

Response Volunteer

Role Description



Purpose:

Your role will be to provide support to patients and staff members during this time of increased pressure on NHS services due to Covid-19 (Coronavirus).

You will **engage with patients and staff** as part of a large multi-disciplinary team of nurses, doctors and therapists. Although your role will not be clinical, you will have a key part to play as it provides the hospital with an extra pair of hands, assisting with non-clinical tasks such as **chatting to patients, distributing meals, making drinks and running errands for staff and patients.**

You will need to commit to volunteer for a regular shift of 3 hours per week. Mainly within Monday to Friday 8:30am – 5:30pm, but some opportunities may be available to support during evenings and weekends. At this time, we are particularly looking for volunteers to support Watford General Hospital.

Tasks which can be undertaken by volunteers:

- **Befriending:** provide companionship to patients, engaging them in conversation
- Helping patients to call or video call their families and friends
- Spotting simple ways to make patients more comfortable, e.g. getting an extra blanket if someone is cold
- **Advocate for patients** by liaising with professional staff to seek help for patients as required.
- **Support with telephone enquiries** by taking messages and relaying information on behalf of clinicians
- Offering to accompany a patient on short walk (if the patient is able), e.g. to the end of the ward or maybe even to the shop
- Provide patients with **hot drinks and other refreshments**
- Ensure patient water jugs are kept full
- **Support patient areas during mealtimes** (volunteers must not undertake patient feeding unless they have been trained to do so)
- **Errand running to support staff** with operational needs (e.g. non-confidential paperwork transfer)
- Nutrition and hydration support for staff (e.g. making drinks for staff, taking food and drinks trolleys round for staff)
- **Supporting patients and visitors with directions** and showing patients and visitors where to go by escorting them on foot as required
- **Pushing patients around the hospital in wheelchairs** as required
- Support the nursing staff with **lab runs and with pharmacy runs** from the internal pharmacy to the wards and Patient Lounge
- Displaying updated information posters around the site
- Reminding visitors and staff to use hand gel
- **Restocking supplies:** tissues, gloves, gel dispensers, masks, PPE etc. around the site as required
- Support by offering to **wiping down surfaces** and **make up clean beds**
- Offer to **tidy** and wipe down movable tables/bedside cabinets for patients
- Support Patient Lounge staff by **liaising with transport**, as requested

Skills / attributes / experience required:

- Must be **proactive**, outgoing and good with people
- Possess a sympathetic and **empathetic** nature
- Willing to treat all patients, relatives, visitors, staff and other volunteers with **consideration, politeness, dignity and respect**
- Accept appropriate supervision and guidance from staff
- The ability to **act on one's own initiative** and a willingness to volunteer without direct supervision
- Reliable and trustworthy
- Physically able to stand (or sit in wheelchair) and independently move around the hospital site with ease for the duration of a shift
- Must be **resilient**: some patients might be distressed; seeing patients with delirium or dementia can be distressing for some people.
- This is not a shadowing opportunity and should not be considered a work placement. You must be motivated to volunteer, rather than shadow clinical staff.

Volunteers can expect to gain:

- A **greater insight into the workings of a busy hospital**
- **Satisfaction and knowledge that volunteering is contributing to patient and staff care and wellbeing**
- **References** (on completion of 100+ hours of volunteering)
- **Supervision and support** from a **dedicated** team of staff
- **Gain confidence communicating** with staff, patients, families and carers in a hospital setting.

General information:

- Volunteers should **not undertake duties outside this role description** without checking first with the Voluntary Services Team.
- Volunteers will **respect patients' wishes** and **report any adverse occurrences to staff**.
- Volunteers must **not undertake any manual handling tasks or clinical patient contact**.
- Volunteers must **not enter any isolation areas**.
- A volunteer can offer emotional support and empathy but must **under no circumstances offer advice or a medical opinion on a patient's treatment or assist with anything of a clinical nature**.
- Volunteers are reminded of the **importance of confidentiality at all times**. Although volunteers will **not be provided with any personal and confidential information about patients**, there will be times that patients disclose personal information. Volunteers must **under no circumstances discuss patients' affairs with any person other than the relevant staff**.
- Volunteers are in place to complement the work of the paid staff and are **not used to replace roles that are usually undertaken by paid hospital employees**.
- Volunteers should **receive regular support, supervision and training** as required.
- Volunteers are **bound by the 'Volunteer Agreement'** which includes their rights and responsibilities, and Trust Policies also apply to volunteers.

Contact information:

For further information or to request an application pack, please contact the Voluntary Services Team

westherts.volunteers@nhs.net

01923 217307