



Doncaster and Bassetlaw  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Volunteers Handbook



**To be the safest trust in England, *outstanding in all that we do.***

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## Dear Volunteer

Thank you for offering to give your time as a volunteer at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Volunteers offer their help in a wide range of services which, are not essential to the clinical care of patients, they do make an enormous difference to their well being.

This is intended to be a guide to the general scope of roles undertaken by Volunteers and is not an inflexible specification. Please take the time to read this carefully. Prior to commencing your voluntary placement, if you have any questions then please do not hesitate to ask.

Volunteering is a gift relationship. The Volunteer or the Trust can withdraw this relationship at any time and there is no contractual obligation between the two.

Please remember to consider joining us as a Foundation Trust member. It is free and you will be supporting the hospitals within the Trust.

We hope that you enjoy your time with us as a Volunteer.

Staff in the Voluntary Services office will be happy to discuss any concerns or suggestions you may want to make that you feel would help to improve the quality of your volunteering experience within the Trust.

## Voluntary Services



## **1. STRATEGY FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICES**

The Trust embraces the involvement of volunteers in its services as it recognises how their roles enhance the quality of service we can provide. Volunteers will be integrated into wards or departments with the aim of enhancing patient experience of our services.

Training will be given to every volunteer. This will include the Trust Induction, Local Induction relating to the volunteer role they undertake and mandatory training. Volunteers do not replace paid employees in any circumstance.

Volunteers support and assist paid employees in providing a high-quality, effective health care to patients, their families, carers or friends.

## **2. WHAT A VOLUNTEER DOES FOR THE TRUST**

At some time in our lives, many of us have needed the help of unpaid people outside our network of friends and family. For those who undertake voluntary work and give either help or support, there is the satisfaction of knowing that you have helped people when they are feeling at their most vulnerable and that you have supported paid staff to deliver the best possible experience for patients, their families, carers or friends.

Most people, regardless of age, gender, race or ability could make a difference to someone in hospital by the help they provide as a volunteer. The primary factor is a persons' suitability and ability in carrying out the role description for an area.

## **3. TRAINING AND PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

Some training courses are mandatory and must be completed as soon as possible after starting as a volunteer i.e. Trust Induction and Local Induction. Other courses will need to be undertaken dependent upon the volunteer role you undertake e.g. moving and handling. Finally there are other courses that have to be undertaken on a regular basis e.g. fire.



You will be advised which courses are relevant to your role by the staff in the voluntary services office.

- 3.1** The Trust induction is mandatory for all new staff to the Trust. You will not need to undertake this before starting your placement.
- 3.2** Volunteers who may be expected to lift boxes, push trolleys for library books etc or who want to be able to push visitors or patients in wheelchairs must undertake additional manual handling training for this purpose before the tasks are carried out.
- 3.3** All volunteers must comply with hand washing guidelines as part of infection prevention and control measures.
- 3.4** Volunteers must undertake annual review courses in fire safety and hand washing. Moving and handling reviews are held every 2 years.
- 3.5** Volunteers will be provided with a role description for the area in which they are placed and volunteers should work only within the terms of that role description.
- 3.6** All volunteer placements shall initially be made for a trial period of 4 weeks. At the end of this period, contact will be made with the volunteer and the manager of the area where the volunteer is placed, at which point either the volunteer or staff may request a re-assignment of the volunteer to a different position or may determine the unsuitability of the volunteer for a position within the Trust.
- 3.7** Volunteers may only undertake training courses that are directly relevant and/or necessary in their role as a volunteer.



However, if the volunteer and manager identify other internal training courses which would enhance the volunteering position, then consideration may be given to supporting the volunteer to undertake that training.

## **4. HEALTH & SAFETY**

Health & Safety is everyone's business. All volunteers and paid staff share with Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust a responsibility to change a duty/task that could improve safety. Any suggestions will be listened to, so discuss any thoughts or suggestions with the manager or staff of the Voluntary Services Office.

