

## CONCLUSION

This document is designed to provide volunteers with an overview of the potential risks you may encounter in their roles and the measures in place to mitigate these risks. **It is essential that this risk assessment is completed prior to volunteers starting their shift.**

It's also recommended that volunteers be actively involved in the process of risk assessment and management, as their first-hand experience and insights can provide valuable information for improving safety measures.

Upon completion of this risk assessment, it should be sent to the Volunteer Care Coordinator for review and record-keeping. We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our volunteers and strongly encourage you to ask questions, raise concerns, and provide feedback on this risk assessment.

Your participation and vigilance are key to maintaining a safe and secure environment for everyone at St Charles Mental Health Hospital.

Remember, this risk assessment is not a one-time occasion but an ongoing process. It will be updated and reviewed regularly, taking into account any changes or incidents and your valuable feedback.

Thank you for your commitment to safety and for your invaluable service to our volunteers at St Charles Mental Health Hospital.

## Appendix H: FAQs for Volunteers

Volunteers are encouraged to review these FAQs as part of their orientation process and refer back to them as needed during their service.

### Questions and Answers:

**1. What should I do if I encounter a medical emergency while volunteering?**

In the event of a medical emergency, immediately notify the nearest staff member or use the designated emergency alert systems within the hospital. Do not attempt to manage the situation alone.

**2. How can I protect patient confidentiality during my service?**

Always ensure that conversations about patient care are held in private areas and refrain from discussing patient information with unauthorised individuals. Do not take any documents, records, or patient information outside the hospital premises. Always use your NHS email account to communicate with your supervisors and other CNWL staff members, especially if sharing patient data.

**3. What is the proper dress code for volunteers?**

Volunteers are required to wear the provided volunteer uniform or badge clearly at all times and adhere to the dress code policy, which includes wearing closed-toe shoes, avoiding excessive jewellery, and ensuring a neat appearance.

- 4. How do I report an incident or concern that I witness during my volunteer shift?**

Any incidents or concerns should be reported directly to your immediate supervisor or other relevant staff member. In some instances you may want to also contact the Volunteer Services Manager, or you may be asked to log it in the hospital's incident reporting system, if applicable.
- 5. Are there opportunities for training and development as a volunteer?**

Yes, volunteers have access to a variety of training sessions and professional development opportunities. Details are provided upon orientation and can also be discussed with the Volunteer to Career Lead. Check Assemble database regularly as we update information on coming trainings, webinars and events.
- 6. What should I do if I can no longer attend a scheduled shift?**

If you are unable to attend a scheduled shift, please notify your supervisor as soon as possible via your NHS email/ MS teams and CC the VtC Lead.
- 7. Who should I contact if I have a suggestion for improving the volunteer program?**

Suggestions for improvement are always welcome and can be directed to your supervisor or generally to CNWL volunteer Services: [Email address]
- 8. Can I volunteer in different departments within the hospital?**

While volunteers are generally assigned to specific areas, cross-departmental volunteering may be possible depending on needs and availability. This can be discussed with the Volunteer to Career Lead.
- 9. What is the policy for handling difficult or aggressive behaviour from patients?**

Volunteers are trained to de-escalate challenging situations and should always call for staff assistance when encountering aggressive behaviour. The safety of our volunteers and patients is a top priority. If you are concerned about your safety, please contact your supervisor and the VtC lead immediately.
- 10. How is volunteer performance evaluated?**

Volunteer performance is evaluated through regular check-ins with supervisors, feedback from staff and patients, as well as through self-assessment tools provided during the orientation. Periodic performance reviews help ensure that volunteers meet the hospital's standards of service.
- 11. What happens if I lose my volunteer ID badge?**

If you lose your volunteer ID badge, report it immediately to [email address] You will be issued a temporary badge while a replacement is arranged. There may be a fee for the replacement badge.
- 12. Are there any restrictions on what I can bring into the hospital during my volunteer shift?**

For safety and security reasons, volunteers are asked to bring only essentials into the hospital. Personal items such as bags and electronics may be subject to search and should be stored in designated areas. CNWL can't be made responsible for any objects lost, stolen or broken during your volunteering.

**13. Can I take photographs within the hospital during my volunteering hours?**

Photographs within the hospital premises are strictly prohibited due to patient confidentiality and privacy laws unless you have received explicit permission from the hospital's for specific events or activities.

**14. Is there a process for providing feedback about my volunteer experience?**

Feedback can be given at any time through our volunteer feedback forms, during debrief sessions, or directly to the Volunteer to Career Lead. We also conduct regular surveys to gather volunteer insights and experiences.

**15. What if I need time off for personal reasons or holidays?**

Volunteers are encouraged to inform their supervisor and the Volunteer to Career Lead as soon as possible about any planned absences. We appreciate as much notice as possible to manage the volunteer schedules effectively.

**16. Who should I speak to if I'm having difficulty with another volunteer or staff member?**

Any interpersonal difficulties should be addressed with your immediate supervisor or the Volunteer to Career Lead, who will treat the matter with confidentiality and sensitivity.

**17. Are volunteers allowed to accept gifts from patients or their families?**

Volunteers should not accept personal gifts from patients or their families. If offered a gift, kindly decline and explain that hospital policy prohibits accepting gifts. Any gifts offered should be reported to a supervisor.

**18. What should I do if I see something that compromises patient safety or care?**

Immediate concerns about patient safety should be reported directly to a staff member or the hospital's safety hotline. Volunteers are an important part of our patient safety culture and are encouraged to speak up.

**19. Can family members or friends join me during my volunteer shift?**

To maintain professional boundaries and confidentiality, friends and family are not permitted to accompany volunteers during their shifts.

**20. If I have ideas for new volunteer initiatives, who can I discuss them with?**

New ideas for volunteer initiatives are always welcome. Please bring your ideas to the attention of the Volunteer to Career Lead.

**21. How can I access additional support if I'm finding my volunteer role challenging?**

Support is available through your supervisor, the Volunteer to Career Lead, or accessing 'Keeping Well' [web address]/ Training, peer support, and counseling services are also available for volunteers needing extra help.