





Volunteering in NHSScotland A starting point for engaging young volunteers in the NHS

National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland

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Contents

Foreword	3
Background and context	4
Volunteering strategy in NHSScotland The role of the National Group for Volunteering Why we produced this document	4
The difference volunteering can make	5
Why involve young people as volunteers?	6
Policy map	7
Principles for practice	8
Case studies and examples of good practice	10
Resources and support	13
Further reading	15
Composition of the national group for volunteering in nhsscotland	16
Acknowledgement and thanks	17

FOREWORD

A welcome and introduction from the Chairman of the National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland

Why should the National Group for Volunteering in Scotland decide to produce a Starting Point for Engaging Young Volunteers? The answer to that question is very straightforward. Young people – who are not just the citizens of tomorrow, but importantly also the citizens of today – deserve to be recognised for their enthusiasm, their energy and their determination, and of course, in addition, the NHS receives a large volume of inquiries from young people. Young people are a significant section of our society and have a substantial contribution to make to Scotland's future

I recently had the privilege of announcing the winner of the National Volunteer of the Year Award, sponsored by Young Scot, at a national awards ceremony, and I was astounded by the range and quality of the volunteering set out by all of the short-listed contestants. The NHS in Scotland already benefits from some young volunteers, but much more could be done to the benefit of our patients, and to the benefit of young people themselves.

This document is aimed at NHS Boards – both the territorial Boards and the national Boards – in the hope that they will highlight the document and support its contents, encouraging appropriate staff and partners to recognise that young people volunteer for a variety of reasons. We also hope that NHS Boards will adopt a systematic, methodical approach to identify and create appropriate opportunities for young people, and also to provide relevant training for the staff overseeing them.

In this document we set out how volunteering by young people can contribute to a number of national strategic goals and provide some principles for practice. In addition, it highlights the importance of the NHS working in partnership, particularly given current pending legislation on Health and Social Care Partnerships and on Community Planning Partnerships.

Volunteering has to be an issue of importance in that context, and we would suggest that the position of young people requires specific consideration by the various partners in line with the contents of this document.

We commend this document to you.

Sandy Watson OBE DL Chairman, National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Volunteering strategy in NHSScotland

The Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme is focused on working towards the following key outcomes:

- 1. Volunteering contributes to Scotland's health by:
 - (a) enhancing the quality of the patient experience, and
 - (b) providing opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of volunteers themselves.
- 2. The infrastructure that supports volunteering is developed, sustainable and inclusive.
- 3. Volunteering, and the positive contribution it makes, is widely recognised, with a culture which demonstrates its value across the partners involved.

This document supports the work towards achieving all three outcomes as it recognises the importance of the patient experience and the benefits of volunteering for the volunteer. It provides a tool that will allow NHS Boards to support inclusive volunteering whilst at the same time recognising the value that volunteering brings to all involved.

The role of the National Group for Volunteering

The National Group for Volunteering exists to provide national leadership and guidance to ensure a long-term vision and consistency of approach and support for volunteering across NHS Scotland.

With representation from NHS Boards, Volunteer Centres and local authorities, the group seeks to champion the cause of volunteering by supporting the NHS to develop and sustain voluntary activity in support of safe and effective patient-centred care.

Why we produced this document

This document has been produced to support NHS Boards to provide meaningful and engaging opportunities for young people in recognition of the large volume of volunteer enquiries that the NHS receives.

We acknowledge that volunteering in the NHS is held in high regard both by individuals who volunteer and agencies such as higher education institutions and prospective employers. We have kept this in mind in developing this document.

The development of suitable volunteering opportunities for young people in NHS settings is an ongoing endeavour and is likely to continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Economic drivers and the increasing value placed on volunteering for career and health gain are likely to result in continued high levels of interest from young people in NHS-based volunteering.