To help us in this area, we would ask you to comply with the following rules and regulations whilst undertaking voluntary service on our premises.

### **4.1 Accident Reporting**

If you have an accident or experience or an untoward incident whilst on our premises, then you must, however trivial it appears to be, report this immediately to the person in charge and the Voluntary Services Department. They will take the necessary action and complete the necessary documentation. Sometimes you may be asked to provide a statement of the incident.

### **4.2 Departmental Health and Safety Policies**

Most departments have recognised Departmental Policies indicating the specific rules applicable to that department. You will have these explained to you by the person in charge of a specific department. Any rules applicable to the department you are to be located in, will apply to you and therefore you must comply with these.

### **4.3 Fire Precautions**

If you discover a fire then raise the alarm. Once the fire alarm is raised follow any instructions you are given by staff. They are aware of the procedures to be followed and will instruct you accordingly.



#### **4.4 Fire Training**

Fire training is included in the Trust Induction course. However after a year all volunteers are expected to attend an annual fire training lecture. You will be offered a choice of dates to ensure this fits in with your home arrangements. Please ensure that you attend a fire training course each year.

#### **4.5 Emergency Situation**

In an event of an emergency situation volunteers can summon help by activating the 2222 system advising if its is, fire, critical incident, security or cardiac arrest.

#### **4.6 First Aid**

If you require First Aid facilities whilst on our premises, then ask the person in charge of the department you are working in.

#### **4.7 Hazard Spotting and Reporting**

If you become aware of a hazard or potential hazard then report this to a member of staff.

#### **4.8 Housekeeping and Environment**

Ensure that you keep doors, corridors, fire exits and stairways free from obstruction. If you are pushing a trolley please ensure that you have a clear view of the corridor before entering.

#### **4.9 Disposable gloves**

If you are asked to wear disposable gloves please observe the following rules:

- Wash your hands before you put on the gloves
- Use the gloves only once
- Dispose of the gloves in a designated waste container
- Wash your hands after removing the gloves.

#### **4.10 Lifting and Transporting**

Correct techniques should be used in lifting and transporting.



If you have not been trained in moving and handling you should not move any heavy weights or push wheelchairs. Moving and Handling training is provided for those who push wheelchairs. Until you have successfully completed such a course you should not push a patient in a wheelchair under any circumstances. Even when the course has been successfully completed volunteers must never help a patient into or out of a wheel chair.

#### **4.11 If in doubt ask.**

If you have any doubts about your capability to move an object then ask for some help but volunteers must NEVER attempt to lift or move patients.

#### **4.12 Machinery/Equipment**

If you are asked to use any machinery/equipment during your volunteer placement you MUST inform the voluntary services office to ensure this is within the scope of your role description. You should not train to use the equipment until authority to do so has been granted by the voluntary services office.

#### **4.13 Pregnancy**

There are certain areas within the Hospitals where it is inadvisable for pregnant women to enter, e.g. X-Ray areas. If you are pregnant then inform the person in charge of the department you are working in and the staff in the voluntary services office.

#### **4.14 Risk assessments**

Risk assessments are sometimes carried out to establish the risk associated with certain roles undertaken by volunteers.

All volunteers can request information regarding the risk assessment from the manager responsible for the ward or department or from the voluntary services office.





#### **4.15 Signing In and Out**

In order that your whereabouts are known, you are required to sign an attendance book before and after duty. This is of particular importance for fire safety purposes. If designated to work in one area do not wander from department to department unless authorised to do so. This attendance book will also be used to verify your attendance if you claim travel expenses.

#### **4.16 Signs and Notices**

These are displayed for the health and safety of employees, patients and others. Please make sure that you comply with the advice given on these.

### **5. HEALTH ISSUES**

#### **5.1**

Before starting as a volunteer, all volunteers must be 'health cleared' by the occupational health department. This involves a simple written questionnaire being completed and sent to Occupational Health who may contact you to discuss any medical issues. This is a confidential discussion.

