Volunteer Role Description

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| **Role name** | **Mealtime Companion Volunteer** |
| **Purpose summary** | To support patient recovery through encouraging eating and drinking |
| **Line Manager** | Ward Sister / Nurse in Charge with support from Volunteer Services |
| **Main point of**  **Contact/supervisor** | Ward Staff - Designated point of contacts will be appointed by the Ward Manager on each ward. |
| **Ward/gate** | Various |
| **Commitment level** | 2-3 hours weekly, for a minimum of 6 months |
| **Where** | Southmead Hospital – Wards in the Brunel Building or Elgar House |
| **When** | Shifts available 7 days a week. Shift times are a minimum length of: 12pm-2pm, 5.30pm-7pm |
| **Description of duties & core tasks** | **This role strictly does not involve feeding or lifting of patients**   * Report to ward manager or nurse in charge on arrival; they will introduce you to a healthcare assistant (HCA) or registered nurse who will take you to a designated patient to support. The HCA will check that it is appropriate for you to support the patient at that current time. They will also update you on any relevant information they may already know about the patient that could be useful. * Introduce yourself to the patient and ask if they are happy for you to support them. * Ask a member of staff to transport the patient to a communal dining area if available and appropriate. Do not lift the patient. * Tidy and clean with a Clinell wipe the patients table ready for meal time. * Through conversation find out likes, dislikes, and dietary requirements of the patient. If you notice any discrepancies with their order notify a staff member. * Position trays, cutlery, cups etc. on tables so that patients can easily access them. * Encourage the patient to wash their hands before eating by using a Clinell hand wipe, assist with opening packet. * Ensure food and drink is within easy reach. * Make sure the patient has everything they need once their meal is served. * Cut up food for the patient where required. * Verbally encourage the patient to eat and drink themselves. Do not feed the patient; this is a specialist role for a qualified member of staff to do. If a patient requires feeding, notify a HCA, who will direct you to an alternative patient to support. * Spot ways to make the mealtime easier for the patient, e.g. opening packets. * If available, request adapted cutlery for patients who could benefit. * Help the patient to complete the menu for their next meal. * Spot simple ways to make the patient more comfortable during mealtimes, e.g. requesting an extra blanket if someone is cold * Support the patient to complete their own Nutrition and Hydration Record Sheets as necessary. * Liaise with clinical staff to seek help for the patient if they need it. * Feed back to your supervisor about your experiences and complete the mealtime support survey (survey in development). * Compliance with all infection control procedures and guidelines shared with the volunteer.   Offer companionship to the patient if they request this during their mealtime or afterwards. You can also engage with the patient with various activities e.g. reading, doing puzzles. If you would like to do a creative or a musical activity please consult Volunteer Services so that the activities align with Fresh Arts Guidelines. |
| **Skills, experience, attitudes, and qualities needed:** | **Essential:**   * Excellent listening skills and a non-judgmental attitude * A friendly and open manner * To feel comfortable in an acute hospital environment * To adhere to the Trust values of treating others with respect at all times * Understand the importance to stay within the boundaries of the role description   **Desirable:**   * Experience working with people with cognitive impairments or dementia   Experience working with people with autism or a learning disability |
| **Training and information provided** | * Specialist nutrition and hydration training for volunteers, including supporting patients with visual impairments and dementia. * Volunteer mandatory training programme * Department orientation and induction * Shadowing induction sessions with an existing volunteer or staff member demonstrating the role. * Ongoing supervision and support * Ongoing updates and information |
| **Challenges of the position** | * Coming into hospital can be an anxious time for patients and their relatives. Sometimes this may make people less tolerant than they might usually be and they may come across as impolite. It is important that the volunteer remains calm and listens politely and seeks staff support immediately if required. * Potentially supporting patients with cognitive impairments or dementia (around 25% of inpatients at NBT have dementia). |
