

Document Details		
Title		Volunteer Policy
Trust Ref No		1984
Local Ref (optional)		N/A
Main points the document covers		This policy outlines the processes and responsibilities for staff and volunteers with regards to recruiting and managing volunteers within the Trust
Who is the document aimed at?		All staff and volunteers
Owner		Emma Bayliss, Patient Experience Lead
Approval process		
Who has been consulted in the development of this policy ?		
Approved by (Committee/Director)		Patient Experience Committee
Approval Date		17 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
Initial Equality Impact Screening		Yes
Full Equality Impact Assessment		Not required
Lead Director		Director of Governance
Category		Governance
Sub Category		
Review date		28 <sup>th</sup> February 2028
Distribution		
Who the policy will be distributed to		Senior staff as defined by Directors for cascading To volunteers identified by the Patient Experience Lead
Method		Dissemination via Directors via email Available to staff via the Trusts website Dissemination to volunteers via the Patient Experience Lead
Document Links		
Required by CQC		
Other		
Amendments History		
No	Date	Amendment
1	September 2015	Replaces previous policies for volunteers
2	December 2018	Full review undertaken. Additional sentence in 7.3 for managers to identify tasks that require awareness and guidance
3	July 2022	Appendix 3, page 16 – Confidentiality form “His and Hers” words replaced with “their” and Freedom to Speak Up: Raising Concerns added. Format changed resulting in new page numbering
4	January 2025	Creation of new policy to replace previous volunteer policy

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## 1. Introduction

Volunteers make a unique contribution to patients, carers, the public and staff at Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust (hereafter, the Trust). The Trust is committed to developing, encouraging, and supporting volunteer involvement in our work where appropriate; and recognises that volunteers will complement the role of all staff. This policy outlines the compliance with Trust policies for the recruitment and management of volunteers.

### 2.0 Policy Statement

This policy applies to prospective and current volunteers of the Trust. This policy will be applied to assist staff who work with volunteers as part of their role. The tasks to be carried out by volunteers will be clearly defined in a role description so that both staff and volunteers are clear about their respective roles and responsibilities.

The Trust will have processes and procedures in place that will be approved, where necessary, by the appropriate operational and corporate groups as set out in the Trust structure. The processes and procedures for this policy will be made available to staff through the Staff Zone

Related policies include:

Health and safety - [H&S Policy](#)

Standard Infection Control Precautions Policy (SICP) - [SICP Policy](#)

Stress and Staff Support at Work Policy - [Stress and Staff Support Policy](#)

Safeguarding Children Policy - [Safeguarding children](#)

Safeguarding Adults Policy - [Safeguarding Adults](#)

Data Protection - [Data Protection](#)

Information Security Policy - [Information Security Policy](#)

Grievance and Concerns Policy - [Grievance and Concerns](#)

Dignity at Work Policy - [Dignity at Work](#)

Freedom To Speak Up Policy - [Freedom to Speak Up - Raising Concerns](#)

### 3.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define recruitment and management process of our volunteers and aims to ensure a fair and consistent approach to the recruitment, adhere to the relevant checks, promote good practice and consistency to management and support of our volunteers, and clarify their roles and responsibilities.

The policy aims to:

- Ensure a fair and consistent approach to the recruitment of volunteers.
- Promote good practice and a consistent approach to volunteer management.
- Clarify the role of volunteers and the relationship between volunteers and paid members of staff within the Trust.
- Acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers and champion their development.
- Confirm the commitment of the Trust in involving volunteers in its work and promote best practice.

## 4.0 Applicability

This policy applies to prospective and current volunteers. It will apply to all staff working with volunteers as part of their role.

All staff that are required to work within the organisation, employed and non-employed, must adhere to this policy and associated policies, including, but not limited to:

- Employed staff (including Bank staff)
- Volunteers
- Student Placements
- Medical Placements
- Allied Healthcare Placements
- Locums
- Agency
- Temporary and Fixed Term contracts
- Third Party Suppliers

## 5.0 Responsibilities

**The Director of Governance** has executive responsibility for volunteers within the Trust and will report to the Trust board.

**The Associate Director of Governance** has line management and service delivery responsibilities for patient experience and volunteers.

**People Services** will work in conjunction with Patient Experience Lead to ensure compliance with Trust Policies for the recruitment, selection and training of volunteers.

