



# Volunteer Handbook



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## **Welcome!**

Welcome to NHS Borders and thank you for deciding to volunteer with us. We hope that you find your involvement enjoyable and rewarding. Volunteers play a vital role in our organisation and we welcome people of all ages, backgrounds and cultures. Volunteering makes a genuine difference to the lives of others and to your own. We developed this handbook to give you important facts about volunteering with us, about your role and to provide information to enable you to volunteer in an informed and safe environment.

## **Introducing NHS Borders**

NHS Borders is an integrated health system providing primary and secondary care to a population of around 114,000 people in the Scottish Borders. We have a 284 bedded district general hospital and 4 community hospitals in Hawick, Peebles, Kelso and Duns. In addition to this we have 4 inpatient mental health units and 23 GP practices. Approximately 3400 staff are employed by NHS Borders.

## **The role of volunteers in NHS Borders**

NHS Borders has a volunteering policy which provides staff with guidelines on our approach to volunteering. Our policy states that volunteers provide support to our service users, which is additional to, and different from, the work of paid staff. We do not regard volunteers as a substitute for staff but rather see their contribution as complementary to existing services. Volunteers enable us to develop different types of relationships and opportunities and to enable service users to experience things that staff would not necessarily be able to provide. Volunteers are a valuable and respected resource within the health service. Volunteers will not be asked to take on tasks normally undertaken by employees. Steps will be taken to ensure staff at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers and how to foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers.

Some examples of volunteer roles within NHS Borders:

- Breastfeeding Peer Support Volunteers
- Healthy Living Network Community Volunteers
- Macmillan Centre Volunteers
- Public Involvement Volunteers
- Ward Visitors / Chaplaincy
- Cleanliness Monitoring Volunteers
- Hospital Radio
- Patient Feedback Volunteers

All available volunteer opportunities are advertised on our website, staff intranet, vacancy bulletin and on the NHS Scotland recruitment website.

<http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/get-involved/current-volunteering-opportunities/>

<https://jobs.scot.nhs.uk/list.aspx>

## Induction Training

You will receive a local induction within the area you will be volunteering which will help you to carry out the tasks relevant to your role, including details of facilities available to you. You will be given information on who will support you and what, if any, additional training you may require. An identification badge and volunteer lanyard will also be provided, which must be worn at all times while volunteering.

The volunteer core training programme covers the statutory and mandatory elements that we are all required to undertake training in - Risk, Health & Safety, Infection Control, Patient Confidentiality and Public Protection. These sessions are scheduled on a quarterly basis and are managed by the Volunteer Coordinator. We ask that volunteers **must** have completed this course within 6 months of starting in their roles.

From April 2016 all new volunteers will be asked if they would like to attend the one day NHS Borders corporate induction. The corporate induction focuses on the organisational values and will provide new volunteers with a welcome to NHS Borders as well as setting out what we expect from staff and volunteers as an organisation. If you would like to attend this session please speak to your designated volunteer lead who will be able to arrange this for you.

## Ongoing Training

You will receive ongoing training as necessary in order to help you carry out the tasks for your role. You will also get the opportunity to undertake any additional internal training courses, if you wish. Volunteers can also access our eLearning site, Learnpro, and undertake any of the eLearning modules that are available. Further information can be obtained from your volunteer lead.

All volunteers are required to undergo formal refresher training in Public Protection every three years. Training can be offered through eLearning or classroom based depending on individual circumstances.

## Support & Supervision

Support for all volunteers is provided on an ongoing basis. You will have a named volunteer lead who will be your main contact and who will support you throughout your volunteering. Evaluation and reviews will be carried out from time to time to allow you and your volunteer lead to reflect on your experience and discuss any additional training needs.

As a volunteer you are entitled to seek assistance from our Occupational Health Team. If you do require access to Occupational Health you can have a confidential discussion with your volunteer lead who will give you information on how to contact Occupational Health or arrange this for you.

## Expectations of Volunteering

### As a volunteer with NHS Borders you can expect:

- Clearly specified lines of support and supervision that ensures you get the most out of your volunteering
- Safe working conditions
- Understanding of rights and responsibilities as a volunteer
- Relevant information, local induction, training and opportunities for personal development
- Appreciation, respect and to feel valued
- A written reference on the basis of your volunteering after an agreed period of time
- Prompt payment of expenses

- To have the same opportunities as paid staff to contribute to the decision making within NHS Borders. Your volunteering lead should be your first port of call for any views you have and will help ensure that they are heard in the most appropriate channels

### **In return we ask that you:**

- Make a regular commitment and can volunteer with us for at least 6 months.
- Give as much notice as possible if you cannot attend or wish to make changes to your volunteering contribution or withdraw from volunteering altogether
- Always be trustworthy in your dealings with people and treat fellow volunteers and staff with courtesy and respect
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships with patients and members of the public
- Maintain a smart appearance and always adhere to our dress code policy
- Attend and participate in meetings and support sessions for volunteers
- Adhere to all NHS Borders's policies as they relate to volunteers and to abide by agreed lines of accountability
- Remember that you are a representative of NHS Borders volunteers
- Bring any problems or concerns to the attention of your volunteer lead immediately and report any suspected or actual abuse of a vulnerable person
- If you are subject to any criminal proceedings, you must notify your Volunteer Lead immediately. NHS Borders reserves the right to request an up to date Disclosure check at any time.

