

Vision | Openness | Integrity | Compassion | Excellence

**NHS**

**Bolton**

NHS Foundation Trust

# Volunteers Handbook

Improving care,  
transforming lives...for a **better** Bolton

# Welcome to Volunteering

**Thank you so much for choosing to volunteer with us here at Bolton NHS Foundation Trust.**

We warmly welcome you as an essential part of our organisation and are so grateful that you are giving up your time to help us care for our patients.

“Volunteering is an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives.”

Volunteering means you can support your community and those in need while improving your skills, helping you meet new people and experience new things. You can also gain a sense of wellbeing from helping to support those around you and improving lives of others, which is well deserved.

This booklet forms part of your Induction and has been designed to give you useful information regarding the Trust where you will be volunteering, advice on the dos and don'ts of volunteering and where to find more information should you need it.

We sincerely hope you enjoy your experience of volunteering.

## The dos & don'ts of volunteering in hospitals and community:

### Volunteers can assist with:

- Make drinks for patients in low risk areas
- Answer telephones
- Carry out filing duties
- Greet visitors to the ward or department
- Appropriately escalate concerns raised by patients or relatives
- Assisting low risk patients with use of mobile phones/ iPads to stay in touch with relatives and friends
- Carry out specialist roles for which they have received appropriate training – in line with their role description
- Acting as a `runner' around the sites
- Replenishing stock
- Helping with staff wellbeing initiatives
- Offer general ward support
- Meet and greet patients and visitors at the main entrance of the hospital
- Delivery and packing

### Volunteers will not:

- Provide personal care to patients
- Enter any clinical areas without PPE and training
- Move patients other than in a wheelchair only if appropriate training has been given
- Replace the work of a paid member of staff
- Be forced to carry out any task which they feel uncomfortable with
- Access patient records unless it is necessary for them to carry out their duties

## Important information

Please remember to follow infection, prevention and control guidelines, such as wearing PPE when appropriate, and practice good hygiene. This includes:

- Frequently washing your hands with soap and water
- Use hand sanitiser gel when appropriate and you have no access to soap and water
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Always bin used tissues immediately and then wash your hands
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- Before volunteering wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds. Take sanitiser gel with you and use as and when appropriate when you don't have access to soap and water and washing facilities

When helping individuals please only offer to help for the tasks you feel comfortable doing and are able to do. Volunteers helping local people need to make sure that if they become unwell themselves they must not volunteer. Volunteers need to protect themselves and not put other people at risk.

## **Sickness reporting**

Volunteers should notify the Volunteer Service Office on 01204 390560 or email [voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk](mailto:voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk) as soon as possible if they are ill.

## **Mandatory training**

You will have already completed your learning journey before you start volunteering, by undertaking the National Volunteer Certificate which underpins the induction you will do as a volunteer.

The aim of the National Volunteer Certificate is to ensure that all volunteers in health and social care, have the same basic learning when you start in your role. Completion of induction training supports the process for ensuring that you are safe in the volunteering environment.

The National Volunteer Certificate (NVC) will demonstrate that you have undertaken high-quality training in theory and carried out a period of practice to be able to volunteer safely in health and social care.

## **Identity badge**

All volunteers must wear their ID badges but not on a lanyard if in a clinical area.

It is important that you wear the badge at all times and in a visible position while you are going about your voluntary duties. The badge identifies you to both staff and patients and clarifies the reason you are in an area. Staff will challenge people not wearing ID badges in a work area and you may be asked to leave the site.

## Car parking

The Trust operates Number Plate Recognition at all of the car parks. A free car parking permit can be provided which will allow access to the hospitals' car parks, however a space is not guaranteed.

## Travel expenses

You can reclaim travel expenses you incur travelling to and from your place of volunteering. As we are keen to recruit volunteers from our local communities, we limit the mileage allowance to a maximum of 20 miles per shift at 40p per mile.

Car drivers who use their own cars must be covered on their insurance policy for Business Mileage.

Should you choose to use public transport we will cover the cost of a day-saver ticket and we would encourage this due to the pressure on car parking at our hospital site. Tickets or receipts should be submitted with a claim form as claims will not be processed without them.

Expenses should be submitted regularly to your Volunteer Service Office who will arrange for the money to be reimbursed.

Expenses must be submitted within three months in accordance with Trust policies – any expenses submitted outside this time frame will not be reimbursed. Taxi fares will be reimbursed up to the value of public transport day-saver ticket rate with a receipt. If no receipt mileage allowance will be paid from your home.

