

**ACTIVITIES & VOLUNTARY SERVICES
OPERATIONAL POLICY
FOR
EAST HAM CARE CENTRE**

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REFERENCES

REFERENCE NO.	REFERENCE / AUTHOR	PAGE
1 & 3	National Service Framework - for Older People 2001	5 & 8
2	COMPACT Volunteering: A Code of Good Practice (available from www.thecompact.org.uk)	6
4	Faith Gibson 'Reminiscence & Recall – A Guide to Good Practice' (published by Age Concern England)	11
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1.0 AIMS OF THE SERVICE

The aims of the service are:

- i) To provide appropriate, planned and culturally relevant activities for the frail elderly residents within Adult Services, catering for the needs of both continuing care patients and patients here for rehabilitation or respite care.
- ii) Through assessment and profiling, to tailor activities and social opportunities to individual needs, depending on ability and preferences.
- iii) To work with other disciplines of staff to provide a package of care which embraces the holistic approach adopted by Adult Services.
- iv) To raise awareness of the needs of older people as part of the community by involving and informing volunteers, work experience students, and student nurses in the work of the service.

These aims are in line with the NSF for Older People Standard 2 on person-centred care. Part of the rationale states that older people [and their carers] should receive person-centred care and services which respect them as individuals and which are arranged around their needs.¹

2.0 SET UP OF THE SERVICE

2.1 Activity Centre and Facilities

The Activities & Voluntary Services Department is housed on the ground floor of the East Ham Care Centre and in addition to offices and storage area, comprises the following:

Main Activity Room – Providing a planned programme of activities from Monday to Friday each week for residents able to leave the ward environment.

Garden Access – One of the landscaped gardens with a large patio and seating area. can be accessed from the main activity room

Multi-Sensory Room – Houses a variety of equipment to carry out sensory sessions [see *Section 7.4.2 'Multi-Sensory Room'*]

Hairdressing Salon – Used by visiting hairdressers offering discounted hairdressing services for residents and also by staff or relatives with residents [see *Section 7.8 'Hairdressing Service'*]

2.2 Staff Members

There are currently four paid staff members in the team:

Activities & Voluntary Services Manager	-	Band 6	-	1.0 wte
Residents' Activities Organisers	-	Band 4	-	2 x 1.0 wte
Residents' Activities Assistant	-	Band 3	-	0.83 wte

2.3 Policies, Procedures & Action Plans

As part of Adults Bed & Day Services, all relevant Trust policies apply to the service.

Specific procedures and Action Plans for the service are in place which would be implemented in particular circumstances, e.g. the Heatwave Action Plan. These outline the changes to service provision staff must carry out during these periods. All Activities Team members are to remain familiar with these Action Plans and any subsequent revisions.

¹ National Service Framework – for Older People Standard Two (2.1)

Activities & Voluntary Services Operational Policy for East Ham Care Centre – Draft Revision
Janice Fenech, Activities & Voluntary Services Manager – January 2007

Any reference to Newham Primary Care Trust should now be read as referring to East London NHS Foundation Trust

2.4 Training

All staff must undertake Safeguarding Adults and Mental Capacity Act training as well as all Trust mandatory training. Other relevant training is undertaken as appropriate.

3.0 ROLE OF THE STAFF

Members of the Activities Team have a unique role within the Trust. Their main function is to provide culturally appropriate social and recreational activities for the residents. Team members also need to be aware of residents' emotional and spiritual needs and provide support where possible, and, in line with all other staff, to advocate for those residents unable to do so for themselves. Team members also supervise volunteers and work experience students working with the department and therefore must be aware of their needs and support them in carrying out their voluntary role.

3.1 Activities & Voluntary Services Manager

Job Summary – To be responsible for the Activities & Voluntary Services Department in organising, implementing and evaluating activities for the elderly residents of East Ham Care Centre. To directly manage all members of the Activities Team. To actively recruit volunteers and encourage work experience students within the department. To promote the relevance of activities for older people to other agencies on behalf of the Trust.