THE DIFFERENCE VOLUNTEERING CAN MAKE

Volunteering in the NHS contributes to safe and effective patient care. For this to happen, the development of volunteering needs to ensure that the patient, the service and the volunteer benefit from the experience.

Successful volunteering programmes have been recognised for many years as being mutually beneficial to both the volunteer and the recipient of the volunteering activity. In mental health circles volunteering is widely recognised for the health benefits it brings through socialisation, a sense of contributing to a greater purpose and providing structure to many lives.

For some time, the benefits to volunteers who support mental health have been acknowledged. Recognising that each individual has a level of "mental health" in the same way that they have a level of physical health, volunteering can be seen as not only a health promotion activity but also preventative care.

Whilst an individual's first introduction to volunteering can extend from the need to increase a sense of wellbeing, self-esteem, confidence or provide structure to their lifestyle it need not only be in such acute circumstances – participation in society through volunteering is something that can provide health gain, both mental and physical, to anyone.

In relation to the benefits gained from the recipients of volunteering in the NHS, many roles exist where the increased interaction and stimulation support the wellbeing of the patient, complementing their healthcare.

More recent developments in the field of nutrition have seen the introduction of volunteers at meal times where a volunteer encourages a patient to eat, thus supporting their improved recovery. It could be argued

that every single role within an NHS setting, as a contributor to the services the NHS Board delivers, is in some way supporting healthcare.

"Worthwhile and both the volunteers and those on the receiving end get tremendous value from it.

Might consider this myself in my retirement years!"

Parent of a volunteer

The integration of health and social care services offers additional opportunities for volunteer involvement as the Transform Befriending Project case study demonstrates on page 11.

"I got involved in the befriending project through the volunteer centre after attending the 'get ready to volunteer' course. I enjoy giving my time to those people who need it most. My confidence and my communication skills have improved whilst taking part in this project and I feel that it will improve my CV and help me with future employment." Joshua, Aged 19

WHY INVOLVE YOUNG PEOPLE AS VOLUNTEERS?

Involving Young People in the NHS can provide a number of benefits. Volunteers of any age, when engaged in healthcare, can develop new skills and increase confidence, become better informed of health matters and become more aware of their own health – often leading to an increased level of responsibility for their own wellbeing.

Across NHSScotland a wide range of roles exist where involving young people as volunteers can bring additional benefits:

- ▶ Involvement and engagement activity e.g. Public Partnership Forums, Patient Panels and other engagement structures. By involving young people in these roles, it can provide a fresh perspective from a generation often regarded as difficult to reach or involve.
- ▶ Equalities and inclusion involving young volunteers in inclusion activity helps to ensure that policy and practice takes into account the views of young people.
- ▶ Health improvement volunteers involved in health improvement or health promotion roles where the target audience consists of young people reduces barriers and the messages put across can carry added validity.
- ▶ Roles aligned to patient care these sorts of roles can provide young volunteers with an insight into working in the NHS and help to build a desire for a career in healthcare

Taking steps to involve young people as volunteers helps to ensure a level of diversity exists within the pool of volunteers. A diverse pool, representative of the community it serves, supports ongoing recruitment and retention of volunteers, making the roles more appealing to prospective volunteers and challenging stereotypes.

Issues to consider

NHS Boards should consider the following issues in developing roles for younger volunteers. Boards may also wish to differentiate between work experience and volunteering, paying specific attention to risk management and mitigation.

- **Volunteers** have reported lengthy delays from their initial note of intention to volunteer to when they begin their volunteering opportunity.
- ▶ At the same time, **those managing volunteers** have experienced a high turnover of young volunteers who have sought to attain a specified quantity of volunteering endeavour in order to access a course of study.
- ▶ Where volunteer roles consist of **patient** contact where a relationship is developed it is often not beneficial to the patient to experience the turnover in volunteers.

This document aims to support NHS Boards to develop suitable volunteering opportunities that will:

- reduce delays in placing volunteers
- meet the needs of short-term volunteers, and
- reduce the impact on patients of volunteer turnover.

