

# Staff Induction

## Guidance to NHS Scotland Boards

July 2010



## **1. Introduction**

This guidance has been produced as part of the Scottish Government Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering in the NHS in Scotland (CEL 10 2008). It aims to help NHS Boards to consider the incorporation of information about its, and national, provisions for volunteering into the staff induction programmes and offers suggestions on what information could be included about national provisions.

## **2. Why should a Board incorporate volunteering into staff induction?**

Volunteers play an important part in the NHS in Scotland and they perform a variety of roles in helping to shape services as well as deliver services in both acute and primary/community settings. It is important that NHSScotland staff members understand why volunteers are involved and are clear about what part they can play to help NHS Boards to become excellent engagers of volunteers. Doing this will assist Boards to achieve the Investing in Volunteers quality standard, a requirement placed on them by Scottish Government Ministers in the Better Health Care Action Plan (December 2007) and the Scottish Government Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering in NHSScotland.

## **3. What should be included about volunteering in staff induction?**

- A rationale for involving volunteers;
- An overview of the Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering includes examples of how NHS staff can help with its implementation;
- An overview of any Board plans and policies on volunteering including any support a Board might give through employer supported volunteering;
- Contact details of the Board's Voluntary Services Managers; and
- Examples of volunteering already taking place in the Board in both acute and primary/community settings.

## **4. A rationale for involving volunteers**

Boards may have a rationale for involving volunteers already in existing Volunteer Policy. If not the following could be used or adapted.

Citizens volunteering in health care pre-date the NHS. Today it is estimated that many thousands of people give freely of their time either directly to our NHSScotland or indirectly through organisations such as the Red Cross and WRVS. Volunteers are active in many different health care settings, including hospitals, and perform a variety of roles. They work side by side with paid medical staff, nursing staff and allied health professionals, complementing, not replacing, their work and adding value to it.

Many people living in Scotland value the NHS as a public body and they value the work it does. Many want to play an active part in the NHS in Scotland. Volunteering helps to create a mutual NHS in Scotland and is a key part of Patient Focus Public Involvement.

In an NHSScotland context a volunteer is:

- A person who gives freely and willingly of their time to help improve the health and wellbeing of patients, users (and their families and carers) of the NHS in Scotland.

Volunteering brings a wide range of benefits to patients, carers, service users, Scotland's NHS and its staff and to the volunteers themselves:

- For patients/service users, volunteers can offer social support, experience, time and attention;
- For Scotland's NHS and its staff, volunteers can help to free up professional resources and forge stronger links with local communities; and
- For volunteers the experience can provide purposeful activity, a sense of belonging, social interaction and be good for their own health and well being.

People who volunteer in the NHS have a wide range of motivations for doing so. Some of the most common motivations are:

- A desire to make positive difference to the lives of others;
- A desire to give something back to the NHS following a family member or friend receiving NHS help; and
- An interest in gaining practical experience of the NHS in Scotland in advance of making career choices.

## **5. The Scottish Government Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering in NHS Scotland**

Volunteering has become an integral and successful part of our NHS in Scotland. Keeping it a success story is in all of our interests. That is why the Scottish Government has introduced the Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering in NHSScotland.

The Refreshed Strategy – What is happening?

- Every NHS Board is being asked to achieve the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard by 31 March 2011 to bring more consistency to volunteering
- Every NHS Board has a Nominated Lead on Volunteering to provide Board leadership on volunteering
- Every NHS Board is producing its own strategic action plan for volunteering, involving key stakeholders to better plan for volunteering

- NHS staff who manage or work alongside volunteers have access to appropriate learning on good practice.

## **5.1 What can I do to help make the Strategy a success?**

There are some simple actions you can take to help make the Refreshed Strategy a success.

If you manage NHS staff who work beside volunteers:

- Raise awareness of the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard amongst your staff;
- Make sure frontline staff are involved in discussions about volunteer involvement before it happens;
- Ensure resources are in place to support volunteers to be effective in their roles; and
- Share volunteer successes with other NHS managers and your managers.

If you work alongside volunteers:

- Show volunteers dignity and respect;
- Be welcoming of new volunteers and help them settle in;
- Recognise their efforts and say thanks; and
- Give volunteers support and help when they need it.

As outlined in section 3, NHS Boards should also consider providing the following information at staff induction:

- An overview of any Board plans and policies on volunteering including any support a Board might give through employer supported volunteering;
- Contact details of the Board's Voluntary Services Managers; and
- Examples of volunteering already taking place in the Board in both acute and primary/community settings.

For further advice and information contact Volunteer Development Scotland, Jubilee House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ, telephone 01786 479593