3.2 Residents' Activities Organisers

Job Summary – To assist the Activities & Voluntary Services Manager to implement planned programmes of activities, both within the Activity Centre and residents rooms, having assessed resident's individual needs. To supervise the Residents' Activities Assistant, volunteers and work experience students as requested by the Activities & Voluntary Services Manager. To deputise in a general capacity for the Activities & Voluntary Services Manager during periods of absence.

3.3 Residents' Activities Assistant

Job Summary – To assist the Residents' Activities Organisers to implement planned programmes of activities, both within the Activity Centre and residents rooms in line with resident's assessment. To assist the Residents' Activities Organisers in supervising volunteers and work experience students, as requested by the Activities & Voluntary Services Manager. To deputise for the Residents' Activities Organisers in their absence.

3.4 Restrictions For All Activities Team Members

The roles do not include:

- Any nursing duties, e.g. washing or dressing residents, or taking them to the toilet
- Any manual handling of residents with the exception of pushing residents in wheelchairs in order to accommodate their participation in the planned activity, having first undertaken the appropriate training in line with the risk assessment for this task
- Assisting with residents meals unless part of an activity session, e.g. coffee morning/afternoon tea, meals on outings or as part of a one-to-one session with a particular individual and included in the planned programme
- Escorting residents to out-patients appointments
- Escorting residents off-site without a nurse escort with the following exceptions:
 - a) When the resident is being taken to visit a friend or relative at a local hospital or nursing home where there are nursing staff present
 - b) When visiting a local venue within near walking distance of the EHCC where nursing assistance can be summoned quickly if required.

4.0 ACTIVITIES VOLUNTEERS

The role of the volunteer is a very important one. The aim of the Compact on Volunteering between the Government and the Voluntary and Community sector is to enable more people to become involved in the varied forms of voluntary activity that are a vital part of active citizenship and offer them the necessary support.² In spending time with older people resident with this Trust, volunteers can enhance residents' lives by helping them to continue enjoying their hobbies and interests and by offering companionship. This can be particularly important to the very frail or terminally ill. The role can often be challenging, but is also worthwhile and extremely rewarding.

Volunteers are, in essence, invited into the resident's home. The residents who live here have varying needs and it is essential that volunteers have the necessary skills and abilities in order to carry out the role.

4.1 Eligible Applicants

Applicants should:

- Be over 16 years of age
- Have the ability to understand and maintain confidentiality
- Have good communication and listening skills
- Be able to speak and understand basic English (the ability to speak additional languages is also desirable as we wish to represent all areas of the community)
- Be aware of body language and be able to maintain good eye contact when dealing with residents
- Be able to form relationships and enjoy the company of others
- Have a good standard of personal hygiene

4.2 Selection Procedure

Applicants will be selected subject to consideration of the following:

- Completed application form
- Interview with Activities & Voluntary Services Manager
- Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance following completion of a disclosure form
- Health clearance by the Occupational Health Department, following submission of a completed health questionnaire
- 1 reference

4.3 Information /Training Given To Volunteers

All volunteers will receive the following, however, should they have an interest in a particular area or would like more information, they are encouraged to ask while here.

- Copy of 'Information for Activities Volunteers' – contains Health & Safety policy.
- A Health & Safety briefing on the first day
- Experience of working with older people in a care environment
- Opportunity to build on communication, team-working and relationship-building skills
- The opportunity to take part in more formal training sessions where possible
- All volunteers to attend a fire lecture annually
- *Optional* - Basic instruction in assisting an elderly wheelchair-user on-site (suitability for carrying out this task will be assessed by department manager or other team member). Further training on handling a wheelchair off-site will be given to individuals escorting on outings. A copy of 'Assisting an Elderly Wheelchair-User' [See Appendix 4] is given to keep for reference.

² COMPACT Volunteering: a Code of Good Practice – Compact on relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community sector in England

4.4 Basic Role of the Volunteer

- Befriending residents, spending time with them either as part of a group or on a one-to-one basis.
- Assisting residents to take part in various leisure and recreational activities, aiding them only as much as necessary in order to help them to maintain their independence and build their self-esteem.

