

Policy G7

VOLUNTEER POLICY

This policy was formally approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

On: 18th September 2023

Signed: 

Position: CEO

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POLICY DOCUMENT – VERSION CONTROL SHEET	
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Purpose and aims

Evora Hospice is committed to engaging volunteers and this policy has been developed to promote and provide guidance on the appropriate involvement of volunteers in EVORA HOSPICE activities and services.

Evora Hospice greatly appreciates the valuable and purposeful role of volunteers. Operating within the constraints of this policy, the organisation aims to offer volunteers a variety of interesting and satisfying tasks that will enhance the quality of care or service provided to service users.

EVORA HOSPICE aims to recruit volunteers from all sections of the community and to ensure that volunteers feel comfortable, and are compatible with, those duties and tasks they have agreed to undertake.

Scope of the policy

This policy sets out how Evora Hospice intends to manage the recruitment and retention of volunteers and relates to potential applicants and volunteers of Evora Hospice. This policy does not relate to corporate volunteers, supporter groups or other groups. This policy uses the following definition of volunteering: -

“Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside one’s immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice without concern for financial gain.”

Policy statement

Evora Hospice is committed to providing effective voluntary support, as a complementary but necessary component in the delivery and development of Evora Hospice. Evora Hospice recognises the important role which volunteers play in complementing the work of paid employees. We support and encourage the efforts of all volunteers who provide a valuable service to the patients and their relatives.

The involvement of volunteers encourages the participation of local people in the work of Evora Hospice, resulting in the promotion of the Evora Hospice, and developing and maintaining links with individuals and groups in the community.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the purpose and aims of this policy are met. The Corporate Services Director has responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the policy.

It is the responsibility of all staff to implement the policy and procedures in relation to the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Expectations

Volunteers can expect: -

- To receive a suitable induction outlining the scope of the role, supervision and guidance on how the role should be carried out.
- Training to help them fulfil their role.
- A trial period to see if the role is suitable and to resolve any problems that may arise.
- Support and supervision from their department manager.
- Choice and flexibility - a volunteer can approach the Volunteer Co-ordinator to discuss problems, opt out of or change tasks if he/she is unhappy in the voluntary role.

In return, Evora Hospice expects volunteers: -

- To do their volunteering reliably and to arrive at their role on time.
- To adhere to our code of conduct.
- To provide adequate notice when leaving their voluntary role.
- To contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator or department if unable to attend.
- To always act on and within the advice of their manager.
- To respect confidentiality.
- To complete all required training in a timely manner.
- Not to disclose any information or matter to which they had access during their time as a volunteer – both during and after their time as a volunteer.

Volunteer roles

Volunteers can work individually or as a group to assist with projects. Roles for volunteers are currently available in the following areas:

- In-patient unit
- Day therapy units – Newry/Dungannon
- Drivers – Care/post
- Fundraising – activities/events
- Medical records
- Gardens
- Reception
- Counselling
- Complementary Therapy
- Money counters
- Bereavement support walking group

Recruitment Process

We will raise awareness within the community of the wide-ranging opportunities available to volunteers to help with Evora Hospice services by:

- Using a variety of media opportunities.
- Speaking to appropriate groups.
- Presenting a “professional” voluntary service.
- Responding to enquiries promptly.
- Using our staff to promote volunteering.
- Requesting our volunteers to promote volunteering.

Stage 1 – Response to enquiries

All individuals who express an interest in volunteering will normally be contacted within five working days and a brief outline of the voluntary work available will be explained to them. Should the person wish to proceed with his/her application to join Evora Hospice, they will be signposted to the online application process, or an application pack will be sent out. Our standard recruitment & selection policy and procedures, which include a structured interview, will follow.

Stage 2 – Processing applications

All volunteers are required to provide details of two referees on their application form. The referees will be contacted and asked to complete a reference request form and return this to the Volunteer Co-ordinator. A character reference must not be completed by a family member. Two satisfactory references must have been received before a volunteer can commence volunteering. Upon receipt of the satisfactory references, the Volunteer Co-ordinator will set up an interview. The purpose of the interview is to highlight what voluntary roles are currently available and to explore the potential volunteer’s interests and the type of volunteering they would like to do, their availability, their reasons for volunteering, skills/experience/knowledge and to tell them about the work of Evora Hospice.

In accordance with the GDPR, all applications will be treated in strict confidence and circulated only to those individuals involved in the recruitment/supervision process.

If the applicant is not considered suitable for voluntary work at this time, the Volunteer Co-ordinator will contact the applicant outlining the reasons and/or suggesting alternative options to them.

Some one-day fundraising events requires the completion of a separate event application form.