## Media contact

All contacts with the media regarding the hospital is through the Trust Communications Team. Volunteers should not speak to the media about the Trust or your voluntary role without prior approval from the Trust Communications team.

Please talk to the Volunteer Service Office if you have had a media request and they will discuss it with the Communications Team.

Please feel free to mention your volunteer work at the Trust on social media but be particularly careful not to bring the organisation into disrepute. Please follow the guidance outlined in the Trust's Social Media Policy and do not post any confidential information or photos that will breach patient confidentiality.

We would encourage you to share and promote Trust corporate messages from our Facebook and Twitter accounts. If you would like further guidance then please speak to the Volunteer Services or contact the Communications Department who will be happy to help.

## **Gifts and money**

As a general rule, the Trust discourages acceptance of gifts. Cash should not be accepted, under any circumstances, either as a personal gift or as a donation to the Trust unless you are taking part in an official fundraising activity.

It is recognised that some small gifts, such as flowers or chocolates may be given and accepted as a token of the patient, relative or family's gratitude for a service provided by a volunteer. If a volunteer is given any other gift, irrespective of size, value or type, they should inform the Volunteer Service Office.

## **No smoking policy**

The Trust operates a no smoking policy. Employees and Volunteers of the Trust are not allowed to smoke on any Trust premises.

## **Insurance**

You are insured through the Trust's Insurance Policies for Public Liability, Professional Indemnity, and Personal Accident Insurance. This applies only to duties where you have been trained.

## **Uniform and Dress Code**

We will provide you with a volunteer uniform and would ask that you wear these at all times while you are volunteering. The uniform should be laundered after each shift on a 60°C wash – if you are attending for two or more shifts per week please speak to your Volunteer Service Office about an additional uniform. All volunteers are expected to adhere to certain standards of dress and appearance when volunteering within the Trust

## **Your belongings**

Your belongings and any possession in your vehicle are not covered under any of the above insurance policies. Volunteers should always arrange their own insurance if required.

## **Change of address**

Please let the Volunteer Service Office know as soon as possible any change of address or home/mobile/emergency contact details.

## **Aftershave or perfume**

The smell of perfume, aftershave and personal care products can be distressing to those who are ill. We respectfully request that all volunteers refrain from using heavily scented products. Individuals can use their own common sense and judgement when it comes to identifying products that may be problematic.

## Here are some main points to bear in mind:

- A volunteer ID badge must be worn at all times
- Clothing must be clean, in a good state of repair and well pressed. It should also be plain in nature with no distinct images or messages printed (small logos are acceptable)
- Shoes should be flat full shoes with soft soles, closed and comfortable with a low heel – open toe shoes or flip flops must not be worn during volunteering
- Footwear must be clean
- Make-up in moderation may be worn

## For volunteers who work in, or are required to enter, clinical areas you also need to take account of the following:

- Short sleeves are essential; you must be bare below the elbows at all times in clinical areas
- Hair must be tidy and of a style that doesn't interfere with your duties and not require constant repositioning, nor causing annoyance or hazard when carrying out your duties. Hair shoulder length and below shoulder should be tied up above the collar, Hair accessories should not be worn e.g. brightly coloured clips, slides, beads
- No jewellery in clinical areas with the exception of a plain wedding band and small stud earrings (one pair only), this includes wrist watches. Necklaces should only be worn if out of sight
- To reduce the risk of infection fingernails should be short and clean with no nail varnish. False nails including overlays should not be worn.
- Cardigans and jumpers must not be worn when carrying out your duties in clinical areas
- No ties, items of clothing or jewellery that dangle to be worn

## Signing in

For safety reasons it is essential that you sign in at the beginning and at the end of each volunteer session, so we can monitor attendance and ensure the ward rotas are up-to-date.

The registers can be found on the respective wards and in the Volunteers Room, located on the main corridor, next to the small RVS shop.

## Refreshments

Volunteers are welcome to use the restaurant and will receive a 10% staff discount, on production of your ID badge. Volunteers working five hours or more in one day can claim up to £2.50 towards the cost of a meal. A receipt must be provided when requesting reimbursement.

# Policies and Procedures

## Fire safety

During your induction you will be required to undertake Fire Safety training. Please ensure that you comply with the Trust policy and are familiar with the local fire procedures in your placement.

