

Community Health Volunteers

Volunteering for Health is a £10 million national programme to show how volunteering can be a vital part of delivering health and social care and supporting people in need now and in the future. Volunteering for Health looks to link volunteers with their local hospital sites, assist people in their hospital stay and with their return home.

The goal is to link people in hospitals with their communities developing an environment where volunteers will be able to move more freely between the hospital setting and out into community organisations to better support patient wellbeing without the need for completing multiple sign-ups.

Volunteer Role Description

This is an exciting opportunity for volunteers to support individuals across health and community settings. It is a fantastic opportunity for volunteers to help shape the role and build the way we think about volunteering within health and social care.

The Volunteering for Health volunteers will provide a vital bridge between hospital and the community, supporting patients, alongside hospital staff and community organisations, to improve their wellbeing and enhance the patient journey.

Our focus is on supporting local people during their time in hospital and continuing to support them out in the community. Volunteers will be visiting and befriending individuals on the wards, learning about their needs, and continuing to support the people as they transition back into their homes by connecting them to community services and groups.

This can include support with confidence building, moving furniture to allow for hospital equipment to be put into a home, arranging shopping or medicine collections, and developing social networks by engaging with local community resources.

This role is very diverse and gives the opportunity for volunteers to make this role their own whilst participating in a wide variety of tasks and responsibilities.

Volunteer Specification

No experience of health care and patient support is necessary as any required training will be provided.

Volunteers should:

- Be able to communicate well with other people.
- Be caring, patient and non-judgmental of others.
- Be able to understand and maintain confidentiality.
- Be able to comply with volunteering policies in every aspect of the role.
- Be flexible in your approach to supporting individuals with varying needs.

Volunteers will be required to provide two references, and we will need to complete a DBS check for this role.

Tasks and Responsibilities

Volunteers will be working with people while in hospital and continuing to work with them during their recovery for up to 6-8 weeks.

Due to the flexible nature of the role, volunteers may be asked to help in a range of ways. These could include:

- Talking to/befriending patients in a ward.
- Providing social activities for patients within a ward.
- Having a cuppa and a chat with people on the ward.
- Accompanying patients for a walk outside or around the hospital site.
- Helping to make a home ready for someone leaving hospital.
- Supporting with shopping or medicine collections during someone's recovery time at home.
- Accompanying people to community groups or activities to help with anxiety and confidence building.

This could include new ideas or activities that a volunteer wants to bring to the role.

Time Commitment

An estimated minimum time commitment of around 2 hours per week is expected.

This is a flexible role which can allow for the time commitment to be shaped around the individual needs of the people being supported and the availability of volunteers.

Support for Volunteers

All volunteers will receive relevant induction and training.

Expenses: Volunteers will be reimbursed any expenses for travel requirements for any activities that are carried out as part of their Volunteering for Health role.

Wellbeing: Staff will complete follow-up calls with volunteers to ensure that you are safe and happy with the arrangements for their role and that they are comfortable with the work that they are being asked to undertake.

Should any volunteer feel they need support through counselling or wellbeing sessions from a qualified professional, volunteers are able to access free support through the Care Coins scheme:

<https://cornwallvsf.org/connecting/projects/care-coins/>

If you have any concerns that need reporting, please follow the processes outlined in the volunteering policy.

Training

Training will be made available to all volunteers, through the NHS e-learning portal (<https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk>) and with the Cornwall VSF Learning Academy (<https://cornwallvsf.org/supporting/training/>).

Essential Training

Due to the nature of the role and the vulnerability of the people that volunteers will be supporting, there will be some training that volunteers will need to complete before they can begin their roles. This training includes subjects such as:

- Safeguarding
- Data Protection
- Setting Boundaries

Additional Training Offer

In addition to the mandatory training, some volunteers may also be interested other training to enhance their skills. For example:

- Mental Health Awareness
- Mental Health First Aid
- Information, Advice & Guidance

Through the Volunteering for Health programme, we are also able to offer funded places on accredited courses that align with the activities that volunteers will be performing.

Lone Working

Due to the nature of this role, there are occasions when volunteers will be working alone, sometimes in people's homes and in rural areas. Given some forethought and a few simple precautions, the risks can be reduced to a minimum.

Volunteers will be expected to follow the Lone Working policy.

Volunteers Benefits

By signing up as a Volunteering for Health volunteer, you will gain the following benefits:

- Enhanced CV.
- Access potential NHS career pathways.
- Learn new skills.
- Meet new people.
- Build confidence and self-esteem.
- Give back to your local community.
- Opportunity to help co-design the future of the Volunteering for Health programme.

Contact

If you have any questions or concerns about your volunteering role, please contact a member of the Volunteering for Health team:

Email: vfh@volunteercornwall.org.uk

Telephone: 01872 265307