Stage 3 - Process following successful interview

Enhanced Access NI checks must be carried out for volunteers in direct patient contact roles and these volunteers will be required to complete the Access NI Disclosure application form.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) Exemption Order, prospective volunteers are required to declare all previous or current criminal convictions. This information will be confidential and will not necessarily prejudice the candidate being accepted for voluntary work.

All relevant information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis, in line with GDPR and Human Rights legislation.

Where a role requires a professional qualification, certification, insurance, etc., volunteers are required to provide original certificates in advance of commencing volunteering.

Volunteers, for whom driving is part of their role, will be required to provide copies of their driving licence (both parts) and car insurance documents (and MOT certificate where appropriate). Volunteers are also asked to check with their insurance company confirming they are appropriately insured. A separate driving policy will be issued to all volunteer drivers before commencing their role. Where the role involves transporting patients between their home and the Hospice, a mileage allowance will be paid in line with HMRC rates. No other mileage is reimbursed.

Placement and induction of volunteers

Once a volunteer has been accepted, they are required to attend an induction training programme, usually held on their first day at the Hospice. Induction is normally carried out by the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

When appointed, the volunteer has a trial period of three months during which time the suitability of the placement can be ascertained. The manager/supervisor has the authority to remove a volunteer from a work area at any time and to end the placement in consultation with the Volunteer Co-ordinator. Placement in a role may also be ended at the request of an individual volunteer.

Management

Day-to-day supervision of volunteers is the responsibility of the departmental manager. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will meet with managers on a regular basis to:

- Identify additional training needs.
- Review existing deployment of volunteers and identify current and future needs.
- Review annual support/supervision sessions.
- Discuss the placement of new volunteers and of volunteers with special skills.
- To establish the reason for a volunteer leaving.

Conduct

Evora Hospice will terminate a volunteer's position with immediate effect in the following circumstances:

- Breach of confidentiality
- Gross misconduct

In addition, where there are breaches of other rules and regulations, and after sufficient warnings have been given, Evora Hospice has the right to end the voluntary role.

The decision to end a voluntary role will be taken by the departmental manager in liaison with the Volunteer Co-ordinator and HR, where necessary.

Concerns

If a concern arises, an attempt to resolve it should be made informally through the departmental manager. If the problem cannot be resolved in this way, an approach should be made to the Volunteer Co-ordinator who will organise a meeting with the department manager. If the problem remains unresolved, the Volunteer Co-ordinator will seek support from HR who will convene a meeting to seek to resolve the problem. The meeting should agree the appropriate course of action, and this should be monitored and reviewed with the volunteer and other relevant people. Records of any meetings should be retained.

The volunteer has the right to withdraw from their role if they feel that this is necessary.

Evora Hospice wish to ensure volunteers understand that they have the right to complain should unacceptable behaviour occur in their volunteer role and undertakes to investigate complaints thoroughly.

Retention of volunteers

Evora Hospice recognises the importance of having a stable and experienced team of volunteers. The retention of volunteers will be achieved by providing:

- A clearly defined role/activity.
- Support, encouragement and motivation.
- Opportunities to develop skills.
- Appropriate training.

Volunteers have direct access to support and guidance from the Volunteer Co-ordinator who will also ensure appropriate training is undertaken in the required timeframes.

It may be possible to look at alternatives if a particular role does not work out, or a change is sought. Alternatives to terminating a volunteer's role could be reassigning to a different area or offering a break from volunteering. In the event of a problem, Evora Hospice will endeavour to resolve the matter in an informal and timely manner.

Record keeping

The Volunteer Co-ordinator will maintain records for each volunteer containing all relevant information relating to the volunteer's appointment and time spent with Evora Hospice.

Individual departmental managers will be given contact details for their volunteers. Record keeping is an essential component of communication between Hospice staff and volunteers.

GDPR

Evora Hospice needs to keep and process information about volunteers for volunteering purposes. This information will be used to enable the organisation to run and manage the relationship with volunteers effectively, lawfully and appropriately. In the course of voluntary work, we gather, store and use this information to provide details of the voluntary role and other related services.

Much of the information we hold will have been provided by volunteers themselves, but some may come from other internal sources, such as managers, or in some cases, external sources, such as referees.

Where necessary, the organisation may keep information relating to health, in case of emergencies. This information will be used to comply with our health and safety and occupational health obligations – to consider how health affects the ability to carry out a volunteering role.

When a volunteer leaves the organisation, their information will be removed from our systems after 3 years.

Further information can be found on our privacy statement:

[Privacy Policy | Evora Hospice](#)

Communication

This policy will be issued to all those involved in line managing volunteers.