### In case of fire or suspected fire:

Sound alarm – break glass at your nearest alarm point.

If you have time, dial **2222** and give the location of the fire to the telephone operator.

Proceed to the assembly point and wait for instructions from senior staff. Lifts must not be used in the event of fire.

## Health & safety

The NHS has a legal, moral and financial obligation to protect its staff, patients, volunteers and any visitors in the hospital. The NHS should:

- Provide a safe workplace and safe working environment
- Provide safe work equipment
- Provide a safe system of work
- Provide adequate welfare facilities (inc. first aid)
- Provide Personal Protective Equipment
- Provide adequate information, instruction & training

## In order to protect your own safety and security you should:

- Never put yourself in a situation where you would feel vulnerable
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken if you are required to work alone
- Always be vigilant, to include walking to and from your vehicle, between hospital and community buildings, car parks etc.
- Attend training
- Follow NHS Trust's procedures
- Never allow people to 'tailgate' you through secure doors
- Never bring high value items or large amounts of money to the hospital or community settings
- Ensure your mobile is charged in case of emergency

Our Health and Safety Policy is available in the Volunteer Services office. In the event of illness or injury while at work, please report to a senior member of staff who may refer you to the Occupational Health Department.

### Infection control

NHS Trusts are committed to reducing the number of infections patients get when they are in hospital or community. As a member of the hospital or community team you should follow the infection control policies that are in place to reduce the risk.

## You should:

- Keep fingernails short and clean and free from nail art and extensions
- Make sure you are bare below the elbow when volunteering in clinical areas
- Wear appropriate protective clothing for the task you are undertaking
- Wash your hands with soap and water before leaving and entering the ward and use alcohol gel before and after entering any patient space (either bed space or room)
- Prompt visitors to use alcohol gel
- Not come into the hospital or community setting if you have an illness such as diarrhoea and sickness, flu-like symptoms, sore throat, cold or rash
- Not volunteer for 48 hours after the symptoms of diarrhoea and sickness have passed
- All volunteers must stop volunteering should they feel unwell and to follow the latest government and NHS advice for the public especially regarding COVID-19 symptoms

## Manual handling

Where relevant, we will give you non-patient manual handling training. Please do not attempt to lift equipment or heavy loads until you have had your training.

**Please do not attempt to lift patients at any time.**

# Patient Care

## Patient confidentiality

All staff and volunteers have a duty to maintain patient confidentiality.

You are able to access patient information in connection with your role but obtaining information for other purposes breaches confidentiality.

More information about patient confidentiality will be discussed at your induction.

## Incidents

Rarely a volunteer may be witness to an incident that happens within the hospital or community such as a fall by patient and may be asked to prepare a statement to help investigate the circumstances and reduce preventable incidents. These investigations are not to apportion blame on any staff members or volunteers but are carried out so lessons can be learned.

In some circumstances, statements are disclosed to the Coroner at their request which may result in you being asked to attend Coroner's Court to give evidence. Whilst this rarely happens for volunteers, every member of staff or volunteer will be provided with support throughout the process by the clinical teams and the Volunteer Service.

## Safeguarding

The NHS is committed to providing safe & caring standards of service, and believes that all staff and volunteers play a significant role in monitoring the quality of those services. The NHS aims to enable and encourage staff and volunteers to raise any concerns which may affect patients, staff, the public or the organisation, and to provide reassurance that it is safe and acceptable to speak up.

A concern could be related to a number of different areas of your volunteering life. It may not directly affect you, but could relate to things you see or hear happening to others. Some examples may be:

- The unsafe practice of a colleague
- The health of a colleague
- A continuing hazard or poor practice
- Tasks or roles being allocated inappropriately
- Patient safety being compromised due to inadequate equipment, resources or training (including staffing issues)
- A patient receiving adequate treatment, but their dignity being compromised
- Witnessing others, or being instructed yourself to follow unsafe practices
- Management not addressing issues of concern

If you have a concern that you wish to raise, you can, in confidence, speak to the local department manager. If you are outside normal office hours and you feel your concern needs to be addressed immediately, you can call switchboard (0) and ask for the on-call Matron or Site Lead for your site.

Alternatively you can call switchboard (0) and ask for the Safeguarding Advice Line. Safeguarding nurses are available Monday to Friday (0800 – 1600) excluding bank holidays.

