

1. Introduction

This paper sets out the key aspects of a communications strategy for the Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme which seeks to ensure that progress towards the programme outcomes is maintained, taking into account the recently published national outcomes framework Volunteering for All.

2. Programme communications 2011-2019

A communications framework, endorsed by the National Group, was published in November 2012. The framework set out key external and internal factors in the volunteering arena and the key messages for each stakeholder group that needed to be considered in order to drive forward volunteering in NHSScotland.

A presentation on the framework was delivered to the NHSScotland Strategic Communications Group in December 2012.

A subsequent presentation took place in February 2015 after a number of misleading and factually inaccurate stories had appeared in national and local media. The Group supported a more cohesive approach to communications, requesting that volunteer managers in their boards be supported to produce case studies and articles that would more accurately reflect the nature of volunteering in NHSScotland.

Feedback from the National Group in May 2019 has provided further input to this current draft.

3. National and policy context

The launch of [Volunteering for All – our national framework](#) on 25 April 2019 has set out the strategic direction for volunteering for the next decade. Built on a foundation of evidence of where we are as a nation, it sets out the long-term outcomes for volunteering in Scotland:

- ▶ **Volunteering and participation is valued, supported and enabled from the earliest possible age and throughout life**
- ▶ **Volunteering in all its forms is integrated and recognised in our lives through national and local policy**
- ▶ **There is an environment and culture which celebrates volunteers and volunteering and all of its benefits**
- ▶ **The places and spaces where we volunteer are developed, supported and sustained**
- ▶ **There are diverse, quality and inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and stay involved**

These new national outcomes are not incompatible with the agreed outcomes for volunteering in NHSScotland. They transcend our focus on NHSScotland and should be viewed in that context. However, there is scope for NHS Boards to consider how their delivery and strategic activity can contribute to this long term vision for volunteering.

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Work is ongoing with NHS volunteer managers to examine how reporting and evaluation of the impact of volunteering can support our collaborative progress to achieving these aspirational goals. Scope remains for consideration of how we *communicate* when we describe each of our own volunteering programmes against the vision of valued, supported enabled, and inclusive volunteering.

Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme outcomes

The Volunteering in NHSScotland outcomes were agreed with Programme Stakeholders in 2012 and encompassed the objectives identified by Scottish Government for the Programme at that time as well as the policy context in 2011/12 and the needs of NHS Boards.

The outcomes below

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

See appendix 1 for a cross-reference of the national and Programme outcomes.

Recent engagement with stakeholders

Volunteer managers and the National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland identified the strategic environmental factors impacting on volunteering in NHSScotland.

In comparison to the factors identified in 2012, today's strategic landscape includes significantly challenging matters which have a far greater locus and which are far less open to influence such as 'Brexit' and societal changes that lead to an impact on volunteer engagement e.g. episodic volunteering, population shifts and an increasing poverty gap in many of our communities.

Against these challenges a number of opportunities have emerged, including an increase in openness to technological development in NHSScotland, a national outcomes framework for volunteering and national (Scottish and UK) volunteering initiatives.

However, the constraints of limited capacity remain, in some cases increasingly pressured to deal with an increase in expectation from the board and from volunteers.

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The resulting PEST analysis is included below with positive (↑), negative (↓) and balanced (↔) aspects noted:

Political (and legal)	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ 'Volunteering for All' ↓ Impact of Brexit uncertainty on volunteers and their families ↓ Negative media coverage of volunteering ↓ Perceptions of job substitution ↔ Differing expectations from Chief Officer, Chair, Board on volunteer engagement ↔ Helpforce activity across the UK sending mixed messages ↔ Regional working ↑ Once for Scotland approach ↑ Volunteering for All – our national outcomes framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Partnership with Helpforce ↓ Savings targets and reducing budgets ↓ Limited expenses/equipment budgets for volunteers ↓ Limited or no budget on wards for volunteer engagement ↓ Fixed term contracts for volunteer managers ↓ Replacing volunteer manager posts with lower banded positions ↓ Lack of development opportunities ↓ No restriction on volunteer numbers ↓ Low income a barrier to volunteering ↓ Balancing care delivery against financial reality
Social (relationships, attitudes etc)	Technological (and systems)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↔ Support for young volunteers ↑ Schools programme ↑ Commitment of volunteers ↔ Older volunteers have been more reliable in past but volunteers are changing ↓ Society changing – increasing commitments impacts on ability to commit to volunteer, episodic volunteering ↔ Older population have demands on time ↔ Shift to younger people volunteering ↔ Socialisation is a driver for volunteers – can impact on delivery ↔ Changes to NHS Board premises (hospitals) and volunteers not wishing to move ↔ Volunteer motivations can vary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ Resources limited ↓ Limited capacity of volunteer managers ↓ Some volunteers require more support that cannot be provided ↑ Volunteering Information System is helpful, opportunity to make reports more meaningful and handle online applications ↑ Volunteering Information System User Group provides an engagement platform to ensure system meets ongoing need ↑ Volunteer Managers Network provides a space and platform to showcase and develop new volunteer roles ↑ Clear Pathway guidance ↔ Evaluation and planning could be improved nationally ↓ Lack of a central bank of core case studies to use locally

4. Key messages for stakeholders

In consideration of the policy landscape and the challenges that face volunteering in NHSScotland and the wider arena of health and social care, the following messages have been identified against each stakeholder group.

