



Volunteering Policy

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Version Number	3
Previous Version Approved	May 2007
Endorsed by:	
Date Endorsed:	
Review Date:	March 2013

1. Involving Volunteers in NHS Lanarkshire

1.1 Definition of Volunteer

A **volunteer** is:

“A person who gives freely and willingly of their time to help improve the health and wellbeing of patients, users and their families and carers of the NHS in Scotland.”

The United Nations recognises four types of volunteering and each type can be evidenced in the NHS in Scotland. These are:

- Service giving;
- Mutual support;
- Influencing and advocating on behalf of others; and
- Participation in decision making

(Strategy for Volunteering in the NHS in Scotland, Scottish Government 2008)

“Moving towards a mutual NHS will require new ways of thinking about health and health care. We need to move, over time, to a more inclusive relationship with the Scottish people, a relationship where patients and the public are affirmed as partners rather than recipients of care.”

(Better Health, Better Care: Action Plan, Scottish Government, 2007)

1.2 Context of the Policy

- 1.2.1 Volunteering is well established in NHS Lanarkshire with a Volunteering Policy and a Voluntary Services department being in existence since 2001.
- 1.2.2 NHS Lanarkshire values and supports the important part volunteers play in the life and work of the Board and the wider community.
- 1.2.3 NHS Lanarkshire’s nominated director for volunteering is the Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals.
- 1.2.4 In February 2008 the Scottish Government Health Directorate issued guidance to Health Boards, refreshing the strategy for Volunteering in the NHS in Scotland. This strategy recognised the diversity of volunteering roles within the NHS in Scotland but looked for a greater consistency of methodology, opportunities and standards.

1.2.5 The establishment of Community Health Partnerships in 2006 created the Public Partnership Forums (PPFs), bodies which involve local service users, carers and the public in the improvement of health services. This has brought a new group of volunteers into new role of working alongside the NHS. Due to the completely different nature of volunteering in PPFs, traditional approaches to volunteering and volunteering management may not always be appropriate.

1.2.6 NHS Lanarkshire is committed to meeting the requirements of the 10 indicators of the Investing in Volunteering Standard:

- There is an expressed commitment to the involvement of volunteers, and recognition throughout the organisation that volunteering is a two-way process, which benefits volunteers and the organisation.
- The organisation commits appropriate resources to working with volunteers, such as money, management, staff time and materials.
- The organisation is open to involving volunteers who reflect the diversity of the local community, in accordance with the organisation's stated aims and operational procedures.
- The organisation develops appropriate roles for volunteers in line with its aims and objectives, and which are of value to the volunteers and create an environment where they can develop.
- The organisation is committed to ensuring that, as far as possible, volunteers are protected from physical, financial and emotional harm arising from volunteering.
- The organisation is committed to using fair, efficient and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers.
- The organisation takes a considered approach to taking up references and official checks which is consistent and equitable for all volunteers, bearing in mind the nature of the work.
- Clear procedures are put into action for introducing new volunteers to the organisation, its work, policies, practices and relevant personnel.
- Everybody in the organisation is aware of the need to give volunteers recognition.
- The organisation takes account of the varying support needs of volunteers.

1.3 Purpose of Policy

1.3.1 The purpose of the Volunteering Policy is

- To give people ownership of 'their NHS'
- To formally acknowledge and support the role of volunteers in the NHS
- To formally recognise that the role of volunteers within NHS Lanarkshire (whatever role they carry out) is complementary to the role of paid staff and does not substitute for it.

- To set out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provide a set of procedures to ensure good working practice.
- To define the roles, rights and responsibilities of the organisation and its volunteers.
- To encourage and enable the involvement of volunteers from socially diverse backgrounds.
- To encourage NHS clients / service users to access volunteering for the benefit of their health.
- To provide a route to employment within the NHS and other caring professions.
- To encourage partnership working with voluntary organisations to improve the volunteer experience within the NHS.

1.3.2 The Volunteering Policy, principles and accompanying procedures are intended primarily for use by NHS Lanarkshire employees and volunteers. A commitment to the principles contained within it would also be expected from voluntary organisations whose volunteers have a role within NHS Lanarkshire. NHS Lanarkshire respects the independence of these voluntary organisations and recognises that they are responsible for the management of volunteers working on specific projects. This policy uses a risk management approach, which facilitates volunteer involvement but ensures the safety of individual volunteers, NHS patients and staff.