4.5 Other Tasks

These are optional for those unable to carry out them for any reason:

- Pushing residents in their wheelchairs, or escorting those able to walk, to and from the activity areas (suitability will be assessed as previously stated)
- Setting out and clearing away the activity equipment.
- Making tea or other refreshments for the residents as required.
- Escorting residents on outings under supervision
- Assisting at functions and events.

4.6 Restrictions

- Volunteers cannot undertake any nursing duties, e.g. taking residents to the toilet, assisting them with washing and dressing.
- Volunteers cannot lift or transfer residents under any circumstances.
- Volunteers cannot assist residents with eating or drinking unless they require only minimal help, e.g. cutting up of food, supporting a cup.
- Volunteers cannot escort residents off-site unless accompanied by a member of staff.
- Volunteers cannot observe residents during any nursing or clinical procedure unless previously sanctioned by the Matron or senior nurse and agreed by the resident.

4.7 References/Certificates

References will be supplied on request, though it may not be possible to do so for those who remain as a volunteer for a very short period of time, as it is then difficult to assess the volunteer's level of ability in order to give an informed reference.

Certificates will also be issued on request. Special certificates are issued for long-service i.e. completing 1 or more years as a volunteer.

4.8 Volunteer Expenses

There is no monetary reward given to volunteers, however certain out of pocket expenses are refundable.

- Bus fares – these are refundable up to a maximum of £4.00 per day on production of bus tickets or one-day travelcards
- Meal vouchers – These are issued to volunteers attending for a full day and can be exchanged in the dining room for food/drinks to the value of £2.50. Volunteers escorting on an outing longer than four hours will be refunded £2.50 towards the cost of their lunch during the trip on production of a valid receipt.

4.9 Identity Badges

All volunteers will be issued with an identity badge. For security reasons, these are kept in the Activities Department and issued on a daily basis. These must be worn while on site and returned at the end of each day's attendance.

4.10 Termination of Services

All volunteers are appointed on a one-month trial basis initially, with a meeting at the end of this period with the Activities & Voluntary Services Manager or one of the Activities Team for both parties to discuss its continuation or otherwise. Volunteers are of course free to leave at any time but we ask that 2 weeks notice be given as a courtesy to avoid disruption of the service given to residents. Any misconduct is dealt with in the same manner as members of staff and in the event of a serious misdemeanour, the volunteer would be asked to leave.

5.0 ROLE OF WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS

Work experience students on placement with the department are often those hoping for a career in the medical field. They are keen to experience working in a care centre environment with an opportunity to spend time with patients and healthcare professionals.

All students, whatever their future career plans, have an opportunity to develop their communication, team-working and relationship-building skills. We undertake to provide them with a meaningful role, to assist them in expanding their knowledge and to provide them with adequate support and supervision.

5.1 Referral / Selection Procedure

Most placements are arranged by staff at local colleges or through other organisations and references are not therefore required. Some students from other areas may approach us directly for an 'own-find' placement but will then require a reference.

Placements may be terminated at any time if proving unsatisfactory or in the event of a serious misdemeanour.

All placements are subject to the following:

- Referral letter from college/Organisation
- Interview with Activities & Voluntary Services Manager
- Completed Work Experience Placement Form
- CRB clearance except for under 16's substantially supervised during placement
- Health Clearance from Occupational Health Department

All work experience students will receive the following:

- Booklet on 'Guidelines for Work Experience Students'
- Health & Safety briefing on the first day
- Information on the importance and benefits of activities for older people
- *Optional* - Training session on assisting an elderly wheelchair user (suitability for carrying out this task will be assessed by department manager or other team member)
- Certificate of Attendance at the end of a satisfactory placement

5.2 Basic Role

The role is essentially the same as for volunteers, with some differences in restrictions and supervision.

5.2.1 'Trident' Work Experience Placements

Placements are arranged by Trident which is part of the Newham Education Business Partnership. Students are primarily those in Year 10 at local schools and are aged between 14 – 16 years old, though Trident have now begun to place some Sixth Form students.