#### **5.2**

Once you are accepted as a volunteer, you are a member of the team. If you are unable to report for duty because of sickness, please notify the manager you are working for, AND the voluntary services office, no later than two hours after your starting time.

It will be helpful for staff to be made aware of the nature of the illness and probable length of time you will be absent, however you are quite at liberty not to disclose this information if you would prefer not to.

#### **5.3**

If you are unwell and have sickness or diarrhoea then please do not return to the hospital until 48 hours has elapsed from your last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.



## **5.4**

The occupational health department will give any advice necessary regarding Immunisation/Health Tests. For further information regarding these, contact the voluntary services office.

## **5.5**

Should you be absent for a prolonged period of time or become ill whilst a volunteer, you should inform the voluntary services department. In some circumstances the occupational health department will be involved in determining whether you are fit to return to your duties or whether there are any restrictions to your full range of duties. The occupational health nurses see all staff, including volunteers, following any prolonged period of ill health or concerns about the physical or mental ability of any volunteer to carry out their duties. This is to ensure that volunteers do not place either themselves or our patients at risk. The meeting with occupational health is usually in the form of an informal chat.

# **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

## **6.1**

All volunteers must observe the rules of confidentiality, as described on the confidentiality form you are asked to sign. You may see and hear things of a confidential nature, including information about a patient's diagnosis and treatment. This information must not be divulged to, or discussed with, anyone other than the relevant staff and must NEVER be discussed with any person outside the Trust.

## **6.2**

A breach of confidentiality will result in termination of your voluntary placement. You should be aware that, in addition, any disclosure of confidential information could result in civil action for damages.

## **6.3**

In conversation with patients, volunteers should be careful to respect religious beliefs and avoid entering into any discussion on this subject.



## **6.4**

Volunteers must respect the right of every patient to privacy and dignity.

## **7. UNIFORMS/PERSONAL HYGIENE/APPEARANCE**

### **7.1**

All volunteers will be given a name badge, which we ask you to wear at all times when helping as a volunteer. This will be attached to a distinctive lanyard. Smart clothing must be worn at all times.

### **7.2**

As a matter of good personal hygiene you should ensure that you wash your hands after every trip to the toilet.

### **7.3**

You are advised to wear flat comfortable shoes: most volunteering involves some walking. Sandals or shoes with open toes are not practical and in clinical areas may be a Health and Safety hazard.

### **7.4**

In ward and clinical areas please observe the following rules: “Bare Below Elbows” follows national advice and is to aid the fight against hospital-associated infections.

- short sleeves (or long sleeves rolled up unless specified religious exemptions apply)
- no ties, wrist watch or jewellery other than a plain ring are to be worn whilst providing or undertaking procedures or if touching patients
- no false nails or polish to be worn
- long hair should be tied back off the shoulders and face

### **7.5**

It is important that volunteers look neat, tidy and presentable in order to promote patient & public confidence and trust.



## 7.6

Volunteer must wear their identification badge and lanyard at all times.

## 7.7

Volunteer should take note of their personal cleanliness and ensure they maintain good personal hygiene standards at all times.

# 8. INFECTION CONTROL

## 8.1

Hand washing is the single most important method of reducing the spread of infection. It is very important that people maintain high standards of hand hygiene if we want to prevent the spread of infection.

[Please take time to carefully read the following hand washing guide.](#)

### **Wet hands with warm water.**

Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces:

1. Rub hands palm to palm
2. Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand with fingers interlaced
3. Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced
4. Rub with back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked
5. Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand using a rotational movement
6. Rub backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.
7. Dry hands carefully.

## 8.2

### **Alcohol gel**

When using an alcohol rub, the preparation should be rubbed into all areas of the hands, again paying attention to the thumbs, fingertips, between the fingers and the backs of the hands until the hands feel dry.



Sufficient alcohol rub must be used to cover all areas of the hands. Hand washing guidelines are intended to help you understand the correct way to wash your hands.