## **Dealing with concerns**

NHS Borders aims to create ways of working that are open and supportive and being clear about what should happen if there are any concerns about your volunteering. Your volunteer lead will address any difficulties about your volunteering whether raised by you, by service users or by staff. However, NHS Borders is a statutory agency and has a legal responsibility to maintain standards of practice.

### **Raising a concern**

Volunteers have the right to raise any concerns they may have in the course of their duties. If you have a concern about your volunteering:-

1. Raise the concern with your volunteer lead, they will listen to your concerns and respond to them.
2. If, by the nature of the concern, you feel you cannot raise it with the volunteer lead, then raise the concern with a more senior member of staff of NHS Borders. They will listen to your concerns and respond to them.
3. We will provide, within an agreed time, a response in writing (or an alternative appropriate recording method). We aim to resolve issues to everyone's satisfaction: volunteers, the people they are working with and the service.

### **If someone else has a concern about your volunteering**

As a matter of course, the volunteer lead supporting you will meet regularly with you and monitor your placement, providing opportunities for you to discuss good standards of practice.

If someone else has a concern, issue or complaint about anything to do with your volunteering that the volunteer lead supporting you cannot resolve as part of your regular support and supervision:

1. A meeting will be arranged with you and your volunteer lead. The issue will be discussed fully and an offer of advice and support to resolve the issue will be given.
2. If the concerns remain unresolved, a further meeting will be arranged, at which time the department manager will discuss the concerns. At this time you will be given the opportunity to respond to the issues with the aim of resolving concerns and reaching an agreement about a satisfactory way forward. This might include offering you further training or a change to your placement.
3. For allegations of abuse or suspected abuse of a service user, or other allegations of gross misconduct, the unit/team manager shall investigate immediately, including interviewing any witnesses if appropriate. In such cases, the department manager will call a meeting to inform you of the outcome of the investigation and may subsequently refer the matter to other agencies. Incidences will be dealt with in a manner that is consistent with that of paid staff.

A volunteer will be asked to leave their placement if any of the following are committed in relation to their volunteering duties<sup>1</sup>

- Sexual/Racial harassment
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour
- Theft
- Malicious damage
- Falsification of expenses
- Intoxication or abuse of drugs
- Disclosure of confidential information

<sup>1</sup> This list is not exhaustive rather an illustration of behaviours that equate to gross misconduct

## **Confidentiality**

As a volunteer you must agree to keep confidential any information you receive about or from the people with whom you volunteer. Do not discuss out with the care team any information about a patient, client or their family. However, if you are concerned about a situation or have questions about confidentiality issues, you should discuss them with the volunteer lead that supports you.

If someone you know is being treated in an area that you volunteer in, please let your volunteer lead know as soon as possible and they will advise on appropriate management of the situation. If a service user or a family member wishes to divulge or discuss confidential information, remind them that, for the wellbeing and safety of all concerned, you may have to share this information with a member of staff.

As a volunteer you are not required to speak to the media. If someone from the media approaches you with any questions or enquiries regarding NHS Borders please inform your volunteer lead who will pass the query on to the appropriate member of staff.

Confidentiality is, however, a two way process and it is your decision how much information about yourself you wish to reveal to people.

NHS Borders's application process requires us to ask volunteers for certain personal information and we undertake to treat such information with respect. We will share private information with others only when necessary and when you have given your permission.

## Boundaries

Some boundary areas that may need to be considered include:-

- Exchange of addresses and phone numbers
- Financial and money matters
- Volunteers should not be involved in providing personal patient care
- Visiting patients in their own home

The team you volunteer with will tell you about boundaries in their setting as part of your orientation. If you are unsure about any issues you should always check with the volunteer lead who supports you.

## Transferring Volunteer Roles

If you would like to transfer to another volunteering role or volunteer in more than one role at a time, Disclosure Scotland checks may be undertaken again depending on the level of protection required. An Occupational Health Questionnaire will require to be completed for a new role.

## Expenses (see Volunteers Expenses Summary Policy for full details)

You should not be out of pocket for expenses you incur from your agreed volunteering. As a guide, you can claim the following types of expense:-

- Travelling to and from your place of volunteering (agreed with the volunteer lead prior to commencing volunteering)
- Parking fees (this does not include fines or charges obtained as a result of not adhering to parking regulations, within or out with NHS Borders)
- Travel in the course of volunteering
- Entrance fees e.g. when helping with patient outings
- Subsistence allowance, e.g. refreshment costs where the volunteering has been in excess of five hours (unless other arrangements agreed in advance).

