
Volunteer Induction & Guidebook

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Welcome

A warm welcome to you!

We hope that you find volunteering with us a rewarding experience. Thank you for choosing to volunteer with us and dedicating your time to the hospital, patients and staff. We welcome your support to help to deliver a high standard of care to our patients and to support and care for our staff too.

This Volunteer Handbook will answer some of the questions often asked by volunteers. It provides guidance and regulations around voluntary activities to ensure they are enjoyable and rewarding, and that you have all the information you need to carry out your role appropriately and safely.

If you require any additional information or advice that is not covered in this handbook or the Volunteer Policy, please contact the Volunteer Service or your placement supervisor, who will be happy to assist.

We work with the community and collaborate with many fantastic local organisations for the benefit of our community. As a volunteer; your contribution will be lasting, positive and impactful.

We hope that you enjoy your time with us as well as learning more about East London NHS Trust Foundation.

The Trust

East London NHS Foundation Trust

East London NHS Foundation Trust Provides a wide range of community and inpatient services to children, young people, adults of working age, older adults and forensic services to the City of London, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Bedfordshire and Luton.

Originally formed in 2000, ELFT has long been recognised as a centre of excellence for mental health care, innovation and improvement. Our ambition is to make a positive difference by providing people with mental and community health care services that support their recovery as well as help them to achieve the most fulfilling lives possible. Everything we do is driven by our values of care, respect and inclusivity. Our patients' needs matter most and we are constantly working to improve our support for all who use and have contact with our services. Our extensive research approach, commitment to education and emphasis on quality means we are at the forefront of excellence in mental health care.

Wherever patients receive our services and from whichever team, our values of care, respect and inclusivity underpin all that we do.

The Trust

Trust vision

The Trust's vision is to provide high quality, community-orientated healthcare to our local communities. We will do this in partnership with service users, carers and families, and statutory and voluntary organisations.

The Trust's core values are at the heart of its vision for the future development of services. These will underpin everything we do and include:

- Putting the service user and carer at the centre of everything we do and striving to improve patients' and service users' experience of our services.
- Ensuring wider choice and promoting independence.
- Providing safe, effective and value for money services.
- Ensuring equality and diversity.
- Recognising the contribution of our staff and providing a capable workforce.
- Promoting social inclusion and recovery.
- Supporting people to take responsibility for their own health.

The Trust

Volunteering with the Trust

Volunteers are crucial to the Trust's ambition to make positive differences in the lives of our communities. When you volunteer, you support that drive to help communities to achieve the most fulfilling lives possible.

Your volunteering truly makes a difference in their lives of so many people. Your commitment, your generosity and your consideration will always be recognised and appreciated.

There are many roles with the Trust, providing challenging and rewarding opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Some can be a one-off, like a garden makeover or campaigns. Others can last for several months or even years, like assisting on wards and services, helping with patients and their daily care needs. If you have not already specified on your application form to volunteer within a particular department, the Volunteer Service Team will look at a range of volunteering opportunities matching with the best suited for your needs. The role descriptions for these roles will be provided to you and you will have the opportunity to discuss these options with the Volunteer Service Team.

As a volunteer you may experience a number of benefits such as higher self-esteem, access to a wider social circle or gaining new skills to aid in your future employment goals. From our perspective there are a number of benefits to volunteering. Patients, visitors and staff can often have a better quality of experience due to the actions of a volunteer. They have the time to do the things that make a real difference – activities that current constraints do not always allow.

Why Volunteer With Us?

We actively support our volunteers and provide:

- Valuable work experience within the mental health sector, allowing you to gain insights into mental health issues, factors and support networks
- Respect your skills, dignity and individual wishes and to do our best to meet them.
- Provide relevant training, support and information for you to carry out your volunteering role, learn new skills, information and experiences
- An opportunity to develop confidence, social skills, and employment opportunities
- An opportunity to make a positive contribution to your community
- Make new friends
- A reference of employment*
- Expenses covered*
- Access to NHS discount service
- Provide support and supervision within your volunteering role.
- Communicate with you and keep you informed of possible changes.
- Offer you fair, honest and open feedback about your volunteering.
- Provide insurance to cover you whilst volunteering within the duties of your role description.
- Provide a safe workplace.

Why Volunteer With Us?

Who can volunteer?

Anyone over the age of 16 can volunteer. Those over the age of 18 will have to complete a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check before proceeding with their volunteering.

Ensuring equality and valuing diversity are core values of the East London Foundation Trust. We welcome volunteers from all backgrounds and do not discriminate on the basis of age, disability (physical or mental), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

In return we ask that you

Adhere to the dress code whilst volunteering, including adhering to the uniform policy and wearing the ID badge that you have been provided with.

Not perform tasks which are outside of your role description, without seeking the approval of the placement supervisor or voluntary services.

