

Guidance on Working with Young Volunteers

Context

This guidance has been created following detailed discussion with and/or internet research into the practices of a number of organisations working with children (under 16s) and young adults (16-18s).¹ It takes into account both the fact that NHS Foundation Trust is part of a Beacon Site for #iwill and also that the Trust is taking a lead within the hospital sector in working with volunteers as young as 10. This guidance aims to protect young volunteers; adult volunteers; adults, children and vulnerable adults in our care; visitors to our sites; and staff. It will be reviewed and adjusted, if necessary, as the Trust gains experience in working with young volunteers.

Some Useful Definitions

- Aspire:** A programme offering 14-24s the chance to get involved in working with us, through Work Experience, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Internships etc.
- Buddy:** Another volunteer who partners a young volunteer. The Buddy might be an older or more experienced volunteer, or another YAV/Junior Volunteer.
- Group Leader:** A DBS-checked adult attending with a group of Junior Volunteers (10-16s). The Group Leader is responsible for making sure the relevant permissions are obtained and for supervising their group on the day, together with the Staff Supervisor.
- Junior Volunteer:** A volunteer aged 10-16, attending with an organised group. Also known as a 'Group-Led Volunteer' or 'GLV'.
- Staff Supervisor (Supervisor):** A member of staff assigned and briefed to provide direct supervision of young volunteers. Usually (but not always) the Lead Person in Charge: the first point of contact in the case of emergencies, issues or queries.
- YAV:** A 'Young Adult Volunteer', aged 16-25, following a prescribed 6-month programme including rotation through three roles and skills development.
- YPAG:** Our 'Young Persons' Advisory Group', comprising patients, former patients, siblings and members of the public, aged 11-19.

(Document last updated: July 2018)

¹ List includes the City Council, Scouts, Royal Free Hospital Volunteering, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Health and Safety Executive, NSPCC, NCVO, Greater London Volunteering, Volunteering Matters, gov.uk, Enfield Children's Trust, and the Volunteer Centre, North Lincolnshire.

Guiding Principles

Equality of Opportunity

- Our volunteering opportunities are open to anyone over the age of 10, regardless of age, race, disability, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, or pregnancy, with the proviso that applicants must be legally able to volunteer in the UK.
- Our advertising, recruitment and selection process is designed to attract and engage volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds, and to ensure that everyone recruited is suitable for the role they would like to do.
- Our publicity aims to attract applicants from a wide range of social, educational and ethnic backgrounds, with special efforts made to engage 'hard-to-reach' groups.
- Our website has the most up-to-date details of the roles we offer and what each role entails.
- We offer support during our application process through email, phone and personal appointments.
- We welcome application from anyone over the age of 10, including people with disabilities and special needs, and especially from populations which are under-represented in our current volunteer pool. Selection is based solely on ability to perform the role(s) in question.
- During the selection process, young volunteers have a chance to ask questions, discuss the role and chat to volunteers, so that they can make an informed choice if they are offered a position.
- If a disability or other special need requires someone to volunteer with the aid of their own care or support worker, they need to provide us with a recent DBS certificate before starting.

Background and Checks

- All adults (over-18s) working alongside, supervising, or attending with young volunteers must be DBS-checked.
- Group leaders are asked to provide the DBS numbers for anyone over the age of 18 attending with their group.
- Group leaders and any additional supervisors attending with a group of young volunteers may be allowed to self-certify if their DBS check is out of date (more than three years, in line with the City Council's requirements) AND they are still working in the same type of job at the same organisation for which their DBS was obtained. Cases will be treated on an individual basis.
- Standard OH checks should be carried out on all young adult volunteers offering a regular commitment (16+).
- OH self-certification will normally be appropriate for young volunteers (and accompanying adults) attending in a group if patient contact is limited.
- Individual volunteers under the age of 18 will not normally be permitted to work in the Emergency Department or other areas with a high likelihood of emotional trauma, such as Paediatric Intensive Care Unit.
- Letters of recommendation will continue to be required for all volunteers, including young volunteers offering a regular commitment; however, group leaders may provide one letter of recommendation covering the suitability of everyone in the group for their agreed project.
- Full names and dates of birth should be collected for all young volunteers, so they can be age-checked, registered on our system and tracked to see if they progress through the volunteering (or any other) programme, including to employment.

Supervision

- Volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times.
- Volunteers aged 16-18 working outside a group context should work in pairs.
- Groups should normally comprise 6 to 8 'Junior Volunteers'; however, fewer or more may be more appropriate depending on the activity.
- Groups are asked to bring at least one, preferably two, DBS-checked adult supervisors.