In addition each Trust has a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian. They have a key role in helping to raise the profile of concerns within the Trust and provide confidential advice and support to staff and volunteers in relation to concerns they have, for example, about patient safety and/or the way their concern has been handled.

Guardians do not get involved with investigations or complaints, but help to facilitate the process of raising a concern where needed, ensuring policies are followed correctly.

The appointment of freedom to speak up guardians was a recommendation of the Francis Report, following the review into the former Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust.

Tracey Garde is the Trust's Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and is available to be contacted three days a week.

t | **01204 390390 bleep 3456**  
e | **[Tracey.Garde@boltonft.nhs.uk](mailto:Tracey.Garde@boltonft.nhs.uk)**

## **Emotional wellbeing**

Working or volunteering in the hospital or community environment can sometimes be quite stressful, particularly on wards. If you feel you need support you can approach the Chaplaincy team who can provide pastoral support for all staff and volunteers of all faiths and none. There may also be additional emotional support that is available to staff at the Trust which you can access through the Volunteer Service Office.

## **Isolation precautions**

You should not enter any areas where isolation precautions are in place unless you have been instructed to do so and have been provided with the appropriate equipment and have been trained in its use.

## Sickness/Absence/Holidays

We do not expect volunteers to have 100% attendance but do expect you to notify the team if you are unable to attend.

t | **01204 390560**

e | **[voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk](mailto:voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk)**

## Changing your role

If for any reason you are unhappy with your particular role, you should discuss this with the Volunteer Service Office. Every effort will be made to find a role which interests you.

## Leaving your role

If you decide not to continue with your voluntary work for any reason, please let the Volunteer Service Office know in person.

t | **01204 390560**

e | **[voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk](mailto:voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk)**

We need to keep our rotas up-to-date in order to ensure wards that need volunteers have the right cover.

It is a requirement of the Trust that you must return your ID Badge and Uniform upon leaving your volunteering role, as any outstanding items not returned can pose a security risk to the Trust. The Trust may also seek reimbursement of the uniform provided to you should it not be returned.

## Ending a volunteer placement

Occasionally departments may change their practice and no longer require the help of a volunteer. When this happens the volunteer will be offered other roles that are considered to be suitable.

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to ask a volunteer to leave. If this is the case, a full explanation will be given as to why such a decision has been reached.

## Problems with volunteering

If you have a problem connected with your volunteering, please contact the Volunteer Service office on **01204 390560**.

We have a problem solving procedure that we can refer to if there are any aspects of your experience you are not happy with. Similarly, if we need to discuss any aspect of your conduct, we will contact you and request a meeting.

## Personal conduct

**Any individual working or volunteering in the public sector should adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life – these are:**

### 1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### 2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### **3. Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **4. Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **5. Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **6. Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### **7. Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

In addition Trusts have their own Code of Conduct and Hospitality, Gifts and Sponsorship Policy, the latter of which sets out the responsibilities of staff and volunteers in accepting or declaring any gifts.

If you are offered a personal gift by anyone related to your volunteering including patients, please seek the advice of your recruiting contact before accepting.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How long are my shifts?

Volunteers normally do four hours shifts although some may be a little shorter or longer depending on circumstances. You can do up to four of these a week although only one a day.

## Do I get a break?

Yes you can have a break: the structure of your breaks will be something you agree with your supervisor. Volunteers are normally allowed a 15 minute break during their four hour shift, although this may need to be modified depending on your individual circumstances.

## What do I do if I can't come in for my shift?

There are certain circumstances where you won't be able to attend your shift, if you are unwell for instance. Try to inform the Volunteer Service Office as early as possible that you won't be able to attend. Keep a record of the contact information [voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk](mailto:voluntaryservices@boltonft.nhs.uk) or Telephone 01204 390560. If you are repeatedly unable to attend, Volunteer Services may follow this up and contact you to discuss any concerns.

## What do I do if someone is rude or offensive to me?

Rude or offensive behaviour, by visitors or staff, is not acceptable and you should report incidents to the Volunteer Service office immediately who will take action to prevent further occurrences.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Can I get a reference from my supervisor or a member of the team I work with?**

Yes you can, volunteering can be a great way of gaining referees for applications, but this depends on your level of attendance during your 6 month commitment period. References will be provided to any 3rd party requests upon completion of a minimum of 50 hours during 6 month period. However, if you have failed to attend on more than 3 occasions without prior notification of non attendance, then regrettably we are unable to offer any references. Therefore it is important that you adhere to Attendance commitment guidelines information that is provided to you when you start your volunteering journey with us

## **I'm not sure about the placement I'm in, can I change to another?**

We want volunteers to find their placements fulfilling and enjoyable, and would not want them to feel stuck in a role or department that they are not comfortable with.