These students will have a high level of supervision and will not undertake room-based activities with residents unless accompanied by a member of the Activities Team.

They are issued with a Work Experience Diary from Trident prior to their placement, which records their experiences and contains tasks for them to complete. The placement supervisor (a designated member of the Activities Team) is required to monitor their progress, sign the diary daily and to complete an evaluation at the end of the placement.

5.2.2 'Health & Social Care' or 'NewCad' Student Placements

Placements are arranged by the designated Work Experience Co-ordinator from each college. These students are generally aged 16-17 years old and interested in a career in some area of Health Care, though not necessarily hospital-based, e.g. dentists or social workers.

These students will have the same level of supervision as new volunteers, and may undertake one-to-one room based activities with individuals where appropriate.

These students may have projects or assignments to complete while here, and sessions may be arranged with other staff members/departments to give them more information.

5.2.3 'Access to Nursing' Student Placements

Placements are arranged by the designated Work Experience Co-ordinator from each college. The students are aged 18+, often being mature students with other commitments who may need some flexibility in hours.

These students also carry out the same role as a volunteer for the duration of their placement, but may also be able to combine the experience of developing their interpersonal skills with some practical hands-on care on the wards by arrangement with Matron.

These students usually have assignments to complete while here, and sessions are arranged with other staff members/departments to give them more information.

5.2.4 Placements from Other Organisations

These are arranged directly with the organisation concerned and students/trainees carry out the same role as a volunteer with the same level of supervision. These students are often undertaking NVQ's or retraining schemes associated with the Department of Employment and may come from all age groups and levels of experience.

The information they require while here may depend on the nature of the course they are doing.

6.0 **ACTIVITIES LINK NURSES**

Each ward unit has one or more designated activities link nurses whose role is to provide an important bridge between the ward staff and the activities team. By exchanging information, we can gain a fuller picture of the requirements of the individual and work together in meeting those needs.

6.1 **Role of the Activities Link Nurse**

Although by no means solely responsible, the following is a summary of some of the areas in which link nurses can take a lead in achieving this aim:

- Providing information on resident's condition e.g. currently on bed-rest, able to resume activities, sudden illness, etc.
- Identifying problems or factors that may affect resident's participation in activities e.g. always sleepy in the morning, has a regular visitor, etc.
- Taking the lead on ward-based activities and advising and supporting volunteers on the ward

- Taking the lead on preparing for resident's outing e.g. ensuring suitable clothes, clean wheelchair, residents' hairdressing arranged in advance etc.
- Checking on ward's activity equipment (where supplied) and informing activity team of any missing or damaged items for replacement

Activities Team members will arrange to meet regularly to discuss issues with link nurses either in a group, where possible, or through 1to1 sessions.

7.0 RESIDENTS ACTIVITIES

In our aim to provide a holistic approach to the care of older people, the provision of leisure and recreational activities are essential and can provide wide-ranging benefits, especially for those unable to influence their lives in other areas. It is recognised that any form of social, physical or mental activity is good for health and well-being.³ Faith Gibson has noted that while it is important to provide good physical care for older people, care environments can also help people maintain their sense of worth, self-esteem and personal identity by treating each person as a unique individual and engaging them in conversation and interesting, stimulating activities.⁴ We encourage all residents, whether here for continuing care or for shorter-term rehabilitation or respite, to take part in some form of activity or socialization as appropriate for them. However, we recognise that activities are available to be enjoyed by residents and not forced upon them.

7.1 Assessments

A Lifestyle Profile based on information and assessment is built up for each individual to determine their particular needs. As Andrew Norris has observed, being familiar with a resident's background and lifestyle, recognising them as an individual, can help them overcome the traumatic transition of coming into care, maintain quality of life and is particularly important for those unable to communicate easily.⁵

7.1.1 Activity Profiles

In order to provide the level and range of activities tailored to the individual, an informal chat is held with each resident as they are admitted and a detailed profile compiled of their needs and preferences. If they are unable to give this information themselves, where appropriate a questionnaire can be sent to a friend or relative, who can provide it on their behalf. Additional information is taken from the residents' nursing notes. This process is essential in determining the needs of the individual

7.1.2 Sensory Awareness

For those unable to take part in or respond to general activities, an assessment as to the level of sensory awareness is made by one of the Activity Team. Their observations can be used to form the basis of provision of some sensory stimulation/relaxation activity using music, pictures, etc., or a range of sensory equipment, e.g. aromatherapy diffuser, fibre optics. [See Section 7.4 Sensory Stimulation/Relaxation (Snoezelen)].