### **8.3**

If you are handling food or helping in a ward or clinical area we would remind you to observe the rules of basic hygiene. These will be explained in greater depth in your induction period.

## **9. POLICE CHECKS AND CRIMINAL OFFENCES**

### **9.1**

All charges brought against you for any criminal offence, whether connected with your volunteer service or not, must be reported to the voluntary services office. This may not necessarily mean that you are not permitted to continue as a volunteer. However, upon discovery of any failure to disclose a conviction for a criminal offence will lead to the termination of your volunteering placement.

### **9.2**

All volunteers are subject to an enhanced criminals records check. Further advice regarding this can be obtained from the voluntary services office or Human Resources.

## **10. SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Before starting their placement all volunteers must have read relevant safeguarding leaflets. These will be given to you from the voluntary services department.

## **11. PERSONAL PROPERTY**

### **11.1**

#### **Personal Property:**

During the course of your service as a volunteer, the Trust will not normally accept any responsibility in respect of theft, loss, or damage to



personal property. You are advised not to bring anything of value and only as much money as you need for the shift.

## **11.2**

Lost items are usually handed in to the General Office.

## **11.3**

### **Gifts from patients:**

Volunteers must avoid encouraging friendships with patients that could lead to the patient wanting to make a gift of money or goods to the volunteer. Any such offers must be both refused and be reported to the manager of the area where you volunteer AND to the voluntary services office.

Volunteers must not visit patients or relatives at home even if invited to do so. If a volunteer does accept any money or goods from patients or relatives, then they are liable to having their placement terminated.

## **12. INSURANCE AND CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **12.1.**

You must notify the voluntary services office promptly of any change in your name, address, marital status, health status or next of kin, or any circumstances which may affect the Trust's insurance cover.

### **12.2**

Volunteers are covered by the Trust insurance only whilst undertaking approved duties as set out in the role description for the area in which they are placed.

## **13. REFRESHMENT CONCESSIONS**

### **13.1**

If you are volunteering for four hours or more in one shift, then you are entitled a meal/drink voucher (the rate is set by Trust). This will entitle you to a drink and towards the cost of a meal or sandwich.



The meal or sandwich must be obtained from the dining room (not including Subway), at DRI, staff dining room at Bassetlaw and Montagu. It is a concessionary voucher for you and cannot be exchanged for cash nor given to any other person.

It is expected that the food is consumed on the premises and not taken away from the hospital. The voucher can be collected from the cashier's office at DRI, general office at Bassetlaw and Montagu on presenting your name badge.

### **13.2**

If you look at the menus posted daily in the main staff area you will see there are usually options which are priced at the value of the voucher but may require payment for additional vegetables. In the dining room over the vegetables section there is a card explaining what constitutes a portion size. Reading this will give you an idea of the final cost of your meal.

### **13.3**

Salads are charged per item so checking the pricing list will ensure your serving is within the value of the voucher or if additional payment will be required.

### **13.4**

If you disagree with the cost of the meal then you can politely ask the cashier to explain how the charge has been raised but remember staff are only following instructions and have no discretion about the charging structure of meals.

### **13.5**

#### **Hot drink:**

In addition to any provided in the ward or clinic area, if you volunteer for a 3 hour shift or more then you are entitled to have a hot drink. You can use your drinks voucher at any of the coffee shops at DRI, the staff dining room at Bassetlaw and Montagu, (not including Costa or Subway).



You must wear your name badge when presenting the cashier with your voucher.

## **14. TRAVEL AND PARKING EXPENSES**

### **14.1**

If you choose to claim travel expenses, costs are reimbursed at nationally set public transport rates. This may change so as the voluntary staff what the current rates are. Mileage costs are reimbursed through the Finance department and are paid direct into your bank account. On production of a valid bus ticket, your name badge and details of your shift, bus fares will be reimbursed in cash by the cashiers department. Bus fares will not be reimbursed to volunteers who are entitled to a free bus pass.