**The Patient Experience Lead** will be responsible for managing the recruitment and selection of volunteers and compliance with Trust policies, scheduling and planning workload for volunteers in compliance with their role descriptions, develop and implement new roles, provide advice and support to managers, staff and volunteers in accordance with Trust Policy, ensure mandatory training is completed and in date, in line with Trust Policy, maintain up to date and relevant records of volunteers, provide support to managers and volunteers and support the implementation of this policy, manage any concerns raised by managers or volunteers.

**Service and Clinical Leads** are responsible for ensuring that their services comply with the requirements set out in this policy.

**All managers** are responsible for the implementation of this policy within their area and for having local processes and procedures in place where necessary, informing staff of their responsibilities with regards this policy and associated Trust processes procedures, and guidance.

**Nominated supervisor** will ensure that the volunteer has had a local induction when commencing their placement, will provide or arrange ongoing departmental local training to allow the volunteer to carry out their role, will act as primary contact for the volunteer, will offer ongoing support and guidance.

**All staff** are required to welcome volunteers into their service and ensure that volunteers are supported within their placement. Staff working with volunteers should ensure that they do not ask a volunteer to do tasks outside of their agreed remit. All staff must comply with the requirements set out within this policy.

**The volunteers** will be responsible for complying with recruitment, selection and training policies and procedures, adhere to trust policies and procedures that the responsible manager agrees relevant, adhere to Trust values, work within their role description.

Volunteers must receive training, support, and supervision to ensure good quality experience for the volunteer, and the staff and service users they work alongside. Volunteers can expect to feel safe, valued, be kept informed and to enjoy their time with the Trust

The Trust will comply with [NHS Patient and Public Participation Policy](#).

## **6.0 Recruitment and Selection**

The Trust will have a robust process in place to ensure that the recruitment and selection requirements are satisfactorily met.

6.1 The aim of the recruitment process is to ensure that we match volunteers' skills and abilities with volunteer roles and ensure the relevant checks have been completed.

6.2 The selection for volunteer recruitment will be based on the suitability for the volunteer to perform the defined voluntary role on behalf of the trust. The Patient Experience Lead is responsible for recruiting volunteers and will reserve the right to decline applications from potential volunteers deemed unsuitable for the needs of the service.

6.3 Defining the role – For all opportunities, a role description will be created. Role descriptions will be developed by the relevant managers with assistance from the Patient Experience Lead and will include a specification of any particular skills, experience or requirements of the role.

6.4 Relevant Checks – All volunteers are required to undertake checks in line with the NHS employment check standards. Offers of a placement are subject to these requirements being met. These include:

**References** - In line with Trust Recruitment and Selection Policy - [Recruitment Policy](#)  
**Occupational Health** - In line with Trust Recruitment and Selection Policy  
**Disclosure Barring Service** – As appropriate for the protection of vulnerable adults and children and in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, any individual applying to volunteer will be subject to screening by the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS). Please refer to Trust Recruitment and Selection Policy.

## **7.0 Induction and Training**

The induction and training programme will be regularly reviewed and approved by the Patient Experience Committee.

The Trust will have systems and processes in place to monitor training compliance on an annual basis.

All new volunteers will participate in an online mandatory training programme, facilitated by the Patient Experience Lead. This will include:

- Communications for Volunteers
- Conflict Resolution for Volunteers
- Data Security Awareness for Volunteers
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights for Volunteers
- Fire Safety for Volunteers
- Health, Safety and Infection Prevention and Control for Volunteers
- Mental Health Awareness for Volunteers
- Moving and Assisting for Volunteers
- Preventing Radicalisation (Basic Awareness) for Volunteers
- Roles and Responsibilities of a Volunteer
- Safeguarding Adults for Volunteers
- Safeguarding Children for Volunteers

Local managers will be responsible for completing a local induction once a volunteer has been assigned.

All volunteers will be required to complete mandatory refresher training when prompted by the Patient Experience Lead.

Volunteers will receive appropriate digital system training/instruction as required to undertake their role and support the work in the Trust, using the technology that is available, such as Better Impact for Volunteer Management, N365, Patient Feedback system.

7.1 All volunteers will receive a Volunteer Handbook, which must be read in line with this policy. The handbook will provide further information on volunteering with the Trust, as well as how volunteers can access further information on relevant Trust wide policies and procedures.

7.2 All volunteers will be issued with a Trust ID badge by the recruitment team prior to commencing their role. Volunteers must always wear an ID badge whilst undertaking volunteer activities.