7.1.3 Individual Activity Plans

Using information from the assessments, an individual plan is drawn up for each resident taking into account the level and type of activity required either attending one of the activity areas or in their ward area/room. These will be updated two-monthly.

³ National Service Framework – for Older People Standard Eight (8.8)

⁴ Faith Gibson 'Reminiscence & Recall – A Guide to Good Practice'

⁵ Andrew Norris 'Reminiscence With Elderly People'

7.2 Group Activities

A range of activities are included in the weekly programme. In carrying them out, activities staff and volunteers are to assist residents only as much as is necessary for them to take part, since being over-helpful can be as frustrating for the resident as allowing them to struggle with a particular activity. Where a resident requires extra assistance, they must be involved as much as possible.

Although activities may fall into more than one category, several types of activity are offered:

Social – e.g. reminiscence, singalongs, bingo, coffee mornings

Active – e.g. ball games, skittles

Competitive – e.g. quizzes, board games, cards/dominoes

Individual – e.g. painting, crafts

Passive - e.g. reading, music, TV and films

7.3 One-to-One Activities

Those residents unable to interact in a group setting or to participate in regular activity due to their frail condition require more individual attention. If unable to attend one of the activity areas, they are visited in their ward area/room for an appropriate level of activity. Activities can include the provision of preferred music or videos at the bedside, reading books, magazines with residents or story-tapes, etc. [See section 7.1 Assessments and section 7.4 Sensory Stimulation/Relaxation (Snoezelen)].

Those residents who would normally attend one of the activity areas but are temporarily on bed-rest will also be included in regular one-to-one visits.

7.4 Sensory Stimulation/Relaxation (Snoezelen)

7.4.1. Introduction

The word 'Snoezelen' is a composite of the Dutch words for sniff and doze, seeking to capture the notion of sensations and emotions. Those with profound disabilities can find the world around them confusing and threatening at times. They have a primary need for stimulation, but their disabilities often prevent them from expressing and fulfilling this need in an appropriate way.

Multi-sensory equipment and 'Snoezelen' rooms are in use in many health care settings, particularly for people with learning difficulties, or older people with dementia. Many studies have been done on the benefits of their use, with Kings Park Community Hospital, part of Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust, finding that it promoted relaxation and interest, and decreased agitation and sadness in the elderly residents with dementia who took part in the sessions.⁶ Other studies have also shown beneficial effects in their use.⁷

7.4.1 Multi-Sensory Room

The multi-sensory room provides input for those residents with limited awareness who are unable to participate in regular recreational activities. The environment consists of a white room that houses a variety of equipment to provide relaxation/stimulation for the primary senses, e.g. fibre optics, taped sounds/music, projected images and aromas. It can also provide a calm, relaxing environment away from the noise and demands of others, which can be a welcome respite for all residents living in a community setting. Residents have a basic right to participate in enjoyable activities purely for their own sake, rather than for therapeutic purposes.

⁶ Journal of Dementia Care: 'Sniff & Doze Therapy' - Sue Benson & information from Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust

⁷ Snoezelen: Its Long-Term & Short-Term Effects On Older People With Dementia - Baker et al
An Evaluation Of The Effects Of Sensory Stimulation with People Who Have Dementia – Spaul et al
Activities & Voluntary Services Operational Policy for East Ham Care Centre – Draft Revision
Janice Fenech, Activities & Voluntary Services Manager – January 2007

7.4.2 Benefits

For those using the multi-sensory environment, our aim is to provide a pleasant and enjoyable experience through the senses. In doing so, it may also provide the following benefits.