POLICY MAP

Supporting young people to volunteer in the NHS helps to contribute towards a number of shared strategic goals.

More Choices More Chances (June 2006) recognised for the first time that volunteering was a viable and worthy option for young people not in education, employment or training and that it could provide young people with the confidence, skills and experience to move into further study or employment.

Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth (October 2010) recognised the changing economic environment and the important opportunity that volunteering offers. With a strong focus on young people throughout the strategy it sets out a vision that "supports the lifelong development and use of skills".

The **Healthcare Quality Strategy for Scotland** (May 2010) sets out a vision for healthcare in Scotland, aiming to deliver the highest quality healthcare services. It sets out three quality ambitions:

- ▶ Safe There will be no avoidable injury or harm to people from healthcare, and an appropriate, clean and safe environment will be provided for the delivery of healthcare services at all time.
- Person-Centred Mutually beneficial partnerships between patients, their families and those delivering healthcare services which respect individual needs and values and which demonstrates compassion, continuity, clear communication and shared decision-making.
- ▶ Effective The most appropriate treatments, interventions, support and services will be provided at the right time to everyone who will benefit, and wasteful or harmful variation will be eradicated.

Volunteers can contribute to all three quality ambitions though the wide variety of roles that exist in NHS Boards, for example by taking part in infection control inspections, providing bereavement support or driving visitors to hospital.

The Scottish Government's **2020 Vision** (2013) is that by 2020 everyone is able to live longer healthier lives at home, or in a homely setting. The **Route Map to the 2020 Vision for Health and Social Care** sets out the continued commitment to the Quality Strategy and the key areas for improvement in achieving the vision. The Route Map specifically makes reference to the desire to enable more people to volunteer.

Curriculum for Excellence (2011) aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for those aged between three and 18. It aims to develop "four capacities" in young people: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Action for Jobs - Supporting Young Scots into Work: Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy (2012) sets out the Scottish Government's short, medium and long-term aims to improve the opportunities young people have in attaining employment.

PRINCIPLES FOR PRACTICE

In engaging young people as volunteers it is important to remember not only the benefits to the NHS and patients, but also to the volunteers themselves. The principles to apply to engaging any volunteers will of course apply to engaging young volunteers too.

Young people volunteer for a variety of reasons and can draw a number of benefits from their experiences such as:

- an improved sense of wellbeing, having contributed something to the society they live in
- increased levels of confidence and improved communication skills
- ▶ a greater understanding of the roles within the NHS and person-centred care, and
- an increased sense of responsibility and recognition.

Through considering the above it's important to consider the needs that young volunteers may have. It is not possible to outline what a "typical" young volunteer's needs might be, but there are some prompts that are worth considering.

- ▶ What is the image of volunteering within the NHS or your area? Is it likely to appeal to young volunteers as an inclusive setting?
- How long will it take to place a young volunteer? Staff from NHS Boards have often cited a difficulty in placing young volunteers within a timeframe that the volunteer had anticipated. Where students, or prospective students, seek out volunteering opportunities as a platform for further study they may only have a finite window to commit their time to. It is important to be upfront about the timescales for recruitment, preparation and any level of commitment required.
- ▶ What level of commitment do you expect from young volunteers? Young people can have a variety of responsibilities and commitments at any given time how realistic are your current roles to a prospective young volunteer?
- ▶ Can you offer short-term volunteer opportunities with a quicker recruitment process? Cutting down on the waiting time can be particularly important for young people moving onto further education.
- Who will supervise young volunteers? If the young person is under the age of 18 you will need to consider what screening and support is necessary for those who manage the volunteer and what level of supervision is required. A risk assessment should be undertaken to establish what level of risk the role poses to all concerned.
- What level of support are you able to offer to young volunteers? Can the roles and the staff working around the roles offer the necessary level of support to someone who lacks confidence or would like to develop their communication skills? Can you offer the correct level of emotional support for volunteers if they are placed in roles that are more demanding of them?
- ▶ Have you considered how you will acknowledge the efforts of young volunteers? The Saltire Awards can provide a useful mechanism for rewarding young volunteers with recognised awards (see the section called 'Resources and Support' later in this report). You may also wish to consider the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Award in Volunteering Skills at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 3, 4 and 5 or the Dynamic Youth Awards operated by Youth Scotland.
- ▶ Are there opportunities to explore partnerships with third sector organisations who have expertise in engaging with young volunteers?