For the safety and wellbeing of yourself and patients you will not lift, handle or lower patients. You will also not carry out any manual handling activities that you have not been trained to undertake.

Inform a senior member of staff immediately, of any concerns that you may have regarding a patient, a child, member of the public or staff.

Always show respect to patients, carers/relatives and members of the public and treat them with dignity, and always maintain confidentiality.

Provide as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend your volunteer placement or if you no longer wish to volunteer for the Trust.

The Volunteer Process

- You apply online
 - Attend Informal first interviewing and screening with Volunteer Service Team (ONLINE MS TEAMS MEETING): Your suitability for the role will be considered alongside discussing the role, your timetable, any support required
 - Complete DBS check
 - Complete Mandatory E-Learning training
 - Attend Inductions. Both corporate (with Volunteer Service Team) and Local (at your volunteering location)
 - Last checks take place: Finalised timetable, agreement signed, placement confirmed
 - Start volunteering with oversight and monthly 1-2-1 supervision.
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Volunteer Roles

As a volunteer it is important that you only carry out tasks outlined within your role description. You should be given a copy of your role description before starting your volunteer placement. If you feel you are being asked to carry out duties that go beyond those outlined in your role then it is important that you discuss this with either your named supervisor or the Volunteer Service Team.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

When applying to become a volunteer at the Trust it may be necessary for you to undertake a DBS check. DBS checks are repeated every three years and the Volunteer Service will contact you when it is due for review.

If you have any subsequent cautions or convictions after starting your volunteer placement, you are required to declare these to the Volunteer Lead.

Training & E-Learning

Before starting you will be required to complete training in order to progress in ELFT as a volunteer. You will not be able to commence your role until this has been completed.

You will have to register for an E-learning account on the ELFH Elearning for healthcare website. There is a guide on how to create an account attached to our Volunteer service web-page on the ELFT website.

There are ten courses you **must** complete and will be sent a link to access these. The titles for the following **MANDATORY** courses are as follows:

01. Roles and Responsibilities of a volunteer
02. Communications for Volunteers
03. Data Security Awareness for Volunteers
04. Conflict Resolution for Volunteers
05. Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights for Volunteers
06. Safeguarding Adults for Volunteers
07. Safeguarding Children for Volunteers
08. Preventing Radicalisation (Basic Awareness) for Volunteers
09. Mental Health Awareness for Volunteers
10. Health, Safety & Infection Control for Volunteers

It is imperative that these courses are completed as they will help you to be prepared for anything that may occur during your time as a volunteer. Please note there are extra **OPTIONAL** courses you can take at a later time if interested.

Training & E-Learning

Furthermore, if you have any trouble during the E-learning process you can arrange a meeting with the Volunteer service for support.

Once all of your E-learning has been completed, you can move onto the next steps of the Volunteer process.

Your next step is to attend your inductions. These should cover all you need to know about the policies regarding volunteering and the location you are volunteering at, including anything specific about your particular area of volunteering.

Some volunteer roles may require additional training. The Volunteer Service will advise you of any additional training you need to complete.

You will have a volunteer supervisor from your volunteering locations who will be available to meet with you regularly to see how your placement is going and discuss any concerns or queries you may have.

If you have any concerns about the training, please talk to the Volunteer Service Team as soon as possible so that the appropriate support can be offered where needed.

Before starting, if the Volunteer Coordinator has any causes of concern regarding your suitability then a discussion will be planned with you to talk about other options that may be available elsewhere and more suited to you.

Support & Supervision

It is important that you feel supported during your volunteer placement. Arrangements will be made for you, depending on your role, to have regular 121's with the Volunteer Lead & department supervisor to who you will be responsible. This, depending on the role, may include formal supervision, but for most volunteers this will include a more informal support meeting to look at how your role is progressing and look at further ways in which you could progress within the role, or to look at other potential roles to enhance your skills.

Recognition

The time given freely and the commitment to attending as a volunteer to assist within the Trust must always be recognised. The Trust will provide events around National Volunteer Week, 1st – 7th June and utilised to promote the reward, recognition and recruitment of volunteers as led by Volunteering England. Certificates of thanks will be provided at local or Trust wide events. However, showing appreciation towards our wonderful volunteers is something staff will endeavour to do every day.

Confidentiality

As a volunteer you may be party to confidential and sensitive information about patients, carers, the public and the Trust. You are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and must not disclose information outside of the Trust. A Confidentiality Agreement must be signed by all volunteers before beginning their placement.

Code of Conduct

All volunteers are expected to treat patients, carers, visitors and staff with courtesy, care and compassion at all times, treating each person as an individual and adopt behaviours and attitudes that promote, support and respect privacy and dignity. Any behaviour that contradicts the spirit of this statement or the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy will not be tolerated.