- Improve quality of life
- Promote relaxation
- Increase awareness of own surroundings
- Encourage self-expression
- Reduce agitation and aggression
- Provide opportunity for personal choice

7.4.3 Monitoring

Time spent in the multi-sensory room will vary for each individual, as will the type of equipment and effects they will prefer.

The room will accommodate a number of users remaining in wheelchairs and their escorts, however, in many cases one person and one escort are advisable. The role of the escort is to accompany the resident and to facilitate the use of the room by switching on equipment as necessary. The resident may wish to talk about the experience or may wish to sit in silence. In this case, the escort must try to be as unobtrusive as possible. Each person's mood and behaviour needs to be carefully monitored to ensure that the experience remains a pleasurable one.

A record of the session, equipment used, evaluation, etc., is entered on the residents record sheet.

7.4.4 Bedside Sensory Sessions

Much of the sensory equipment is portable and can be used at the bedside. Though not providing the same effect as can be achieved in the sensory room, it can nevertheless be a pleasurable experience for very frail residents unable to take part in any regular form of activity and whose level of awareness is low. Providing some input other than the general noise and activity surrounding the resident is believed to be beneficial to their well-being.

7.5 Entertainment

A number of events are held throughout the year to provide entertainment for the residents.

7.5.1 Events

A number of events are held throughout the year. These can include Christmas and Easter parties, Asian-themed parties, music recitals or commemorative displays e.g. V.E. Day, etc.

7.5.2 Hiring Entertainers

Members of the Activities Team make all the necessary arrangements for hiring an entertainer for an event where required and forwarding invoices to appropriate departments for payment. A variety of entertainment can be provided, e.g. singers, dancers, musicians, etc.

7.5.3 Advertising Events

Activities Team members produce and distribute posters informing residents, relatives and other staff of forthcoming events.

7.6 Off-Site Activities

Occasionally residents may wish to attend outside lunch and leisure clubs. Visits organised by Activities Team staff will be accompanied by a member of the team. We will endeavour to support ward staff who wish to organise visits but, with other demands on the service, it is not always possible to provide escorts. Staff may wish to escort residents in this instance if they feel it is necessary for them to attend.

7.7 Outings

Outings may be organised to various destinations, e.g. seaside, theatre, shopping, for those residents able to travel. The Trip Organiser, who will be a member of the Activities Team, will remain responsible for all aspects of the trip except for the medical or nursing requirements of a resident which is the responsibility of the nurse escort [See section 7.7.4. Nurse Escorts and Appendix 2 'Nurse Escort Guidelines for Residents' Outings].

7.7.1 Policy

To ensure that outings are a pleasurable experience for residents, staff are obliged to adhere to the Policy on Residents' Outings. [See Appendix 1 'Policy on Residents' Outings].

7.7.2 Transport

Most transport for outings is arranged through Dial-A-Ride, which has currently operates a scheme with Computer Cabs called Door2Door. Residents are registered by Activities staff, and are issued with identity cards which must be produced for each trip. This new scheme has its difficulties, since it is not possible to guarantee that Dial-A-Ride buses will be sent for a group of residents on a trip, but may instead be several black cabs. It is not possible to secure the wheelchairs in all cabs, which rely solely on the wheelchair brakes to prevent movement while the cab is in motion, and appropriate escorts are not always available to accompany each one. This has meant fewer trips than were previously possible. After raising this problem with the Board governing Dial-a-Ride, it was agreed that we could request buses as a necessity. Other means of transport such as the Community Transport scheme and private disabled coach hire are also being explored.

A minibus was purchased by the Friends of Sally Sherman Nursing Home for use by residents of the home and this has been retained. This can accommodate three residents remaining in wheelchairs plus a maximum of two residents able to transfer to a seat. However, this then only allows for three escorts seated in front without immediate access to the residents in the rear of the vehicle, so would usually carry less than capacity. The minibus relies on staff members able to drive the vehicle on trips.