The above can serve as a brief checklist for preparing to engage young people as volunteers but it would be wise to consult other resources – see the section called 'Resources and Support' later in this publication.

Saltire Awards

Saltire Awards are the new Scottish awards designed to formally recognise the commitment and contribution of youth volunteering to volunteer-engaging organisations (organisations that engage with volunteers).

Supported by the Scottish Government in partnership with Voluntary Action Scotland, the Saltire Awards enable young volunteers to record the skills, experience and learning gained through successful volunteering placements provided by local and national voluntary agencies.

The Awards are split into four sections – the Challenge, the Approach, the Ascent and the Summit – and achievement is recognised in the form of Saltire Award certificates and Young Scot reward points.

Saltire Awards are designed to encourage, enable and reward youth volunteering and to make it easy for organisations to support young people to take part.

See **Resources and Support** for more information.



CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

The following case studies have been collected from NHS and third sector colleagues in order to provide examples of successful volunteer engagement.

How volunteering helped Joe, and our patients

"Joe applied for volunteering in 2007. The first communication came from Joe's mother; she had been looking around for something suitable on behalf of her son. He has a physical disability, which also meant many years of experience as a patient at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children (RHSC) Yorkhill.

Not knowing much about Joe's limitations, I wasn't sure what we would be able to offer him through volunteering, however invited an application, which included an Occupational Health Check to determine his fitness for any volunteering placement. At interview, Joe shared that following school age, he had spent many years at home during the day, whilst all his friends were busy with work or college. He has a very busy social life at evenings and weekends, but found daytimes very long and boring.

The last day I saw Joe he whizzed past me in the corridor shouting "how's it going"! He's a very capable young man and a valuable member of the team of volunteers who work at Medicinema. His role includes escorting (in his wheel chair) able bodied children to/from the cinema auditorium. He has a great sense of humour, fantastic with the kids, many of whom he can relate to, from his personal experience in hospital.

He helps them with their computer games, as he is an expert in this field. Joe was not looking for volunteering as a means of improving employment opportunities, however, he acknowledges how it has helped tremendously in giving him something meaningful to be involved with whilst his friends are at work etc.

Joe now volunteers twice weekly; he gets involved in supporting many other ad hoc events, particularly around Christmas Time, which is exceptionally busy at the Children's Hospital. Christmas time 2011/12 Joe was on premises working with

nursing staff (dressed as an elf) wrapping and distributing gifts until 3am both Christmas mornings. Joe could be described as being one of the most reliable and committed volunteers available to RHSC."

Services Manager NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

The Transform Befriending Project

Transform Befriending is an inter-generational volunteering project for young people in Midlothian run by Volunteer Centre Midlothian. Young people between the ages of 14 and 20 go into sheltered housing complexes to befriend residents, many of whom are lonely and isolated.

The sessions provide fun, laughter and stimulation and the young people gain confidence, social skills and experiences that will be beneficial for getting into university, college or getting a job.

Residents and volunteers have an active role in creating and planning activities. The sessions are two hours long and the activities include; arts and crafts, carpet bowls, quizzes, new age curling, reminiscence, music, Nintendo Wii and much more. The worker from Volunteer Centre Midlothian arranges and supervises the session. This way, volunteers do not have to be members of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) schemes, nor do they have to go through a lengthy application process. Provided there is not a waiting list, young people can register their interest, receive training the next week and start immediately.