Data Protection

Our Trust has a duty to protect the confidentiality of volunteers involved in our work. We will only collect and retain personal information that is relevant to your volunteering placement. In accordance with the Data Protection Act, personal information about volunteers is kept securely and no personal information will be shared with other organisations/individuals without the consent of the volunteer, unless we are legally obliged to do so. Files will be destroyed one year after a volunteer placement has ended.

Public Relations

Volunteers may be featured in Trust public relations activities and consent will be sought from volunteers before the publication of any material in which an individual may be identified. Volunteers are requested not to make any statement to the media without prior consultation with the Trust's Communication Team.

ID Badges

Before beginning your volunteer placement you will be issued with an ID badge. You should wear this and a lanyard at all times whilst volunteering. If your ID badge is lost or stolen please notify Volunteer Service or security immediately. Replacement cards will incur a fee of £20.

Dress Code

For volunteer roles, whilst there is no formal uniform, there are still dress code rules you are required to adhere to. To meet Volunteering standards and infection prevention standards please adhere to the following uniform requirements:

- Please only wear black clothing to distinguish yourself as a volunteer. (If no black clothing is owned, any dark colours are acceptable)
- Please note that shoes should be comfortable non-slip and have enclosed toes and no heels).

All volunteers may be required to adhere to the following requirements:

- You must wear your ID badge at all times
- Adopt the 'bare below the elbow' policy unless pre-discussed reasons.
- Wrist watches and hand jewellery must be removed.
- The wearing of one plain banded ring is permitted.
- No acrylics or fake nails or naturally long nails
- No clothing with offensive or overly exaggerated graphics
- No revealing or non-sensible clothing
- Do not bring any personal belongings that could get damaged/stolen

Additional rules may apply depending on the department you are volunteering for. These will be communicated to you before your volunteering placement will start.

Attendance, Absence Holidays & Placements

All volunteers must make an initial commitment to volunteer with the Trust for six months, however as a volunteer you are under no legal obligation and a volunteer placement can be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party.

At the end of your placement you might be asked to complete an exit questionnaire with room for comments and suggestions you have. This will allow the service to be evaluated on a regular basis and where possible, to make improvements

Some volunteers work irregular intervals, as and when they are needed, however most volunteers will commit to a specific day and time. Working times will be agreed between the volunteer, the named supervisor and the Volunteer Service Team.

It's important that once a volunteer placement has started, you are committed to the arrangement that has been agreed. Any queries around this after volunteering has started shall be discussed with the Volunteer Service Team.

How to deal with absences:

You must contact your department/ward supervisor and the volunteer service team at the earliest convenience if:

- Your circumstances change and you can no longer volunteer
- You are ill and cannot attend your placement
- You have an unforeseen circumstance and cannot attend your placement
- If you are planning to go on holiday (give dates of unavailability & return)
- Any other non planned unattendances
- Any other long term unattendances

Attendance, Absence Holidays & Placements

If you wish to change your volunteer placement please contact Volunteer Services. Where possible we try to accommodate changes in placements, however this will be on the basis of availability of an alternative placement and the volunteer's suitability for a role.

All absences must be reported and communication is necessary! Absences are regularly monitored by the Volunteer Service Team and recurrent absences may be investigated further. If the volunteer service Team feels that a volunteer is missing large portions of their volunteering, this could result in ending the placement.

Those with recurrent unexplained or questionable absences may be refused extra opportunities and benefits granted by the Volunteer Service Team. This decision is made solely by the Volunteer Service Team and cannot be tested.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We are committed to equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion. We accept volunteers based on their suitability for the role.

We will not discriminate against our volunteers because of their gender, sexual orientation, disability or impairment, age, race, nationality, marital status, religion or belief.

As an organisation we value difference and recognise the value that different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences our volunteers bring.

Health & Safety

Volunteers will be guided and shadowed to ensure you work safely and appropriately at all times. All our staff understands what we are asking of volunteers and what your role will entail. You will have a dedicated member of staff who will act as your mentor and you will have general support from the whole team.

Every staff member has been trained in Health and Safety procedures, fire awareness and evacuation. All volunteers will be given a tour at the site, shown where the fire exits are, first aid boxes are situated and how to report accidents at work.

As a volunteer you need to be made aware of any health and safety issues when undertaking your role. Your named supervisor is responsible for your immediate supervision and support. Should you have any doubt about a health and safety matter, then you should discuss this with your supervisor in the first instance.

You have a responsibility as a volunteer to:

- Only carry out tasks which are outlined within your role description.
- Take responsibility for the health and safety of yourself and of others who may be affected by your actions whilst volunteering.
- Immediately report any accidents, hazards or injuries sustained by yourself or others immediately, to a member of staff.

You must notify your named supervisor and Volunteer Service if:

- You have an accident whilst volunteering.
- You fall ill prior to, or whilst volunteering.

