Volunteer Role Description

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| **Role name** | **Patient Befriender Volunteer** |
| **Purpose summary** | Provide company and companionship to suitable patients, spending time with them on the wards, engaging in conversation or activities, with the support and supervision of ward staff.  Patient Befriender volunteers will enhance the patient experience and help to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.  This role can be combined alongside the mealtime Companion volunteer role. |
| **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** | 3-4 hours, weekly or fortnightly for a minimum of 6 months |
| **Where** | Southmead Hospital – Wards in the Brunel Building or Elgar House |
| **When** | Shifts available 7 days a week. Approximately 10.00am-2.00pm or 4.00pm-7.00pm |
| **Description of duties & core tasks** | * Speak to the nurse in charge upon arrival, who will provide information on what patient to offer befriending support * Provide companionship to patients by talking and listening to them * Encourage patients to participate in social and recreational activities, such as reading (this could be reading to patients or encouraging and supporting them to read to themselves), doing a jigsaw, sharing a crossword, playing cards, or other appropriate activities that appeal to the patient * If you would like to do a creative or a musical activity with the patient, please consult Volunteer Services so that the activities align with Fresh Arts Guidelines * Prompt patients to make their menu choices for the next day’s meals and recording these on their menu request form * Chat with carers and signposting to the hospital’s carers liaison service * Assist patients to fill in patient feedback forms when discharged * Buy items from the hospital shop on the patient’s behalf, with permission from the patient and knowledge of the nurse in charge * Notify the appropriate staff member if the patient would like refreshments, or assistance * Escalate any concerns immediately to a member of staff * Compliance with all infection control procedures and guidelines shared with the volunteer |
| **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** | * Volunteer mandatory training programme * Department orientation and induction * Specialist training if required, such as Dementia Level 2 * 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), additional training and support will be provided. |
| **Boundaries of the position** | * The patient is at the heart of everything we do. This role is to improve the patient experience providing companionship is the key objective of this role. **This role will not involve tasks to support the housekeeper.** * A Volunteer **must not**: * Move 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** |