

VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION

ROLE:	Paediatric Ward Support
CLINICAL GROUPS:	North Manchester General Hospital Wythenshawe and Trafford
SPECIALIST HOSPITALS:	Royal Manchester Children's Hospital
DEPARTMENT:	Inpatient Paediatric Wards across MFT
REPORTS TO:	Ward Manager, Nurse in Charge
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Patient Experience Matron, Voluntary Services Manager, and Voluntary Services Administration Officer

ROLE PURPOSE

This volunteer role is designed to enhance the patient experience by offering companionship and helping create a calm, positive atmosphere on the ward. Volunteers will engage with patients through friendly conversation and simple activities, helping to reduce feelings of loneliness, and isolation, particularly for those who may not receive regular visitors.

By offering a warm and empathetic presence, volunteers support social interaction through games, reading aloud, or other light activities. Volunteers also provide emotional support by listening to patients' stories or concerns, helping them feel heard and valued during their hospital stay.

You will:

- Support only those patients identified by the nursing team as appropriate for volunteer interaction.
- Provide face to face, peer support to patients, creating a warm, welcoming, and non-judgemental environment.
- Spend time with patients, parents and guardians through conversation, reading, games, or other simple activities.
- Assist patients with basic non-clinical tasks such as fetching water, magazines, or personal items.
- Help colleagues maintain a clean and tidy ward environment.
- Assist patients accessing entertainment resources such as books, puzzles, or hospital TVs.
- Provide a friendly, respectful, and compassionate presence at all times.
- Maintain patient confidentiality and uphold dignity and respect.
- Be reliable, flexible, and able to adapt to different situations.

Please note: This role does not replace that of a team member, but directly benefits colleagues by providing valuable support to patients.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER

- Report to the Ward Manager or Nurse in Charge (NIC) at the start of each session.
- Be introduced to a Nursing Assistant (NA) or Registered Nurse (RN), who will identify patients to support.
- Introduce yourself to the patient, obtain verbal consent, and use the patient's preferred name.
- Provide a warm, positive and welcoming environment on their arrival.
- Engage in conversation to reduce patient stress and isolation.
- Read age-appropriate books to patients to promote cognitive function and improve mood.

- Support patient wellbeing through activities based such as puzzles, board games, or quizzes, promoting cognitive function, fine motor movement, memory and understanding. Offer support and information as directed by colleagues, in line with training and NHS standards.
- Help maintain ward information, displays and promotional resources.
- Assist colleagues with setting up and tidying the relative's room.
- Participate in local and national initiatives, e.g., World Book Day.
- Support the Friends and Family Test (FFT) and other patient experience surveys by distributing, collecting and logging data.
- Promote and uphold equality, diversity, and individual rights, and take appropriate action if policies are undermined.
- Act as a buddy or mentor for new volunteers.
- Follow all food hygiene and uniform guidelines, including:
 - Hair tied back
 - Bare below the elbows
 - No jewellery, artificial nails, gel or acrylics
 - Cuts covered with waterproof plasters
 - Seek advice if unsure

RECORD AND REVIEW

- Observe sessions and complete a paper-based record.
- Submit records to the Ward Manager or Nurse in Charge, who will upload the information onto HIVE.

TRAINING

Volunteers must:

- Complete all Mandatory Training and maintain up to date records.
- Complete Hand Hygiene and Infection and Prevention – Level 2
- Develop a working knowledge of MFT policies and procedures relating to patient care.
- Actively promote equality, diversity, and rights of individuals, and take action if policies are undermined.
- Be prepared to adapt to new or different duties as service needs evolve.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRACTITIONER SUPERVISING THE VOLUNTEER

- Provide a full orientation to the ward, including environment, safety procedures, and processes.
- Share all relevant information to enable effective volunteer support, including cultural, religious or other special considerations.
- Serve as the primary point of contact, offering guidance, support, and regular communication to help the volunteer feel welcomed, valued, and confident in their role.