1.4 Role and Value of Volunteering within the NHS

1.4.1 There are many benefits of volunteering: to the organisation; to the patient; to the individual volunteer; and also to the wider community.

1.4.2 The involvement of volunteers benefits NHS Lanarkshire in many ways. Volunteers improve the quality of the patient experience: giving patients the opportunity to spend time with volunteers allows staff to devote more time to professional roles. Patients, in particular those who are socially isolated, benefit from volunteer input and friendship. The wider community benefits greatly from an NHS which is more reflective of, and reactive to, the needs of the local community.

1.4.3 However, the greatest benefit of volunteering should be to the individual volunteer. There is a range of health benefits of volunteering, particularly to the mental health and wellbeing of the volunteer. It increases self confidence, develops and renews skills and also provides a sense of belonging. Therefore NHS Lanarkshire strives to provide a high quality volunteering experience.

2. Principles behind Developing Volunteering within NHS Lanarkshire

2.1 Relationships with NHS Lanarkshire Employees

NHS Lanarkshire believes that volunteers are complementary to the role of paid staff and do not substitute for it and is committed to ensuring that:

- Tasks that are carried out by volunteers do not replace the work of paid employees.
- Volunteers are not permitted to take on tasks formerly undertaken by paid employees or to work in ways which facilitate a decrease in paid employment.
- Volunteers are not permitted to take on tasks, which have been identified as necessary for the delivery of clinical care but are not currently part of the funded establishment. This includes administrative support roles.
- Steps are taken to ensure that staff at all levels and people who use the service are clear about the role of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between staff, patients, service users and volunteers.
- Training and support is provided for those working alongside volunteers.
- The safety and wellbeing of patients, users of the service and staff are paramount. The standards of care and conduct of volunteers must be of the same high quality as that of paid staff.

2.2 A Diverse and Inclusive Volunteer Programme

NHS Lanarkshire is committed to challenging stereotypical images of volunteers and will take the following steps to develop a diverse volunteer force

- Market volunteering opportunities appropriately to ensure the volunteer force actively reflects the wider community.
- Strive to recruit volunteers from all sections of the community in line with the Equal Opportunities Policy and take positive steps to actively raise awareness and recruit volunteers from socially diverse backgrounds.
- Use a standard recruitment and selection procedure which incorporates an Occupational Health declaration and a Criminal Record Disclosure (consistent with NHS Lanarkshire's Policy on Disclosure)
- Acknowledge the importance of social inclusion and recognise that most prospective volunteers have something of value to offer. All reasonable efforts will therefore be made to find

placements for everyone who offers their time and energy and has undergone the screening programme. Where there is no placement available or volunteers do not meet the disclosure requirements for volunteering within the NHS then the volunteer will be informed of the reason and referred where applicable to another agency such as the local Volunteer Centre.

- Does not impose an arbitrary age at which a person can start or stop volunteering but uses a risk management approach to determine whether volunteering in the NHS is appropriate for a volunteer under the age of 16 or for an older volunteer.

2.3 A High Quality Volunteering Experience

NHS Lanarkshire is committed to providing individual volunteers with a high quality volunteering experience and will take the following steps to encourage this:

- All volunteer roles within NHS Lanarkshire will have written role descriptions with specific and meaningful tasks and will have been fully risk assessed prior to volunteers being recruited to a particular task.
- All volunteers will have a designated contact person within the area of volunteering who will be able to provide mentoring support.
- All volunteers will have regular contact with the Voluntary Services Department to ensure that volunteers have the necessary support, encouragement, guidance and training to undertake their volunteer role.
- All volunteers will be provided with information on the organisational policies which may affect them and where to access these policies. This will include information about disciplinary and grievance procedures for volunteers and about their rights and responsibilities if something goes on.
- All volunteers will receive a level of induction training that is appropriate to the volunteer role that they are carrying out but includes as a minimum clarification on the role that they are carrying out, health and safety and data protection.
- All volunteers will be covered for insurance in the same way as paid NHS staff are for liability purposes under CNORIS.
- All volunteers will have access to on-going opportunities for learning and development as appropriate to their volunteer role.
- All volunteers will have the opportunity to have personal development plans for their volunteering role and support from the Voluntary Services Department to access careers within Health and Social Care fields.
- All volunteers will be given the opportunity to contribute to decision -making processes of NHS Lanarkshire.

