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**Valuing and Appreciating our Volunteers**

**Top tips for staff supporting and supervising DPT Volunteers**

**A big thank you thank you to some of our volunteers who put together this information**

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| ***Make them feel included*** | ***Make them feel valued*** | ***Make them feel safe*** |
| **Welcome and first impressions**Be prepared for your volunteers arrival each and every visit - first session - consider putting together a welcome pack for them - plan their induction **Put them in touch** with other volunteers within same service and within DPT "There is another volunteer at the ward, and I would like to be able to have some contact with them”**Include** them in social events and the tea and coffee rounds! Sit with them during breaks **Keep them in the loop**Keeping volunteers updated on what is happening with the organisation is important. This way volunteers feel involved and more connected with our organisation. - *Don’t forget they don’t have access to Daisy!* **Give training**Motivate your volunteers to attend developmental training relevant to their role in the organisation. This becomes important for the ones who volunteer to develop their CV or boost their employability skills. The training sessions can be online or offline. Invite volunteers to seminars, conventions or meetings, placing value and importance to their roles.**Let volunteers voice their opinions**Allow volunteer to have a say in planning and shaping activities, tasks and practices. **Slow down and *see* them.** | **Look at volunteers as individuals** Recognise and utilise skills the volunteer may have that is possibly extra to their role. The volunteer role should be clearly defined but it may be that the volunteer has other capabilities that could be used and developed. **Utilise**Encourage the team to utilise your volunteer effectively - no volunteer likes feeling underutilised when giving up their valuable time.Give them a quality space and the equipment needed to work in - particularly if desk based.**Problems**Do you/they know what should they do?**Trust your volunteers**Give volunteers meaningful tasks that have higher stakes, doing so makes them feel responsible, demonstrating trust. Trusting your volunteers makes them feel appreciated and valued. It shows that you recognise their time and effort.**Express gratitude**A simple thank you can go a long way in making volunteers feel valued. You can do this formally at a staff meeting or informally in person, through emails, by telephone or texting to send out personalised thank you. Some other ways to thank volunteers is to write about their contributions in newsletters or weekly. Remember to be consistent and fair and do not favour a particular group.**Let your volunteers know that their work makes a difference.** | **Breaks**Encourage volunteers to take breaks and also holidays. Some may need to give themselves permission to do this. **Alarms training/awareness** (personal and also fire alarms) Volunteers should be made aware of alarms where they are used, have access to them, be aware of their testing, and how to use them. **Appropriate access** to information about people that the volunteer may be working with. Most have no access to clinical systems - it's important that volunteers' safety isn't compromised.**Whistle blowing/Guardian service**If a volunteer is unhappy with something they see, do they know the process they should follow?**Supervision**Ensure volunteers have access to regular supervision; management and clinical. An explanation to volunteers about what supervision is, could be useful.**Being honest in feedback**Sometimes volunteering is not always positive and as a supervisor, you may have to give volunteers constructive criticism. The best way to give feedback is to be specific, focus on the requirements of the role, give real examples, and make sure it is not too long after an incident or issue arises. Know what you want to achieve and have some suggestions about how you think this could be done. Let volunteers talk and discuss their suggestions. Be prepared to be flexible. Being honest is a positive way to build mutual trust with your volunteers.Make sure volunteers understand their own limitations or the limits as to what they can do, and the reasons why. |

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