NHS Borders encourages the use of environmentally friendly travel, for example, walking, cycling and public transport where appropriate.

To claim agreed out of pocket expenses you should complete a claim form and attach any receipts. Your volunteer lead will provide you with the appropriate form and information on where to return this. Please note that expenses will only be paid within the boundaries of NHS Borders.

## Insurance

Through Public/Product Liability and Professional Indemnity, NHS Borders ensures that volunteers are appropriately covered. It is important to note that if you carry out any duties that are not part of your volunteering role you will **not** be covered.

## Car insurance

If you will be using your car to commute to your place of volunteering we advise you inform your insurer of this as they will put a note to this effect on your policy. Please see information from [ABI \(Association of British Insurers\) Volunteer Driving – The Motor Insurance Commitment](#)

If you are required to use your car as part of your agreed placement, for example, to carry service users, then you must insure your car with comprehensive cover. You should check with your car insurer that your policy covers you for any passenger or third party claims. NHS Borders will not accept responsibility for uninsured losses occurring during travel to and from your volunteering. In addition to driving licence your volunteer lead will also need to check a valid MOT certificate for the vehicle you use when carrying out your volunteering activity.

You should also be aware that you should report any motoring offences, police cautions or driving accidents while undertaking volunteer duties to your volunteer lead. NHS Borders will not pay any parking tickets or speeding fines and so on that you accumulate while carrying out your volunteer duties.

## **Personal effects**

NHS Borders cannot be responsible for your personal effects while you are volunteering and it is important to note that your belongings, possessions or vehicles are not covered under any NHS Borders insurance policies. Your volunteer lead will advise where you can leave your belongings however you should make every reasonable effort to limit the number of valuables you bring to NHS premises.

## **Volunteering while claiming benefits**

Volunteers can provide voluntary services for as many hours as they wish but can only receive money to cover their expenses, such as travel to and from your place of volunteering. We would strongly recommend that you discuss your intention to volunteer with your benefits advisor prior to starting in your role. You are in no way obligated to discuss whether you are claiming benefits with your volunteer lead.

If a volunteer was receiving a disability benefit (DLA, PIP or AA) or ESA, they will be medically assessed as either being unfit for work or being unable to do certain activities. However, if they are volunteering then they may be seen as more able by the assessor and refused benefit.

## **Staff benefits and resources**

NHS Borders has a number of facilities at the Borders General Hospital site that are available to all volunteers (no matter where you volunteer!) on:

- Dining Room – discounted prices for staff and volunteers
- Learning Resource Centre
- Library
- Chaplaincy Centre
- Laundry / Dry Cleaning
- Exercise Classes
- Squash Court

There are a number of local companies that offer staff discounts and benefits for our employees, which volunteers are also entitled to. Please speak to your volunteer lead for further information. The website below provides information on discounts and benefits from national companies:

<http://www.healthservicediscounts.com/>

<http://www.nhsstaffbenefits.co.uk/>



## **Acceptance of gifts**

As a volunteer you may find that people offer you gifts or money as a way to express their gratitude for the service that you provide. As a rule, NHS Borders discourages the acceptance of gifts and cash should not be accepted under any circumstances, either as a personal gift or as a donation to the Board. If someone offers you gifts or money, whatever the value we would ask that you inform your volunteer lead immediately.

## CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT – VOLUNTEERS

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As a volunteer in NHS Borders you are bound by a code of confidentiality. Simply stated this means that anything you see or hear while volunteering must not be discussed or talked about with anyone outside i.e. your partner, spouse, friends, relatives etc.

It is a privilege to be given access to others people's private concerns, from information about their health and welfare, to information about personal possessions and family members.

Patients may on occasion offer 'in strict confidence' important information about themselves or a difficult situation at home or with friends. This may be of a potentially serious nature and volunteers should never be put in the position of keeping "secrets".

If you find yourself faced with this you should make it clear to the patient that you have to share the information with a member of staff. These individuals carry overall responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of patients. This should be clearly explained to show an understanding of any perceived breach of trust and to explain why it is necessary to disclose personal information.

To enable the best service to be provided, there is a need for sharing of personal information amongst staff and volunteers. Limits to this will have been decided by the clinical staff on the ward or unit.

NHS Borders has a legal duty to ensure compliance with the policy on confidentiality of personal information.

***Confidentiality is fundamental to all work in the NHS and is so important that any volunteer breaking the code will no longer be considered appropriate for volunteering.***

**I have read and understood the above and agree to abide by the NHS Borders policy on confidentiality.**

Print (full name):

Signature:

Date:

**Please return a copy of the signed and dated statement to your volunteer lead who will give you a copy and send a copy the HR Department**