7.3 Upon starting a voluntary placement, an individual will be informed of a nominated supervisor. The supervisor, along with support from the Patient Experience Lead, will be responsible for ensuring that the volunteer is supported and guided and is able to raise any questions or concerns.

## **8.0 Performance Monitoring**

8.1 The Patient Experience Lead will hold regular 1:1 conversations (as required) and group meetings (quarterly) with the volunteers.

8.2 Performance reviews will be conducted to evaluate the volunteer's contributions, identify any challenges, opportunities and desires. Reviews will be based on feedback from both the volunteers and service leads.

8.3 Volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback on their experiences, including any suggestions for improvement or concerns they may have.

8.4 Additional training and development opportunities will be provided to volunteers as required.

8.5 The wellbeing of volunteers is a priority. Support services will be provided to all volunteers as per Trust policy. Any issues affecting a volunteer's ability to perform their role will be addressed promptly and sensitively.

8.6 Accurate records of all reviews will be maintained and used to track progress and shape the volunteer role.

## **9.0 Governance and Compliance**

The Trust will have governance arrangements in place to monitor volunteer involvement in accordance with national guidance and frameworks, to include, [NHS England » Patient experience improvement framework](#) and [The NHS Volunteer Data Collection scope and metrics](#) to evaluate volunteer activity, the review of suitable roles, recruitment, training and development, along with an annual review of the policy to ensure it remains effective and relevant. This will be overseen and managed by the Director of Governance the Associate Director of Governance and the Patient Experience Lead.

## **10.0 Quality and Equality Impact Assessment (QEIA) and screening**

The trust will comply with the national requirements of Quality and Equality Impact Assessment, and local policies and procedures.

## **11.0 Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of all information they encounter during their work.

Personal data of volunteers will be handled in compliance with the Trust data security and protection requirements and policies.

Both paid employees and volunteers are bound by Trust confidentiality policy and procedures.

A signed confidentiality agreement must be in place prior to commencement of a volunteering role.

Volunteers will be made aware of the Trusts privacy notice.

## **12.0 Health and Safety**

The Trust is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all volunteers.

Volunteers must follow all the Trust's health and safety policies and procedures and report any hazards or incidents to their supervisor.



### **13.0 Problem Solving Procedures**

The trust is committed to ensuring volunteers are supported in a consistent, fair and effective manner, promoting a positive working environment with an appropriate means through which grievances or complaints can be discussed and resolved.

13.1 Handling a complaint regarding paid employees – Volunteers are encouraged to report any issues or concerns as soon as they arise. In the first instance, volunteers will raise their concern/complaint with their nominated supervisor with escalation to the Patient experience Lead, if required. Advice may be sought from People Services. The volunteer may be required to put their concern/complaint in writing. The complaint will then be handled and investigated fairly and consistently as per Trust Policy.

13.2 Handling a complaint regarding a volunteer – Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves to the same standards as employed staff. If a service has a concern regarding a volunteer's behaviour or their ability to carry out their role, then they should discuss their concern with their team lead in the first instance who can discuss with the volunteer directly. If the problem cannot be resolved informally it will be referred to the Patient Experience Lead to be handled and investigated fairly and consistently, as per Trust Policy along with support from People Services. The volunteer will have the opportunity to put their case forward. Following an investigation, an informal warning may be issued and a timeframe for improvement agreed. If there is insufficient progress after the agreed timeframe then a formal warning may be issued. The final stage is the exclusion of the volunteer, following investigation as per Trust Policy.

13.3 Volunteer conduct - Where a volunteer is accused of committing serious misconduct (this may include but is not limited to, theft, violence, harassment, malicious damage, breaches of confidentiality), then the individual will be instructed to stop volunteering whilst the matter is investigated.

We have the right to terminate a volunteer agreement if satisfied that a volunteer has not adhered to our policies and procedures or fails to perform their role satisfactorily.

### **14.0 Communications and Dissemination**

This policy will be communicated and disseminated widely across the Trust using a variety of tools and mechanisms.

### **15.0 Advice and Guidance**

For any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Patient Experience Lead via [Shropcom.cgov@nhs.net](mailto:Shropcom.cgov@nhs.net)

### **16.0 Review and Maintenance**

This policy, associated processes and procedures and other related documentation will be regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with the Trust's Policy Approval and Ratification Framework