### **14.2**

Payment of volunteer mileage rate does NOT imply any employer /employee relationship. The mileage rate is intended only to cover travel expenses incurred whilst undertaking voluntary activity on behalf of the Trust. Again this is reimbursed through the payroll system. You must complete the relevant expenses form in order to claim mileage allowance.

### **14.3**

The Trust does not take any responsibility whatsoever for the tax status of its volunteers. This is the sole responsibility of you as an individual. You are responsible for any tax position arising. The Trust does not undertake to log the total mileage of its volunteers – only that mileage incurred on Trust activity.

### **14.4**

It is your responsibility as a volunteer to inform your insurance company that the vehicle is being used to travel to and from the hospital in connection with volunteering and that mileage expenses are being paid. You will be solely responsible for any additional insurance premium raised by the insurers.





## **14.5**

The Trust provides a free park and ride service for Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to park at Doncaster Racecourse, Car Park A, on the corner of Ledger Way and Town Moor Avenue. A free shuttle bus runs a frequent service to Doncaster Royal Infirmary between 6.30am and 10.00pm and takes approximately five minutes.

At Bassetlaw Hospital a Permit System is in place, please see voluntary staff for more details. These are for the designated car park only. If you park in any other car park, the parking expense will not be covered by the Trust.

## **15. PERSONAL FILE**

The voluntary services office will keep a personal file for each volunteer. The file will contain your application form, health check approval (but not personal health information, which is confidential to the occupational health department) and other information relevant to your work as a volunteer including placements and training.

## **16. SMOKING ON SITE**

The Trust has a policy of no smoking on its premises and on its grounds. Volunteers found smoking on Trust premises will have their placement terminated.

## **17. PROBLEMS SOLVING PROCEDURES**

### **17.1**

The Trust aims towards a constructive atmosphere in which volunteers feel comfortable in their role, have a sound relationship with other volunteers and feel that their rights and responsibilities are being respected. It is important that problems are dealt with fairly, openly and consistently and with this aim there are problem solving procedures in place.



## **17.2**

In all cases volunteers have the right to be accompanied at meetings on these issues by another volunteer, a member of staff or a friend none of whom should be directly involved in the matter.

## **17.3**

In all cases volunteers can ask to discuss these issues with a Human Resources advisor.

## **17.4**

If a volunteer has a complaint about the Trust, a member of staff or another volunteer:

### **17.4.1**

Most problems can be solved informally through discussions. But if this is not the case the volunteer should raise the matter formally with the voluntary services office. If the complaint is against the voluntary services staff, then the volunteer should request a meeting with their line manager.

### **17.4.2**

If the issue is not resolved informally then it should be put in writing to either the voluntary services office or their manager. The matter should be dealt with within 21 days.

### **17.4.3**

If the issue is still not resolved, a meeting involving the volunteer, the voluntary services office and their manager will be called with a view to resolving the matter.

### **17.4.4**

If the matter remains unresolved then the volunteer or the manager can refer the matter to the Director of Nursing for a final review and will receive a response within 21 days.



## **17.5**

### **If there is a problem with the behaviour of a volunteer:**

#### **17.5.1**

Again, hopefully this can be resolved informally. Many 'problems' are simply due to training needs, a lack of If it is felt necessary a caution may be issued, with documented steps agreed to improve conduct.

#### **17.5.2**

If the issue is still not resolved a meeting involving the volunteer, and a member of the voluntary services staff will be called. This may result in a formal written caution, with the understanding that should a similar incident occur the volunteer will be asked to leave.

#### **17.5.3**

If a volunteer is believed to have behaved in a manner that has or could have seriously affected the organisation – for example theft or violence the matter will be reported to the police and the permission for the placement will be immediately suspended pending investigation. Following investigation there will be a meeting between the volunteer, and a member of the voluntary services staff and their manager. The volunteer will be able to put their case, and a decision will be made within 21 days. If the complaint against the volunteer is upheld the volunteer will be excluded from volunteering.