At the same time it is often worth sticking at a role for a few shifts in order to get to know the staff and learn the real workings of the department.

If you would like to move then contact Volunteer Service office and they can let you know what other opportunities are available and look into moving you to a new role or department.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What do I do if I want to leave or end my placement?

It is important that you let the Volunteer Services office know as far in advance as possible, if you no longer intend to volunteer.

Please also let us know how you've found the experience and whether you feel it has benefitted you.

If there are any specific reasons why you are leaving please let us know those too.



# VOICE Behaviour Framework

## Vision

We have strong plans and make decisions with Bolton's communities

### Be Positive

#### I do...

- Work in a professional way with energy and commitment and act as a good role model to others.
- Ensure my work supports the delivery of the Trust's Strategy and adopt a 'can do' attitude.
- Work across the Trust and the wider system to achieve the best outcomes in a seamless way.
- Take responsibility for my own engagement, development and wellbeing.

#### I don't...

- Join in with pessimism and discourage others to be positive about the future.
- Forget to put the people of Bolton and colleagues at the heart of everything I do.
- Miss opportunities to work collaboratively with others to achieve the best outcomes.
- Limit my opportunities to develop myself and fulfil my aspirations.

## Openness

We communicate clearly and encourage feedback

### Be Inclusive

#### I do...

- Challenge racism and discrimination and help others feel equal, valued, accepted, included and protected.
- Recognise and question my unconscious biases and minimise the impact of these on the decisions I make.
- Seek out and value the diversity of thoughts, ideas and ways of working that people from different backgrounds, experiences and identities bring.
- Adapt my approach to meet the specific needs of people and treat everyone fairly.

#### I don't...

- Exclude people and use actions, words or physical gestures that cause another person's distress or discomfort.
- Fail to acknowledge and value everyone's contribution and alternate views.
- Discourage patients, service users and colleagues to provide feedback.
- Fail to listen to people who may not otherwise feel they have a voice.

## Integrity

We are fair, show respect and empathy

### Be Honest

#### I do...

- Speak up if I have concerns about patient safety and the way colleagues are being treated.
- Act honestly and consistently and do the right thing even if no one is watching me.
- Admit when I have made a mistake and learn from failure and success.
- Encourage people to speak up and voice their views, concerns and ideas.

#### I don't...

- Act as a bystander when I see behaviour that could make a person feel excluded, bullied, victimised or harassed.
- Make decisions based on how it will make me look rather than how it will benefit others.
- Work in a closed manner and withhold information unnecessarily.
- Take credit for someone else's work or ideas.

## Compassion

We have a caring person-centred approach

### Be Kind

#### I do...

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and kindness.
- Help colleagues when they are struggling and show empathy and compassion towards others.
- Manage my reactions and think about the impact my behaviour has on others.
- Take time to be kind to myself and role model self-care.

#### I don't...

- Adopt an unhelpful manner and treat colleagues unkindly.
- Jump to conclusions, misjudge people and favour some people more than others.
- Act defensively and criticise or blame others.
- Interact with others in a rude or disrespectful way.

## Excellence

We prioritise quality, safety and continuous improvement

### Be Positive

#### I do...

- Try new things, learn new skills and take action without fear of failure and other people's reactions.
- Take positive action if it is in the interests of the people of Bolton and ask for help and support when needed.
- Embrace new technologies and maximise data to improve outcomes for others.
- Seek out and embrace challenges and new experiences with curiosity and persistence.

#### I don't...

- Overpromise and under deliver.
- Let a bad moment impact on my performance or give up after a problem or set back.
- Think all existing ways of working are the best and automatically reject new ideas or overlook solutions.
- Resist or deliberately slow down change or think quality improvement and innovation is someone else's job.

Be the best version of myself...

Vision | Openness | Integrity | Compassion | Excellence

**Voluntary Service Department**  
8.00am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday

Bolton NHS Foundation Trust  
Royal Bolton Hospital  
Minerva Road,  
Farnworth  
Bolton, BL4 0JR

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**Improving care,  
transforming lives...for a better Bolton**