



Volunteering in NHS Borders

A GUIDE FOR VOLUNTEERS

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 guide to give you important facts about volunteering with us and to provide information to enable you to volunteer in an informed and safe environment.

Why Volunteer?

Because it is satisfying to do useful work which benefits people and the community and because volunteering offers many benefits and opportunities for the people who participate.

Volunteers extend and enhance our services and make a significant and valuable contribution to our work.

You can volunteer in a range of settings. Wherever you are involved and with whomever you volunteer we want you to feel welcome and valued. We believe that everyone in our service should:-

- 1 Be treated with dignity
- 2 Have their privacy respected
- 3 Make informed choices
- 4 Be safe and secure
- 5 Realise their potential
- 6 Be treated as an equal and have their diversity respected

What do volunteers do?

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.

Induction Training

All volunteers will receive induction training which will help them carry out the tasks relevant to their role. When you start your volunteer lead will discuss your training needs and identify the most appropriate training to fit with your role. This may include:-

- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety
- Moving and Handling (non patient)
- Infection Control
- Protection of children and vulnerable people

You will also receive information and orientation to the area/project with which you have chosen to volunteer. You will be given information on who will support you and what, if any, additional training you may require. A placement introduction will be arranged to allow you to meet colleagues and a volunteer lead will be identified.

Ongoing Training

You will receive ongoing training as necessary in order to help you carry out the tasks for your role.

Support

Support for all volunteers is offered on an ongoing basis. Evaluations may be carried out from time to time to ensure that you are satisfied with your involvement as a volunteer in NHS Borders.

Involvement in NHS Borders Decision Making

As a volunteer you should 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.

There is also a Public Partnership Forum that is a group made up of members of the community who provide advice and support to NHS Borders on making services responsive to local need.

To get involved in the Public Partnership Forum contact Public Involvement on freephone: 0800 7314052 or email: publicinvolvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

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 who supports you.

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.

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:-

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

The project or 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.

Expenses (see Volunteers Expenses 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:-

- 1 Travelling to and from your place of volunteering (agreed with the volunteer lead prior to commencing volunteering)
- 2 Parking charges
- 3 Travel in the course of volunteering
- 4 Entrance fees e.g. when helping with patient outings
- 5 Subsistence allowance, e.g. refreshment costs where the volunteering has been in excess of four 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.

Car insurance

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.

Personal effects

NHS Borders cannot be responsible for your personal effects while you are volunteering. You should make every reasonable effort to limit the number of valuables you bring to NHS premises and ensure that your essential personal effects are stored in a safe place.

Dealing with concerns

NHS Borders aims to create ways of working that are open and supportive and being clear about what should happen if things start to go wrong. 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. (See over page for more on raising a concern).

What we expect from you

- 1 To make a regular commitment
- 2 To give as much notice as possible if you cannot attend
- 3 To always be trustworthy in your dealings with people
- 4 To maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships with patients and members of the public
- 5 To attend and participate in meetings and support sessions for volunteers
- 6 To adhere to all NHS Borders's policies as they relate to volunteers and to abide by agreed lines of accountability
- 7 To bring any problems or concerns to the attention of your volunteer lead
- 8 Immediately report any suspected or actual abuse of a vulnerable person

What you can expect from us

- 1 Clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- 2 Safe working conditions
- 3 Understanding of rights and responsibilities as a volunteer
- 4 Relevant information, training and opportunities for personal development
- 5 Appreciation, respect and value
- 6 A written reference on the basis of your volunteering after an agreed period of time
- 7 Prompt payment of expenses

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 the volunteer lead identified to support your volunteering. The volunteer lead 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 some other appropriate recording method). We aim to resolve issues to everyone's satisfaction: volunteers, the people they are working with and the project or 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 duties¹

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

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