INFECTION CONTROL

All volunteers are required to adhere to the MFT Infection Prevention and Control policies and procedures applicable to their role. Managers are also responsible for ensuring that their volunteers complete all relevant, required training in this area.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

MFT has a statutory responsibility to provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment for its volunteers to work in. You have a personal responsibility to ensure that you do not put the health and safety of either yourself, or of anybody else, at risk.

You must not willingly endanger yourself or others whilst on hospital grounds; safe working practices and safety precautions must be adhered to and protective clothing and equipment must be used where appropriate. The MFT Health and Safety Policies detail your full responsibilities regarding Health & Safety at Work, which can be found on the MFT Intranet.

All accidents/incidents must be reported to your Senior Manager, including the reporting of potential hazards.

Please note you must only act within the remit of your role and is important that under no circumstances as a volunteer you become involved in any of the following activities:

- Clinical or medical treatments of any kind, including the handling of pharmaceuticals
- Psychological and or physical interventions, counselling or nursing duties. This includes supporting a patient with feeding or using the toilet
- Advising patients on matters at all – personal, financial, medical, nutritional etc. If a patient asks for advice; the volunteer must direct them to nursing colleagues
- Be involved in lifting/handling patients or pushing patients in wheelchairs unless trained
- Monitor or supervise patients
- Access or input a patient's records
- Handle complaints from patients. Any concerns raised must be escalated to the nursing team, and or the volunteers' services managers
- Escorting patients off hospital premises

Please speak with your manager if you have any queries regarding this.

SAFEGUARDING

All volunteers must ensure that the policies and legislation relating to child protection and Safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults are adhered to. Any concerns should be reported immediately in line with defined MFT processes. Managers are also responsible for ensuring that their volunteers complete all relevant, required training in this area.

SECURITY

All volunteers have a responsibility to ensure the preservation of NHS property and resources. Any concerns should be raised immediately with your line manager, or via the Freedom to Speak Up team.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All volunteers are required to maintain confidentiality at all times in all aspects of their work and to retain the required standard of Information Governance training. Managers are also responsible for ensuring that their volunteers complete all relevant, required training in this area.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

MFT operates a system of comprehensive communication with all volunteers, which is based on the principles that people will be more committed to their work if they fully understand what is happening in their organisation and how it is performing. Regular updates are issued by MFT and which are accessible via the MFT Intranet. Colleagues can also access a wide range of information, including Workforce Policies, via People Place.

NO SMOKING

MFT operates a Smoke Free policy across all of its sites. The policy applies to all colleagues, affiliates, volunteers, patients and visitors and extends to the hospital grounds as well as internal areas.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Method of Assessment
QUALIFICATIONS	<p>Successful candidates will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.</p> <p>Ability to communicate effectively in English, both verbally and in writing.</p>		<p>Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).</p> <p>Application form / interview / recruitment event</p>
KNOWLEDGE	<p>Demonstrates understanding of the Trust's core values and how they relate to the volunteering role.</p> <p>Shows a strong understanding of the hospital.</p>	<p>Experience of working within a health care environment.</p> <p>Shows a strong understanding of the ward and its functions.</p>	<p>Application form / interview / recruitment event</p>
TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE	<p>Full training will be provided to all successful candidates.</p>	<p>Healthcare / related Qualifications.</p>	<p>Completion of the Trusts Mandatory Training.</p> <p>Role specific training provided by department of placement.</p>
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<p>Displays skills such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion, empathy, active listening and responsiveness • Ability to work independently and take initiative • Enthusiastic and strong motivation • Enhanced communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with a variety of health professionals, the general public, and fellow volunteers • A commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times. • A professional attitude • An understanding of the role's boundaries and the ability to recognise when to refer matters to staff. 	<p>Ability to manage occasional challenging behaviour with professionalism and empathy.</p> <p>Experience using office equipment, such as, computers, printers, scanners and telephones.</p>	<p>Application form / interview / recruitment event</p>

		Previous ward experience.	
ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiastic and committed to supporting and contributing to high standards of patient care. • Friendly, open, empathetic and compassionate. • Professional outlook with a positive attitude. • Honest and trustworthy. • Resilient and able to handle challenges effectively 		Application form / interview / recruitment event
OTHERS	You must be 18-years of age to apply for this role.		Application form and evidence of ID.