Feedback from a volunteer: "I like talking to everyone, the volunteers and the residents. I just like to feel like I am helping out. My confidence has been boosted and my communication skills improved."

Rebecca, aged 15

Feedback from a resident: "I enjoy playing the dominoes! I would play them every week, also I like trying the activities and they are great to get everyone talking. The young volunteers are great, they are all very nice."

Molly, aged 92

Feedback from a Sheltered Housing Manager: "The befriending project is a much needed service, the residents all very much look forward to coming down to the sessions and enjoy the social interaction with the young volunteers. The residents have learnt new skills, passed on their skills and have a better understanding of younger people now."



Mark, Manager Crystalmount Sheltered Housing

Volunteer Case Study - Lianne

Lianne became involved as a volunteer with NHS Lanarkshire in the Community Mothers Breastfeeding Support programme at the age of 17. She had overcome difficulties in breastfeeding her first child and when her health visitor had suggested that she could pass on her experiences to other mums as one of the volunteers.

Lianne admits: "Volunteering was something I had never thought of doing until hearing about the Community Mothers Project. It allowed me to meet other people who were passionate about breastfeeding and providing the best possible start for their baby. As I had difficulties with breastfeeding, I was aware of how hard it was therefore I wanted to help others in a similar situation so that they could continue to breastfeed."

One of the main criteria of the funding that the Community Mothers Breastfeeding Support Programme received from SureStart at the time was for personal development of the volunteers. The programme staff highlighted that Lianne was keen to do further development and placed her on one of the UNICEF breastfeeding management courses along with midwifery and nursing staff. Lianne then started giving talks to local schools on breastfeeding and being a young parent and was supported by the programme to attend breastfeeding in the community workshops and other NHSScotland events.

Lianne says: "I always had a keen interest in midwifery, however without the support from Community Mothers staff I am not sure I would have had the confidence to go ahead and apply."

The Programme staff were there for support throughout the course and with the Human Biology Higher that Lianne had to attain to get onto the programme.

Lianne is now a fully qualified Midwife working in Maternity Services in NHS Lanarkshire.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Volunteer Managers Network

The Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme of support has re-established the Volunteer Managers Network. The Network provides an opportunity for those managing volunteers in NHS settings to come together to share practice, highlight challenges and collaborate on joint work.

National meetings take place once a year with regional meetings taking place quarterly in between. For more information visit the Scottish Health Council website at www.scottishhealthcouncil.org

The network also includes an online community of practice hosted on the Knowledge Network. This is accessible via an Athens log-in (available to all NHS staff).

The network is available at www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/volunteering.

Volunteer Centres

Volunteer Centres form one of the integral parts of the Third Sector Interface in each local authority area. The Volunteer Centres work to develop volunteering and volunteers in their area, improving practice in volunteer management and developing new roles for volunteers.

Details for your local Volunteer Centre can be found here: www.vascotland.org/tsis/find-your-tsi

Volunteer Scotland

Volunteer Scotland is the national web portal for volunteering opportunities. It allows prospective volunteers to search for volunteering opportunities in a geographical area, by the client group or by the type of activity the role involves.

www.vascotland.org

Saltire Awards

Saltire Awards are the Scottish Government Volunteering awards for young people aged between 12 and 25. An easy-to-use website allows young people to record and track volunteering hours and learning gained through volunteering so their experiences will always be there when they need them.

www.saltireawards.org.uk

Award in Volunteering Skills

The Award in Volunteering Skills at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 3, 4 and 5 provides formal recognition of volunteering activity. Through participation in volunteering activities, candidates will develop a range of skills and personal development experiences which will help to prepare them for responsibility, further education and employment.

www.sqa.org.uk

Dynamic Youth Awards and Youth Achievement Awards

Dynamic Youth Awards are peer-assessed awards recognising the contributions and achievements of young people in the 10 to 14 age group. The awards are easy to incorporate into existing youth work and school programmes.

