

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

A comprehensive guide to volunteering at Southport & Ormskirk Hospitals



SOUTHPORT AND ORMSKIRK HOSPITALS

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Foreword

Volunteers play an important role within Southport & Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust, supporting both the staff and service users alike. Volunteers are involved in a large variety of roles throughout the Trust from welcome volunteers at main reception, dining companions on wards, discharge support volunteers and patient ‘befrienders’, in addition to assisting staff to ensure our patients have the best possible experience during their stay in hospital. Volunteers can also assist with escorting patients to x-ray, phlebotomy, out patients and appointments.

This document is designed to give you as much information as possible before you complete your application form. We always welcome volunteers into the Trust, whether you are a young person considering a career in the NHS (currently 16 years or over—17 for ward-based roles), or a more mature person seeking to give something back, or even someone who simply wishes to develop new skills and confidence, we are sure you will find volunteering a worthwhile and fulfilling experience.

What our volunteering programme is

We aim to increase and expand our volunteer programme to ensure we help to improve the patient experience during their visit to our hospitals. It’s about being compassionate and caring, with a willingness to support, by interacting and listening to patients who may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious or even just a little lonely. By helping patients in this way, it has a direct, positive impact to not only patients and staff, but also to the volunteer themselves. Helping others is hugely rewarding and a growing body of evidence suggests volunteering also has a positive impact on mental wellbeing.

What our volunteering programme isn’t

Our volunteering programme requires commitment and it may not be for you if you cannot commit regularly. You won’t be ‘shadowing’ clinical staff or assisting with patients personal care - nor will you be giving advice to patients or relatives.

Who are our volunteers?

Volunteers are people from many walks of life and are quite often

- Parents and carers
- Former patients
- Retired staff
- Other retirees
- Part time workers
- Students
- Unemployed people

Before you apply, consider these factors

- Can I commit to the time needed regularly each week?
- Do I have a regular time slot that would fit in with the Trust’s needs?
- Will I still want to do this regardless of whether it’s raining, snowing or a lovely summer’s day?
- Can I plan my work/home life commitments to fit in with the role?

It is important to consider all of the above factors before committing to a volunteering role.

Recruitment and selection

Our recruitment and selection process is governed by the Trust Volunteer Policy which is available on request.

Application

All applicants can request an application form by visiting the ‘Contact Us’ page on the Trust website www.merseywestlancs.nhs.uk. The form will ask you why you are interested in a volunteering role and what roles you are interested in.

All submitted applications will be read and considered for an informal interview. There is no fixed date for applications - you can apply at any time as long as your availability matches our vacancies. The informal interview will take place to discuss your motivation, communication skills and commitment. The interview panel will consist of the Volunteer Manager and/or other members of staff/volunteer pertinent to the role applied for. This will also give you the opportunity to understand whether your chosen role is suitable for you.

If you are successful at interview, you will be notified as soon as possible afterwards. At this point, the following will happen:

- You will complete an Occupational Health check form
- You will complete an online Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check (the cost of which is paid for by the Trust)
- You will be asked to complete a series of Core Skills Readers which include Safeguarding, Moving and Handling, Health & Safety, Infection Control, Risk Management, Fire Safety
- There will also be a full day, face to face Conflict Resolution training session to attend and there may be other elements of training which are pertinent to the role you have applied for, which may require attendance i.e. dementia training or nutritional training
- We will take up references supplied by you

Please note these processes are quite lengthy and we rely on you to complete any paperwork or answer any queries as soon as possible, in order that we can process your application in a timely fashion.

If you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be able to request feedback

Covid-19

Ward-based roles will require volunteers to wear appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) on entering ward areas if required.

What happens next?

Once all your checks and training have been completed, we will start to prepare you for a volunteer placement in the Trust. Once a placement has been agreed, we will issue you with an ID badge, Trust Volunteer polo shirt and ask you to attend the ward/department for a local induction, which will outline the tasks you might be asked to do. You will also be expected to sign a Volunteer Agreement, which outlines your commitment to your volunteering role for a minimum period of six months

Once you start volunteering

Volunteers are expected to attend regularly as agreed and if sick or unable to attend, to let us know as a matter of courtesy. If you need to take a break from your volunteering role, please let the Volunteer Manager know. Should you wish to leave, you need to give notice to both the department you are volunteering in and also the Volunteer Manager and you will be asked to complete an evaluation form about your volunteering experience to improve the service at our Trust.. You will also need to return your ID badge and uniform. We ask that volunteers give us at least 2 weeks notice if they intend to leave, to give the Trust an opportunity to fill the vacancy.

CSW Development Placement Scheme (min. age 17)

Ward-based volunteers who have completed a minimum of 50 hours volunteering can go on to apply for the CSW (Care Support Worker) development placement scheme via NHS professionals, which is a 6 months (Paid) working placement on a designated ward within the Trust. Each trainee has to commit to a minimum of 30+ hours a week and are rostered onto shifts in line with the rest of the ward.

Completing this programme will help you build and develop the key skills necessary and gain the qualifications required to become a Care Support Worker (CSW) all whilst receiving weekly pay, paid annual leave and all the other great benefits NHS Professionals offers our bank members.

Reviews and Support

All volunteers will receive support, both during the induction period and whilst volunteering. The first 6 weeks are seen as a trial period and after this, volunteers will have an informal review with the Volunteer Manager to see how they are settling in. The volunteer review is a method of ensuring that all volunteers are happy with what they are doing. As a volunteer, you can refuse demands that you consider unrealistic, beyond the scope of your role or if you feel you do not have the necessary skills to perform the task.

Behaviour and discipline

All volunteers are expected to abide by Trust policies on behaviour and conduct and adhere to the Trust Values, which will be explained during induction. Volunteers will be supplied with copies of the appropriate Trust policies in their welcome packs. Volunteers are advised that they must wear their ID badges and uniform tops whilst carrying out voluntary duties on Trust premises. Black or navy trousers/skirts are the preferred option to wear with your Volunteer top. Shoes should not be loose and open toed sandals may not be appropriate in some volunteering areas. As with clinical staff, if you are working in a ward/departmental environment, we expect volunteers to be bare below the elbow, with no jewellery (plain wedding band acceptable)

Confidentiality

Volunteers must abide by the Trust confidentiality policy and will be expected to sign an agreement before starting. Everything must be kept in the strictest confidence and must not be disclosed to anyone outside of the hospital. .

Insurance

All volunteers are covered by the Trusts' insurance policy

Volunteer Rewards

The Trust issues a certificate of recognition to volunteers who complete a 12 month period of voluntary service. On leaving, volunteers can ask for a certificate of attendance and a reference.

Trust Values

The Trust values every contribution made by our volunteers and we consider them to be an integral part of the smooth running of the hospitals and an invaluable source of kindness, caring and helpfulness towards our patients experiences during their visit/stay in one of our hospitals.

Thank you for considering applying for a volunteers role at Southport & Ormskirk Hospitals and we look forward to receiving your application.