| **Boundaries of the position** | * The patient is at the heart of everything we do. This role is to improve the patient experience and supporting the patient during meal times and providing companionship is the key objective of this role. This role will not involve tasks to support the housekeeper. * A Volunteer **must not**: * More or lift patients * Move or lift any heavy equipment or furniture. * Feed any patients or administer fluids. * Use dangerous equipment or machinery. * Use or handle drugs, poisons and other substances hazardous to health. * Come into contact with sharps, soiled dressings etc., bodily fluids or items likely to spread infection. * Engage in any clinical activity or offer any clinical advice. * Engage in the personal care e.g. washing, dressing or assisting in toileting of patients. * Handle money that belongs to a patient, without their express permission for tasks such as buying items from the shop. * Handle any other patient’s personal effects without permission * Read patient’s medical notes or documentation. * Go home with a patient or go to their home. * Run their own activity without the consent and arrangement with the relevant department, for example, volunteers must not play musical instruments within the hospital setting without the consent of the Fresh Arts Music Manager to ensure they meet the requirements of the Fresh Arts quality framework. * To maintain confidentiality regarding information seen or heard or shared, but appropriate escalation when indicated. * Maintaining a professional, non-judgmental and compassionate attitude at all times and be mindful not to overtly share personal religious, cultural or political views. * There will never be an occasion where it is appropriate to give your personal contact details to patients or become ‘friends’ on social media. * To be aware of your own support needs and seek supervision when needed or suggested. * Any concerns you may experience as a volunteer (due to what you see or hear) should be referred to your Supervisor or Line Manager. Alternatively you can contact the Volunteer Services Manager or a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (a reporting concerns process will be shared during induction). * ID and uniform must be worn at all times |
| **Reimbursement of expenses** | * Travel expenses to and from the hospital can be reimbursed * Meal vouchers for use in the staff Vu restaurant are offered if volunteering for over 4 consecutive hours in one day |
| **Potential benefits to the volunteer** | * Gain practical volunteer experience and learn about the healthcare environment * Develop skills and experience that may be transferable to paid employment, such as working as a part of a team * Opportunity to help/support patients during a difficult time * References can be provided on completion of three months volunteering, if required * Ongoing support and supervision sessions * Making friends with other volunteers and meeting new people * Awards in recognition of volunteering contribution * Light refreshments when on duty * Free parking |
| **Commitment to health and safety** | It is expected that you take care during your role to avoid accidents to yourself and to others, and to co-operate in maintaining your place of volunteering in a tidy and safe condition, thereby minimising risk. All volunteers must follow the reporting concerns procedure for any breaches of security or matters of concern. |
| **Commitment to no smoking** | As an NHS employer, we have a duty to our staff, volunteers, and patients to protect them from the health hazard that smoking represents. Consequently, in line with the public health white paper, *Choosing Health*, the current policy will be that smoking will not be permitted anywhere on Trust property including all buildings, grounds and within leased/owned vehicles of the Trust. This applies to all staff, patients, visitors and volunteers of the Trust. Failure by volunteers to comply with this requirement may result in recourse to the disciplinary procedure. |
| **Commitment to equal opportunities** | North Bristol NHS Trust has given its full commitment to the adoption and promotion of the key principles of equal opportunities contained within current legislation and the Trust’s Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.  All volunteers hold personal responsibility for the application of this policy on a day-to-day basis and should not undertake any acts of discriminatory practice during the course of their volunteer placement. Similarly, all volunteers have a responsibility to highlight any potentially discriminatory practice to their line manager.  Information about the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy.is available in the Volunteer Welcome Pack. |
| **Commitment to the prevention of harassment and bullying** | We believe that all people, whether volunteers, staff, patients or visitors, are entitled to an environment in which the dignity of the individual is respected.  We are also firmly committed to promoting an organisational culture which values diversity and equality of opportunity and to preventing discrimination in all aspects of its employment practices and services. We regard harassment and bullying as totally unacceptable forms of behaviour that will not be tolerated or condoned. |
| **Commitment to safeguarding** | North Bristol Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults and to protecting them from all risks of harm. The organisation expects all volunteers to abide to children and adult safeguarding policies and procedures. The trust expects volunteers to be dementia aware, where applicable. All volunteers are expected to share this commitment. |
| **Recruitment information** | You will be asked to provide two independent references from people who have known you for more than three years (this cannot be a family member).  You will also need to have a standard Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for this role, which will be paid for by the Trust.  All volunteer roles are subject to a 6 week trial period, after which an informal review will take place. |
| **For more information contact** | Hannah Spawls, Volunteer Manager  0117 414 0110 |
| **Date approved**  **Review date**  **By whom** | **6/10/21**  **6/10/22**  **Gifty Markey, Head of Patient Experience** |