- All volunteers who have completed 6 months service with the organisation may request a reference from the Voluntary Services Department. References will be drawn up in consultation with the named contact in the area that the volunteer has been spending their time.

2.4 A Flexible Approach to Volunteering within NHS Lanarkshire

- NHS Lanarkshire recognises that individuals may want to volunteer with our organisation in different ways. They may want to get involved at a particular hospital or in a particular role or with a particular public health campaign. Therefore volunteers may stay with the organisation for a prolonged period or may only want to be involved in a time limited campaign. It is important that the volunteering programme is flexible enough to allow this to happen.

However, volunteers need to undergo the same recruitment and selection procedure outlined in this document regardless of whether they intend their volunteering to be fixed term or ongoing

2.5 Resourcing Volunteering in NHS Lanarkshire

- NHS Lanarkshire recognises that the development of a high quality volunteering programme requires investment of both staff time and resources. No volunteer should be financially disadvantaged by contributing their time to NHS Lanarkshire.
- NHS Lanarkshire will resource the costs of volunteering such as marketing, recruitment, vetting, training and support.
- NHS Lanarkshire will lay out the provision for reimbursement of out of pocket expenses for volunteers as part of a separate policy which will be reviewed annually.

2.6 Relationships with Voluntary Organisations

NHS Lanarkshire maintains relationships with the Community and Voluntary Sector in Lanarkshire. The Community and Voluntary Sector in Lanarkshire encompasses

- Voluntary Organisations providing services
- Partnerships with Voluntary Organisations to provide services within the NHS
- The Volunteer Centre Network

NHS Lanarkshire recognises that voluntary organisations providing a service to the NHS (such as WRVS, Hospital Radio, and Friends of

Hairmyres Hospital) are independent organisations with their own identities and values. However, individuals who volunteer with these organisations should be subject to the same level of vetting as individuals who volunteer with NHS Lanarkshire directly. NHS Lanarkshire expects voluntary organisations to adopt similar standards to NHS Lanarkshire in the recruitment and selection of volunteers.

NHS Lanarkshire values its relationship with the local volunteer centres who have a role in not only signposting volunteers to the NHS but also working with the NHS to promote volunteering to the local communities and to NHS staff.

2.7 Encouraging Employer- supported Volunteering

NHS Lanarkshire recognises that voluntary activity has a range of health benefits, particularly to the mental health and wellbeing of the volunteer from volunteering itself. As an organisation which promotes a positive work / life balance, NHS Lanarkshire will also promote the benefits of volunteering to its staff and highlight the role that the Volunteer Centres play in signposting volunteers to vacancies. The benefits of volunteering will also be highlighted to staff who are preparing for retirement.

3. Volunteering Procedures

- 3.1 The procedures applied by NHS Lanarkshire in implementing this policy are set out in Appendix 1.

4. Monitoring and Review of the Volunteering Policy

- 4.1 NHS Lanarkshire is committed to an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation of this policy in consultation with all relevant parties on an annual basis. The policy will reflect and complement NHS Lanarkshire's corporate objectives, the Local Delivery Plan and the stated priorities in relation to improving health, tackling inequalities and social renewal.
- 4.2 Reports will be submitted annually to the Volunteering Steering Group and the Clinical Governance Committee.



Volunteering Procedures

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Approved by: Human Resources Joint Policy Committee
Staff Governance Committee

Previous Version/Date: May 2007

Version Number/Date:

Revision Date:

1.1 Recruitment and Selection

NHS Lanarkshire:-

- Requires all volunteers to complete an Application Form, Occupational Health Declaration and Enhanced Disclosure (consistent with NHS Lanarkshire's policy on Disclosure) prior to appointment. All volunteers must provide references as requested.
- Will place volunteers in accordance with rigorous volunteer recruitment and selection procedures and with due care and attention to the process of matching volunteers' needs and service requirements.
- Will make all reasonable effort to find placements for everyone who offers their time and energy and who have undergone the screening programme. Where there is no placement available or an individual does not meet the disclosure requirements of the organisation, the volunteer will be informed of the reason and referred, where applicable, to another agency such as the local Volunteer Centre.