Youth Achievement Awards offer significant opportunities for young people to develop the four Curriculum for Excellence capacities: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. They recognise young people's contributions in a variety of settings including youth work, volunteering, active citizenship, and formal education.

www.youthscotland.org.uk

Young Scot

Young Scot is the national youth information and citizenship charity for Scotland. It regularly engages with young people on a variety topics.

The Young Scot website has more details on their activities: www.youngscot.org

FURTHER READING

It is important to ensure that volunteering opportunities are accessible to young people and provide them with the skills, confidence and experience that they seek to gain.

Many volunteer roles across Scotland are time-bound and locked in to office hours during the working week. It can be difficult for young people in education to access these opportunities and consideration should be given to offering opportunities outside the Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm window.

A number of research publications cover the barrier to volunteering in more depth. Comparing these findings against your own experiences of involving young people in your volunteering programmes may help to identify ways to increase access to the opportunities.

A Good Practice Guide to Working with Young People as Volunteers, 2007, Voluntary Action Angus & Thornton's solicitors, www.volunteerangus.org.uk

British Youth Council, 'Recognise and Respect Us', 2008,

www.byc.org.uk/media/18384/Recognise%20and%20Respect%20Us.%20Overcoming%20Barriers%20to %20Youth%20Volunteering.%20Full%20Report%2024%20July%202009.pdf

Young people, volunteering and youth projects: A rapid review of recent evidence, Vinspired, December 2009

vinspired.com/uploads/admin_assets/datas/282/original/v_formative_evaluation_rapid_evidence_review_D ec_2009_x_2.pdf

Beyond the Trolley Service – Volunteering and health in the 21st century, NHS Tayside, 2009 www.volunteerangus.org.uk/documents/pdf/Beyondthetrolley.pdf

All website links were accurate at the time of publication.

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL GROUP FOR VOLUNTEERING IN NHSSCOTLAND

The National Group for Volunteering comprises of a range of representatives from the spectrum of health, social care and volunteering backgrounds. Nine NHS Boards are represented amongst the membership in addition to two Third Sector Interfaces, national agencies and one local authority.

The Group membership currently consists of the following representatives:

- Sandy Watson (Chair), Chairman, NHS Tayside
- Alan Bigham, Programme Manager (Volunteering), Scottish Health Council
- ▶ Carrie Blair, Senior Strategy Engagement Officer, NHS Health Scotland
- ▶ Rob Coward, Educational Projects Manager, NHS Education for Scotland
- ▶ Harriet Eadie, Director, Volunteer Centre Edinburgh
- ▶ Kenny Freeburn, Head of Ambulance Services, Scottish Ambulance Service
- Lynne Kidd, Head of Public Affairs, NHS National Services Scotland
- ▶ Diane Lockhart, Voluntary Services Manager, NHS Lothian
- ▶ Louise Macdonald, Chief Executive, Young Scot
- ▶ Diane McCulloch, Head of Community Care (Operational Services), Dundee City Council
- Katrina Murray, Voluntary Services Manager, NHS Lanarkshire
- Francis Santos, Policy Manager, Scottish Government
- Claire Stevens, Chief Officer, Voluntary Health Scotland
- ▶ Tom Wilson, Community Nurse, Learning Disability and Branch Chair RCN Lanarkshire and State Hospital, Staff Chair HR Forum, NHS Lanarkshire
- Margaret Young, Services Manager, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

This document was produced with input from a range of stakeholders, including volunteer managers, references to existing practice and testimony from volunteers.

The National Group would like to note the contributions from the following people and organisations:

- ▶ Karen Downie, Volunteer Centre Midlothian
- ▶ Keith Barbour, Volunteer Centre Midlothian
- the volunteers who agreed to appear in case studies.

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