

1.0 Who is this for?

Staff - Any current or ex-staff member of NHS Lothian. This includes bank staff and retired staff but does not include agency staff or staff from other NHS Boards. Non-NHS Lothian employees working on site and any students on placements are treated as external applicants.

2.0 What is the purpose?

NHS Lothian is committed to supporting, encouraging and developing staff by facilitating staff involvement in appropriate volunteering activities.

However, volunteering must be considered in conjunction with individual circumstances, working patterns (where applicable) and responsibilities to ensure volunteering has appropriate boundaries and supports the health and wellbeing of prospective volunteers, staff and patients.

3.0 What do I need to do?

Expression of Interest

Staff may approach the Voluntary Services Team by email, to enquire about volunteering opportunities: loth.volunteerenquiries@nhs.scot

Finding an opportunity

Current approved volunteering roles can be found on our website when our external recruitment is open. [Volunteering Opportunities – Get Involved](#). During periods where our external recruitment is closed, staff can contact loth.volunteerenquiries@nhs.scot for information on opportunities available.

Staff are unable to volunteer in the same location where they currently work, e.g., same ward/department. This is to ensure appropriate boundaries are in place and so they/their colleagues are not tempted to ask them to do things outside of their volunteering remit. In the instance of those working on the staff bank across multiple this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Additional paid hours

Staff wishing to carry out additional hours in their paid role should speak with their line manager and/or the Staff Bank about opportunities for this as this is not covered under volunteering.

Applying

If an appropriate role/site has been identified, the Voluntary Services team will provide staff

with an application form to complete (either online or paper). References must be provided as part of the application.

Staff need to discuss their application with their line manager in the first instance, and their current line manager should be listed as one of the references. For former/retired staff, their most recent line manager should be listed as one of the references.

Staff will be expected to ensure that their work pattern allows them to volunteer at an agreed set day and time each week.

For bank staff, we can accept alternative references that are not their current line manager. This is particularly advisable if the nature of the shifts are ad-hoc.

For current staff who are a paid via the payroll, manager agreement must be sought before applying if the staff member will be claiming volunteer expenses.

Interview

Once application is received, the Voluntary Services team will determine whether an informal chat is appropriate or if full interview is needed.

Examples

If a clinical professional (e.g., nurse, physiotherapist, clinical support worker, doctor etc) wishes to volunteer as a ward helper then a full interview may not be required.

Staff who do not have clinical experience, e.g., work in administrative, domestic, catering or lab roles with little to no patient interaction in a ward type setting and who wish to volunteer on a ward, they will be interviewed in full.

If staff have retired or left the organisation, they will be interviewed in full.

Attending interview

Staff will be required to verify their identity at interview, this is necessary to enable us to progress a Disclosure Scotland application at a later stage.

Discussion regarding the role and timing should happen at this stage, as staff may not wish to progress with their application.

Occupational Health Service (OHS)

Staff are required to complete the occupational health declaration. If they have declared a health condition/disability, normal process for referral is made and logged.

If staff declare they have been retired on medical grounds then they must go through OHS before continuing their application to volunteer.

Disclosure Scotland Checks

Each role has been assessed to determine the level of Disclosure Scotland check required. The Voluntary Services team will progress the relevant check level for the role applied for.

Training

It is at the discretion of Voluntary Services team whether to fast-track the training or to book

onto the full volunteer induction programme. It will depend on role the staff member will be volunteering in and the experience of member of staff what is required.

At a minimum, all new volunteers will complete: TURAS – Volunteering Induction.

Getting Started as a Volunteer

Once the above has been completed, the Voluntary Services team will confirm the volunteer role and shift times/days and a volunteer agreement will be signed.

Information about the area they will volunteer in, key contacts, a shadow shift, uniform, ID badge and regular reviews will also be arranged.

Flow chart of process



4.0 Associated materials/references:

- [Volunteering in NHS Lothian Policy](#)
- [Volunteer role creation procedure](#)
- [Volunteer recruitment procedure](#)
- Volunteer role description template
- [Volunteering Well – NHS Lothian Volunteering Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028](#)
- Volunteer Induction Training Materials