7.7.3 Escorts

These may be staff members, volunteers or relatives. [See Appendix 1 'Policy On Residents Outings'].

If the outing involves being out and about e.g. Christmas shopping, a minimum ratio of one-to-one is required to push residents in wheelchairs. If it is to visit a particular venue e.g. the theatre, two to one may be adequate. The trip organiser will decide the number necessary when planning the trip.

7.7.4. Nurse Escorts

Every trip must be accompanied by a nurse escort with the following exceptions:

- a) When the resident is being taken to visit a friend or relative at a local hospital or nursing home where there are nursing staff present
- b) When visiting a local venue within near walking distance of East Ham Care Centre

Nurse escorts need to be aware of all relevant policies and procedures, follow the guidelines set out in 'Nurse Escort Guidelines for Residents Outings' [see Appendix 2] and undergo any necessary training, e.g. both on and off-site wheelchair handling.

7.8 Hairdressing

The onsite Hairdressing Salon is available not only for visiting hairdressers, but also for relatives or staff to use with residents.

A professional hairdressing service using independent hairdressers is offered to residents and Day Hospital clients who may find it difficult to attend outside hair salons. Residents'

hairdressing request forms are sent to the Activities Team who arrange the collection of residents from the ward areas for their hair appointment.

Independent hairdressers wishing to provide this service must meet a minimum standard and agree to the terms and conditions of carrying out those services for residents. The terms and conditions will be set out in agreement which will be signed by both the hairdresser and Trust member of staff, usually a member of the Activities Team.

7.9 Religious Needs

A resident's religious needs will be established as part of the initial profiling. The activities team will include the playing of religious music or audio tapes as part of their individual activity plan if requested. Materials can be obtained from the library where available or can be provided by relatives.

Arrangements can be made for residents to be visited by a religious leader of their own faith, or, if they are able to travel, to attend their own place of worship.

There is a multi-denominational Prayer Room located on Sally Sherman which is available for all to use for small services or private prayer.

During the Christmas period, carol singers from local schools and church groups visit each site to sing carols.

7.10 P.A. T. (Pets As Therapy) Association

It has been recognised for some time that stroking and petting an animal can be beneficial for those in hospitals and nursing homes, and can give the residents a great deal of pleasure.

Pets As Therapy is a national registered charity that provides therapeutic visits to hospitals, hospices, nursing and care homes, special needs schools and a variety of other venues by volunteers with their own friendly, temperament tested and vaccinated dogs and cats. All volunteers are covered by the charity's own insurance. This visiting service will be arranged by the activities team when available, though there is a shortage of registered animals in Newham with a waiting list for volunteer visits.

Arrangements can also be made for residents' own pets to visit them.

Appendix 5 'Pets in Residential & Nursing Homes' of the East Ham Care Centre Infection Control policy refers primarily to pets acquired to live on the premises and the responsibility for their care and behaviour but aspects of this would apply to visiting animals, in particular:

'2. Pets should not be permitted to lick patients/clients or jump on them in a manner which may cause accidents.'

'4. After patients/clients and staff have touched animals, they should wash their hands well in soap and water.'

7.11 Activities Not Included

The following are not the responsibility of or organised by Activities Team members:

- Individual birthday teas for residents. Currently it is not possible to provide for up to 75 birthdays per year and would be unfair to discriminate. We are happy to help staff and relatives with arrangements for special events, e.g. 100th birthdays, by booking an entertainer etc.
- Funeral teas. Ward staff may arrange with bereaved families of deceased residents to hold the post-funeral tea on site. Activities Team members are not responsible for purchasing or preparing food for these occasions but may be able to assist in the same way as other members of staff where possible.

- Barbeques. Food for resident's events must be provided either by the Trust's Catering Department or bought pre-packed from the supermarket for reasons of Health & Safety. Therefore, we do not arrange this type of function for residents.
- Cooking food. Other than cake baking sessions in which the residents' themselves are involved, Activities Team members cannot cook food for consumption by residents or relatives as stated above.
- Staff parties. Activities Team members are not responsible for making arrangements for these occasions but will assist in the same way as other members of staff where possible.