It is not the remit of the Volunteering in NHSScotland to operate in isolation in communicating these key messages. Rather, it is a collective responsibility that sits across all members of the National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland and the stakeholder group they represent.

Whilst the earlier iteration of a Communications Framework outlined the methods available to NHS Boards, it is not considered relevant to do so as each has their own Communications Department and access to a website, social media and contacts in local media. It is not the intention of the Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme to drive forward local media engagement, rather, to facilitate it through, for example, the production of case studies, the evaluation work and the scaling and spreading of volunteer roles across Scotland via the NHSScotland Roles Library and the case study activity.

To this end the table below outlines the stakeholder group, the key messages and where the responsibility for conveying these messages.

Stakeholder groups	What the stakeholder group needs to know	Responsibility for communicating with these stakeholders				
		National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland	Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme	NHS Board Strategic Leads	NHS Board Volunteer Managers	NHS Board Comms Depts
Prospective volunteers (public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What roles are available ▶ What length of commitment is expected ▶ How to apply ▶ How long the process takes ▶ How volunteers will be supported ▶ What the benefits of volunteering can be ▶ That volunteering is inclusive 				✓	

Stakeholder groups	What the stakeholder group needs to know	Responsibility for communicating with these stakeholders				
		National Group for Volunteering in NHS Scotland	Volunteering in NHS Scotland Programme	NHS Board Strategic Leads	NHS Board Volunteer Managers	NHS Board Comms Depts
Existing volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Other opportunities ▶ Events, recognition of their contribution and how they are valued ▶ How to seek, and availability of support and training ▶ How to feed back on their experiences 				✓	
Unions, staff and staff-side	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ That each board has a policy in place ensuring that volunteers do not replace staff roles ▶ That there is a nationally agreed charter in place (between Volunteer Scotland and the Scottish Trades Union Congress) ▶ That roles are person-centred, coproduced and that staff are engaged in the design ▶ The difference that volunteering makes, particularly for staff and patients ▶ Who to contact in order to design a volunteer roles 	✓		✓	✓	
Boards and management within NHS Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The impact that volunteering has on patients, staff and volunteers ▶ The health gain attained through volunteering ▶ That for volunteering to work it needs to be adequately resourced 	✓	✓	✓		
Patients, carers and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ That there are opportunities to design volunteer roles based on their experiences ▶ That there is a space and place to feed back on experience with volunteers and ideas for volunteering via Care Opinion 			✓	✓	
Local media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Positive and illustrative examples of volunteering and the impact it has on all stakeholders 		✓	✓	✓	✓
National media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Positive and illustrative examples of volunteering and the impact it has ▶ How volunteering is contributing to the national outcomes across society ▶ That volunteers do not undertake the roles of paid staff 		✓	✓	✓	

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		National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland	Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme	NHS Board Strategic Leads	NHS Board Volunteer Managers	NHS Board Comms Depts
Education institutions and students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What roles are available ▶ What length of commitment is expected ▶ How to apply ▶ How long the process takes ▶ How volunteers will be supported 				✓	
Elected members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Positive and illustrative examples of volunteering and the impact it has ▶ How volunteering is contributing to the national outcomes across society 				✓	✓
Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Positive and illustrative examples of volunteering and the impact it has ▶ How volunteering is contributing to the national outcomes across society 		✓		✓	
Volunteer Centres/ Third Sector Interfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What types of roles are available ▶ What length of commitment is expected ▶ What qualities are sought from prospective volunteers ▶ How to apply ▶ How long the process takes ▶ How volunteers will be supported 				✓	
National and local volunteering organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What roles are available ▶ How to engage with their NHS Board/organisation to develop roles or deliver services ▶ The Clear Pathway guidance for engaging with NHS Boards 				✓	

5. Actions for the National Group for Volunteering in NHSScotland

The Group is asked to endorse this concentrated approach to communication of key messages, highlighting any gaps and providing suggestions to address them.

Appendix 1: Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme and Volunteering for All outcomes

Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme Outcomes	Volunteering for All – National outcomes				
	Volunteering and participation is valued, supported and enabled from the earliest possible age and throughout life	Volunteering in all its forms is integrated and recognised in our lives through national and local policy	There is an environment and culture which celebrates volunteers and volunteering and all of its benefits	The places and spaces where we volunteer are developed, supported and sustained	There are diverse, quality and inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and stay involved
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.	✓		✓		