1.2 Age Limits for Volunteering in NHS Lanarkshire

1.2.1 There is no minimum or maximum legal age that people can give their time as volunteers. What does apply is the general law of duty of care which all members of the public are required to observe.

1.2.2 Children and young people under 16 years of age can and do make a responsible and active contribution to society through volunteering and community involvement. The organisation has an enhanced duty of care to ensure they are involved in a sustainable way which ensures their safety and protection from harm.

An individual risk assessment will be undertaken by the Voluntary Services Manager in conjunction with the Senior Nurse / Service Development Manager in advance to assess the risks to the health and safety of the young volunteer. In addition the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003: Guidance for Organisations and the Board's Child Protection Policy and Guidelines will be followed to ensure that children and young people who are volunteering are protected and appropriate

safeguards are in place. This may mean that there are a significant number of volunteer roles (such as volunteering within certain clinical areas) that are deemed to be unsuitable for volunteers under the age of 16. Parents / guardians of volunteers under the age of 16 will also be asked to give consent to their child volunteering.

- 1.2.3 Older volunteers should be treated as individuals with the only measure of suitability being their capability to carry out duties in a safe manner and in line with the organisation's policies and procedures. Where older volunteers are no longer able to conduct their duties, consideration should be given to changing their role or to redeployment elsewhere in the organisation. Where this is not possible the volunteer should be supported to retire with dignity. This may include taking on another voluntary role with other organisations.

1.3 Support, Supervision and Recognition

- Each volunteer will be assigned a named contact person for supervision and support and will be given clearly specified lines of accountability.
- The role of the volunteer will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they have the necessary support, encouragement, guidance and training, if appropriate, to undertake the assigned task.
- Volunteers will be expected to conduct themselves in a reasonable manner, perform their task(s) to an acceptable standard and comply with organisational policies and procedures. When this standard is not met, appropriate support will be offered. If the volunteer does not then improve sufficiently, their involvement will be reviewed in line with the NHS Lanarkshire procedure for Dealing with Volunteer Conduct.
- In the case of serious breach of conduct or inability to perform agreed tasks, the organisation reserves the right to end the services of the volunteer.
- On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers may request a reference from their named contact person. Volunteers would require to have volunteered for a minimum of six months.
- The work of volunteers will be recognised and acknowledged by NHS Lanarkshire on a regular basis.

1.4 Expenses and Insurance

NHS Lanarkshire will ensure that:

- Volunteers are adequately covered by insurance whilst they carry out their agreed duties both on the Board's premises and in the community.
- Volunteers are given information on other legislation and policies which may affect them (e.g. Health and Safety).
- Volunteers are treated in the same way as paid staff for liability purposes.
- Provision of volunteer expenses are costed and included at the outset of any new volunteer involving project within NHS Lanarkshire.

1.5 NHS Lanarkshire's Expectations of Volunteers

Volunteers are expected to:

- Participate in induction sessions and other training specific to the assigned task(s), including PAMOVA (Prevention and Management of Violence and Aggression).
- Comply with all Board policies and procedures, particularly in relation to confidentiality, accident reporting and health and safety.
- Access immunisation protocols as advised and be informed of routine control of infection procedures.
- Carry the NHS Lanarkshire identification badge at all times and wear as directed.
- Undertake their voluntary role at agreed times.
- Inform the relevant member of staff if they are unable to attend, in advance if possible.
- Give as much notice as possible if unable to continue their voluntary work.
- Raise any issues of concern relating to their voluntary work with their named contact person. Use the NHS Lanarkshire procedure for Dealing with Volunteer Dissatisfaction if they feel unhappy with the way that they are being treated.
- Inform their named contact of any relevant changes in their health status or if they are subject to any criminal proceedings during their period of volunteering.
- Inform their named contact in advance of all holidays and breaks.

3.6 Development of Volunteering Procedures at a local level

NHS Lanarkshire recognises that individual directorates and localities may need to develop their own protocols for the involvement of volunteers in their particular areas. This should be carried out in conjunction with the Voluntary Services Department and should use the standards laid out in this policy as a minimum baseline standard.