7.12 Patients Taken Ill While Taking Part In Activities

Patients taking part in activities do so in agreement with the ward staff who are responsible for their health care. Due to the nature of the care setting and criteria for admission, many patients will have profound health needs but should still be able to take part with suitable support.

Should a resident have an accident or become ill while attending the Activity Centre, Hairdressers or Sensory Room and no trained nurse is in attendance, staff will follow the 'Procedure for Dealing with Patient Taken Ill While Attending Activity Areas [See Appendix 3]'. Should they have an accident or be taken ill during an outing, staff will follow the 'Nurse Escort Guidelines for Residents' Outings' [See Appendix 2].

8.0 WHEELCHAIR HANDLING

The majority of residents are wheelchair users. It is essential therefore that anyone taking on the role of assisting those residents as a wheelchair 'pusher' needs to be fully aware of not only the practical aspects of pushing a wheelchair, but also the needs of the individual.

The Activities & Voluntary Services Manager has regularly carried out training for volunteers and work experience students in assisting a wheelchair user and has also provided training for Trust staff and student nurses on placement. Wheelchair training for volunteers and work experience students is now also undertaken by some Activities Team members.

All wheelchair handling is undertaken in line with the generic manual handling risk assessments for wheelchairs using the safe-systems-of-work.

8.1 On-Site Training

On beginning their role, training on assisting wheelchair-users on-site will be given to all volunteers and work experience students who wish to carry out this task following an assessment of their suitability.

8.2 Off-Site Training

Pushing a wheelchair off-site and negotiating kerbs and ramps etc., can be extremely hazardous for both the wheelchair user and the person pushing. Anyone escorting residents off-site for outings must first undertake this training.

8.3 Training Checklist

This is completed for each training session and agreed by both trainer and trainee – [See Appendix 5 'Training Checklist']

8.4 Information Booklet

A copy of the information in either A4 or booklet format is given to each person undertaking training to keep for reference. [See Appendix 4 'Assisting An Elderly Wheelchair-User']

9.0 INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER GROUPS

9.1 Newham Sixty Plus Group (formerly The Ageism Group)

9.1.1 Membership

The Newham Sixty Plus Group (previously known as The Ageism Group) is open to all Newham residents aged 60+, including those resident in The East Ham Care Centre, and those who have an interest in the welfare of older people through work or relationship. Many members of the group have represented elders at various forums throughout the borough.

9.1.2 Aim

Its aim is to enable older people to meet together in order to share their views and make their voice heard, not only in their local community but also in society as a whole. The group also enables older people to be more informed and to take an active interest in issues that can have a direct impact on their lives.

9.1.3 Meetings

The group meets monthly where there is an opportunity for members to share information or raise any issues that concern them. Speakers from health, local government, local services and organisations may be invited to attend to talk on specific issues.

9.1.4 The Role of the Facilitators

Although the focus of the group is intended to be directed by the members themselves, the Facilitators take care of the organisation and administration. This involves organising the meetings, booking speakers and obtaining information on issues where required. The Facilitators also make all necessary arrangements for trips; contacting the appropriate person/organisation, organising travel arrangements, seeking possible funding on the group's behalf and mailing information on the trip to members. They have also been responsible for organising and manning displays at local venues to promote the group.

9.2 Colleges/Sixth Form Centres

The department has strong links with several local colleges and Sixth Form Centres. The Activities & Voluntary Services Manager is regularly invited to take part in students Career Information and Volunteering Opportunity Days, and also attends the Employer's Forum at the Newham Sixth Form College, as well as giving talks to students on Health & Social Care courses. This is extremely worthwhile not only from the point of view of volunteer recruitment, but as an opportunity to raise awareness of the needs of older people in the community.

As a result of these links, college students make up a large proportion of the volunteer workforce. This not only gives those studying for a career in the health care profession valuable experience in helping others in a hospital environment, but also provides an opportunity for others, whatever their chosen career, to spend time with those from a generation with whom they may have little previous contact, broadening their knowledge and understanding.