#### **17.5.4**

Following an exclusion the volunteer can refer the matter to the Director of Nursing for a final review and will receive a response within 21 days.

## **18. SUPPORT MECHANISMS**

### **18.1**

The Trust provides support for staff and volunteers. Every employee and volunteer has the right to work or help without fear of harassment or abuse, whether on the grounds of sex, race, age, colour, disability, or



sexual orientation. Each one of us has the responsibility to protect that right.

The Trust is committed to eliminating personal harassment and creating an environment where employees and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect.

## **18.2**

Anyone whose conduct towards another employee or volunteer is intimidating, annoying, hurtful, malicious or unwelcome may be guilty of harassment. It is the impact of the conduct and not the intention, which determines whether harassment has taken place.

## **18.3**

Harassment may include: Bullying, unwelcome remarks or suggestions, malicious gossip, practical gossip, practical jokes, offensive literature or pictures, gestures, unnecessary physical contact or physical assault.

## **18.4**

As part of the policy, eliminating personal harassment, the role of harassment contacts has been developed.

These are members of staff who have volunteered to take on this role to support others through the information stages of the policy. There are leaflets about their role available throughout the Trust.

## **19. APPLYING FOR EMPLOYMENT**

A volunteer may apply for paid employment within the Trust. Volunteers are able to apply for jobs advertised as 'Internal Applicants Only' after a period of six months as a volunteer. All vacant posts are advertised on the notice boards located throughout the Trust. Each advert will indicate where to apply for the post.



## 20. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### 21.1

The aim of the Trust is to provide health services with a focus on quality and service and to empower the workforce, including volunteers to:

- identify problems
- communicate effectively with patients, and staff and any visitors to the Trust work productively in a team environment.
- work productively in a team environment.

### 21.2

The philosophies that underline these aims are “continuous development” and “continuous improvement”.

**Continuous development** is defined as self-directed, lifelong learning. For this to be successful there must be a means of systematic assessment. This gives the opportunity for skills training and personal development, in line with the aims of the organisation. Staff of the Voluntary Services Office will also discuss with you, your contribution to the service.

**Continuous improvement** is about getting it right - first time, every time - every day. Every ward or department within the Trust must focus not only on meeting, but striving to exceed the expectations of its customers. The importance of continuous improvement must be reinforced every day. All staff and volunteers are encouraged to think ‘How can I make it better?’ Volunteers will not be placed within the same department as other members of their family who are staff, patients or volunteers.



## 21. EX EMPLOYEES

### 22.1

Please note that former members of staff who return as volunteers will not be placed in the area in which they worked until a period of one year has elapsed from the time they finished working in that area.

**22.2** Former staff must take care to remember that they are acting as volunteers and must remain within the limitations of the role description for their placement.

## 22. LEAVING

### 24.1

The Trust name badge must be returned for security reasons

### 24.2

Should you wish to leave please speak to the voluntary services staff as soon as possible in order that a replacement can be found to maintain the role.

The manager may speak to you about your experience of volunteering in that area or any problems identified or suggestions to improve the environment for volunteers will help to improve volunteering standards. This is an opportunity for you to provide feedback for continuous improvement.

## 23. TERMINATION OF PLACEMENT

Possible grounds for termination of placement may include, but are not limited to the following:

- gross misconduct or insubordination;
- being under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- theft of property or misuse of Trust equipment or materials,
- smoking on site;
- abuse or mistreatment of staff, patients or visitors;



- failure to abide by Trust policies and procedures;
- failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance;
- failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

## 24. HOW TO CONTACT THE VOLUNTARY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**By email:** [dbth.volunteering@nhs.net](mailto:dbth.volunteering@nhs.net)

**By telephone:** 01302 644403

**By post:**

Voluntary Services Office  
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Doncaster Royal Infirmary  
Armthorpe Road Doncaster  
DN2 5LT