- The Trust commits to providing at least one Supervisor, who will probably also act as the Lead Person In Charge - responsible for on-the-day decisions and for dealing with any emergencies.
- The minimum acceptable adult to child ratio is 1:10 for 10-14s and 1:12 for over-14s, but in practice, every group will have a minimum of two supervising adults. Minimum ratios should only be referenced in an emergency situation where one or more adults have been called away to deal with an urgent situation, such as a child in distress.
- It is the Trust supervisor's responsibility to ensure (in collaboration with the Volunteer Services Team, if appropriate) that Junior Volunteers and their group leader / additional supervisor(s) - OR - Young Adult Volunteers (16-25s) working individually or in pairs, have a clearly-defined role, which should include a local induction appropriate to the project/experience; a tour of the relevant location(s); a schedule for the activity (written or discussed, as appropriate to the complexity), and starting/ending discussions about outcomes.
- The Staff Supervisor is responsible (together with the Group Leader and any attending additional supervisors, if applicable) for the direct supervision of Junior or Young Adult Volunteers throughout their experience. Direct supervision is defined as in visual contact, with the exception of toilet breaks.
- If toilets are not in the same area, volunteers under the age of 18 should ideally be escorted there and back by a supervisor, or attend in pairs, as appropriate to the situation.
- Young volunteers (under 18) should not be alone with non-DBS-checked adults.
- Ideally Junior Volunteers should work in pairs if a group is splitting into smaller units.
- The Lead Person In Charge should re-iterate the importance of confidentiality, health and safety, infection control etc throughout a group's volunteer experience. See also, Data Protection, below.

Managing Risk

- All volunteer job roles / projects must be adequately risk assessed and special consideration given to whether there are any additional or different risks for young volunteers in each role.
- Special consideration must also be given to whether any aspect of a role might need to be adjusted for people with disabilities and/or differently adjusted for young people with disabilities.
- All young volunteers should receive an induction and training appropriate to their job role and length of commitment.
- The Lead Person In Charge will give (or arrange to be given) a local induction to the area where the group or individual young volunteer will be working appropriate to their role(s) and experience. This should include any risks of which the group leader / supervisor(s) / young volunteers should be aware.
- The Trust will ensure, as far as possible, that young volunteers are placed in roles that are appropriate to their emotional development and resilience. The induction process includes information about how to access support, should it be required.
- Any volunteer who experiences emotional trauma, either at the time of volunteering or subsequently (as a result of volunteering), will be actively supported by the Trust. We will inform parents/guardians and/or schools/groups if we are aware of any young person experiencing emotional distress as a result of volunteering.
- All young volunteers (and group leaders/ supervisors, where applicable) should wear name badges at all times to assist with their identification.

Insurance and Indemnity

- Groups attending with young volunteers are asked to supply their own insurance; however, we don't wish this to be a barrier. Groups without appropriate insurance are asked to contact us.
- Before starting, all volunteers will receive training appropriate to their age and role description, including (but not limited to) health and safety, hand hygiene and confidentiality. While

volunteering for us in an agreed role, time slot and uniform (if applicable), and assuming they are adhering to our Code of Conduct, they will be covered by our Public Liability insurance.

Encouraging continued engagement

- All young volunteers offering a regular commitment are asked to complete a Reflective Journal.
- Group-led volunteers feed back (through their Group Leader) at the end of their project.
- Inductions for young volunteers include signposting of YPAG, Aspire and follow-on volunteer opportunities to encourage young volunteers to stay involved.

Data Protection, Confidentiality & Personal Safety

- Young volunteers' personal data is collected, held and processed in the much same way as that of adult volunteers, in accordance with the GDPR.
- Data retention times are longer for all young volunteers who successfully begin a programme with us, due to the need to track their engagement with our follow-on volunteer programmes and, ultimately, to see whether they apply for healthcare jobs.
- Parental/Guardian Consent must be obtained for volunteers under the age of 18 to:
 - participate in volunteering work (see also Group-based consent, below)
 - have their data stored and processed for the purposes of managing the volunteer experience, monitoring and tracking
 - be photographed/videoed by the Trust or its photographers, and for photographs/videos to be used for any purpose
- As well as young volunteers, Parents/Guardians must read and sign the Trust's Photography and Social Media Policy and Code of Conduct. Parents/Guardians or Group Leaders must also sign these documents on behalf of participants.
- YAVs aged 18+ must complete the same forms outlined above for themselves
- If appropriate transferable participation and/or photography consent has already been obtained by a school or group's own consent procedures for all participating individuals, group leaders may indicate this on their supplementary application information in lieu of collecting individual consent forms. Otherwise, we will ask group leaders to use our consent forms to obtain the relevant permissions from all volunteers taking part in a group visit or project.
- Consent for personal data to be stored and processed should always be obtained separately.
- Consent is given for a photograph of an individual or group at a particular time. We will not re-seek adult consent from young volunteers who turn 18 shortly after photographs are taken.
- A group leader, volunteer/young volunteer, parent or guardian may request that images be removed from our photo stock at any time. In this case, photographs will be removed as soon as possible from any online platform within our control (e.g. Trust website or social media) and will not be used in future printed materials. However, we cannot guarantee photos can be removed from circulation, where an image has already been used by a third party publication, for instance, a newspaper.
- Young volunteers must be reminded that, as outlined in our Photography and Social Media Policy, the following is prohibited:
 - discussion of patient/service user identities or situations outside the project scope
 - use of personal mobile phones/devices/cameras
 - photography/video by group leader / supervisors unless necessary to the project and agreed in advance and patient consent obtained
- Young volunteers must be reminded not to share personal details with service users, such as phone numbers or email addresses.