Health & Safety

Pregnancy

There are certain areas of the hospital in which it is inadvisable for pregnant women to volunteer. If you are pregnant or become pregnant please inform your placement supervisor and Volunteer Service who will ensure you are adequately safeguarded whilst volunteering.

Incidents

Sometimes things happen or almost happen to patients, relatives, members of the public or staff that should not happen. An incident could be the use of inappropriate language, someone falling over or a patient leaving a ward area without staff knowing they have gone.

If an incident occurs, then a DATIX form should be completed by a member of staff and in serious cases, an investigation into what happened may be required. Volunteers may be asked to take part in an investigation if it affects the area where they are volunteering. In such cases, volunteers have the same rights as staff and will be supported throughout the investigation.

If you witness or are involved in an incident whilst volunteering, you should report it immediately to your named supervisor as well as the Volunteer Service.

Health & Safety

Moving and handling

For the majority of volunteering roles you are not required to undertake any moving and handling or heavy lifting. If your role requires any moving and handling then you will receive additional training. You should never move or lift a patient as this could cause injury to you or the patient.

Infection control

It is important for the health of our patients, members of the public and staff that you do not attend your volunteer placement if you:

- Are suffering from diarrhoea and/or sickness (you need to be symptom free for at least 48 hours before coming in to the hospital).
- Have a viral infection e.g. cold, flu, sore throat or flu like symptoms.
- Have a contagious infection, e.g. chicken pox.

Alcohol hand sanitiser is to be used by all volunteers before entering and exiting ward and outpatient areas. Volunteers are also required to abide by hand hygiene protocols (washing hands between patients) whilst working on wards and throughout the hospital.

If an outbreak is declared (such as Norovirus) on a ward where you volunteer, the Volunteer Service will contact you to advise you not to attend. Occasionally it may not be possible to contact you before you arrive at the hospital and in this situation the ward will send you home. You should never be expected to go into a side room or bay where there are infectious patients requiring barrier nursing.

Safeguarding Adults & Children

All individuals have the right to live a life free from fear, to be treated with dignity and have their choices respected. Before starting your voluntary placement, you should have completed your mandatory training which covers the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

Safeguarding is about protecting everyone from harm, abuse or neglect. The safeguarding process starts before volunteers are involved in any activity by making sure the right people are recruited in the first place, and that they receive the necessary support and guidance to carry out their volunteering safely and effectively. Effective safeguarding also looks beyond traditional notions of harm and abuse, taking into consideration health and safety, and other ways to ensure the health and well-being of volunteers and the people they support.

As a volunteer, you have:

A duty of care. It is your duty to identify and report any concerns, not to take action or investigate further

A responsibility to be aware of the Prevent strategy and an obligation to report concerns. As part of your volunteer training, you may also be asked to complete the Prevent training session. If in doubt, talk to your volunteer coordinator

If you do have any concerns whilst on your volunteer placement, please escalate these to a senior member of staff immediately.

Should you be approached by a patient, carer, family member, visitor or member of staff to sign any form of legal document such as Power of Attorney forms or a Will, you must decline and immediately inform a senior member of staff.

Valuables & Security

The Trust will not be held responsible for the loss of any personal items and it is recommended that you do not bring any personal and/or high value items in to the hospital.

When starting your volunteer placement, your ward/department supervisor will inform you of security arrangements. The Trust's first priority in terms of security is the personal safety of our patients, volunteers and staff.

Grievances & Complaints

Any grievances or complaints by the volunteer or about the volunteer will be addressed by the Volunteer Lead and Volunteer Service Team on the day or at a later date.

Complaints will be addressed immediately and with strictest confidentiality. Discretion and action will be identified upon investigation of the complaint and dealt within a maximum 10-day period.

Volunteers will always be notified and kept updated.

Expenses

We never want our volunteers to be out of pocket so we will reimburse the following expenses incurred by you in undertaking your volunteering.

All expenses paid via BACS:-

- Travel to and from home to your base and during your placement as necessary. This includes public transport use as well as private car use (applicable to those outside of London/ public transport issues); in this case mileage allowances for use of a car and amounts that can be claimed. For more information, contact Volunteer Service Team. Receipts must be provided
- Meal allowances of up to £4 for which a receipt must be provided. To be eligible for a meal allowance you must have been in your volunteer placement for a minimum of 4 hours in any one day.
- Specialist clothing will be reimbursed if this is required and purchased by you, otherwise this will be provided from the Trust.

Claims need to be submitted on a volunteer claim form which must be signed by the appropriate manager and authorised by the Volunteer Service.

We advise that all claims are submitted within one month of the expense being incurred. Claims for expenses will be invalid after one month.

Further details can be found on our website or please speak to the Volunteer Lead.

Contact Information

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