Operational Policy for Community Wellness Volunteers

Version Number	Date of Issue/Revision	Summary of Changes	Reviewed By	Review Date	Next Scheduled Review
1.0					

1. Introduction and Purpose

- **Objective:** To establish clear guidelines for Community Wellness Volunteers, focusing on their roles and responsibilities within the community, in alignment with CNWL's standards and values.

- **Scope:** This policy applies to all Community Wellness Volunteers at CNWL, ensuring consistency and quality in volunteer services.

2. Volunteer Role and Responsibilities

- **Role Overview:** Community Wellness Volunteers play a crucial role in supporting mental health patients in non-clinical capacities. This includes aiding in community integration, providing companionship, and facilitating patient support post-discharge.

- **Role Boundaries:** Volunteers are strictly prohibited from performing clinical care, handling medications, or conducting unaccompanied home visits.

3. Training and Professional Development

- **Mandatory Training:** Volunteers are required to complete the Breakaway course and National Volunteer Certificate (NVC). Additional training provided by the HTT team covers patient engagement, privacy, and safety.

- **Professional Growth:** Volunteers have access to the Volunteer to Career (VtC) Programme after completing 30 hours of service, along with other CNWL educational opportunities.

4. Operational Guidelines

- **Induction and Adaptation:** New volunteers undergo a local induction organised by the HTT team manager, which includes a period of shadowing and supervised visits before independent work.

- **Shift Scheduling and Reporting:** Shifts are scheduled via MS Teams. Volunteers must complete and submit the Community Volunteer Interaction Record Form post-visits.

- **Expense Reimbursement:** Pre-approved expenses can be claimed with receipts through the Serenity system within 30 days.

5. Safety and Security Protocols

- **Lone Working Guidelines:** Adherence to the Lone Working procedures is mandatory, including informing supervisors about schedules and location, and reporting any concerns post-visits.

- **Emergency Protocols:** Focus on attracting attention and seeking assistance from nearby individuals or authorities. Always prioritise your immediate safety and call for help if needed. It's crucial to report any incidents to your supervisors as soon as possible for further guidance and support.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- **Privacy Compliance:** All volunteers must handle patient information in accordance with GDPR and CNWL policies, using NHS.net email for communications. Volunteer team requests IT logins for volunteers.

- **Confidentiality Assurance:** Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all patient interactions and information.

7. Volunteer Support and Well-Being

- **Access to Support:** Immediate support available from local supervisors and the Volunteer Services team for general questions, including claiming expenses, other training available, ...

- **Well-Being Resources:** Volunteers can access CNWL's Keeping Well Service and other health resources.

8. Volunteer Recognition and Engagement

- **Recognition Initiatives:** Participation in National Volunteers Week, end-of-year celebrations, and CNWL volunteer recognition programmes. We encourage staff supervisors to take part in them too and to organise local ones if there is capacity.

- **Community and Network Engagement:** Encouragement to join CNWL Networks to enhance positive workplace culture.

9. Communication and Feedback

- **Regular Updates:** the team should keep in touch regularly with volunteers before/ after their shifts and they can also organise regular meetings for all volunteers. General information on updates and changes will be communicated through the Volunteer Management System, Assemble.

- **Feedback Mechanisms:** The volunteer team has formal feedback mechanism such as an annual volunteer survey, and entry and exit questionnaires. Volunteers can share their feedback via email to the volunteer team or directly with their teams.

10. Appendices

All the following can be found in the Volunteer Handbook:

Quick Guide to the Appendices:

No.	Appendix	Description	Usage for HTT
1	Role Boundaries (Appendix 1)	Defines activities volunteers can and cannot do.	Reference for defining volunteer scope and limitations.
2	Lone Working Procedures (Appendix 2)	Safety and communication for volunteers working alone.	Essential reading for understanding lone working safety protocols.
3	Risk Assessment (Appendix 3)	Identifies and mitigates potential risks.	To be reviewed before a volunteer's shift starts for safety compliance.
4	FAQs (Appendix 4)	Quick answers for common queries.	Useful for on-the-spot reference and clarifications.
5	Interaction Record Forms (Appendix 5)	For documenting volunteer-patient interactions.	To be completed after each patient interaction; crucial for SystmOne entry by supervisors.
6	Local Induction (Appendix 6)	Covers the initial volunteer induction process.	Guideline for conducting volunteer inductions.
7	Support and Supervision Template (Appendix 7)	Framework for regular volunteer support and check-ins.	To be used during supervision sessions to ensure effective volunteer support.

Detailed Descriptions of Appendices:

1. **Appendix 1: Role Boundaries:**

Detailed explanation of the permissible activities and strict limits for volunteers, ensuring safety and adherence to CNWL's standards.

2. **Appendix 2: Lone Working Procedures**

Comprehensive procedures for safely conducting solo visits, including pre-visit planning, communication protocols, and emergency guidelines.

3. **Appendix 3: Risk Assessment**

Outlines the process for identifying and managing potential risks associated with the role, emphasising personal safety, health assessments, and emergency protocols.

4. **Appendix 4: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Provides answers to common queries about operational procedures, role expectations, and support mechanisms for volunteers.

5. **Appendix 5: Community Volunteer Interaction Record Form**

A template for documenting each interaction with patients, capturing key details and observations essential for continuity of care.

6. **Appendix 6: Volunteer Local Induction**

Guidelines for new volunteers, covering essential orientation, work details, reporting procedures, and training requirements.

7. **Appendix 7: Community Wellness Facilitator Volunteer Support and Supervision Template**

Framework for regular supervisory meetings, discussing volunteer well-being, case discussions, training needs, and adherence to CNWL policies.

11. Review and Update Procedures

- **Annual Review:** This operational policy will be reviewed annually or as needed, with amendments communicated to all involved parties.

12. Contact and Support Information

- **Volunteer Services Team Contact:** For assistance, support, or emergency contact, volunteers can reach out to the Volunteer Services team via xxxxxxxx

13. Accessibility and Inclusivity

- **Multiple Format Accessibility:** Available in various formats including large print and digital versions for accessibility.

- **Inclusive Language:** Commitment to inclusive and culturally sensitive language, respecting the diversity of staff and volunteers.

14. Stakeholder Involvement

- Collaborative Approach: We at CNWL volunteer team emphasise a collaborative approach involving volunteers, HTT staff, and management in the implementation of this policy. Each stakeholder plays a vital role in the successful running of our volunteer programmes.

15. Procedure Approval

- **Validation:** This operational policy has been approved by CNWL's Volunteer Manager, ensuring compliance with best practice in volunteering and organisational standards.