



VOLUNTARY SERVICES ROLE DESCRIPTION

Title: Mealtime Assistants

Department: Wards

Accountable: Voluntary Services Manager

Responsible: Sister/Matron

Volunteers' activities should complement and enhance the care and support given by staff to improve upon a patient's experience. All volunteers will be expected to co-operate with the voluntary services department in ensuring that services are made available to patients in the best possible way.

Aim:

To provide support for the patients on a ward at mealtimes, who require assistance or encouragement with feeding and hydration.

Tasks:

- Liaise with the appropriate staff at the start of each mealtime to ensure an awareness of each patient's medical needs in relation to their diet and the way they feed is understood
- Introduce yourself to the patient and say who you are and explain what you are going to do.
- Encourage patients to eat and remind them where necessary, if they have not finished their food. Ensure all food and drink is within easy reach of each patient
- Ensure the patient has the correct meal. Assist patients in cutting food and opening packets.
- Refresh patient water jugs as required
- Assist with patient dignity. For example this may be by wiping the patient's mouth (with their permission) or ensuring they have a suitably placed napkin and hand washing before and after meals
- Ensure the patient is comfortable and safely positioned (**if not, seek assistance from the healthcare team as you are not permitted to lift patients**)
- Ensure that the patient has access to any equipment they need for eating including false teeth.
- Remove crockery and cutlery from the patient's bedside area and ensure the area is kept clean and tidy – maintain high standards of personal and food hygiene
- Help patients fill out menu cards if instructed by healthcare team
- Please remember you **MUST NOT** feed any patient who has difficulty swallowing – inform the nursing staff of any patients who experience any difficulties particularly in swallowing.

Volunteers must not:

- assist with anything of a medical nursing nature
- read patients' medical files or share this information
- assist with cleaning duties of any kind
- repair any item of equipment
- lift heavy loads
- take money or gifts from patients.





You will:

- be well-presented, clean and wearing the appropriate uniform and ID badge at all times
- you will have good verbal communication skills
- be reasonably fit and active, as the task may entail standing or walking for up to four hours at a time
- establish a friendly, helpful and effective welcome to patients and visitors in busy public places within the hospital
- assist our patients to access areas/services of the hospital
- maintain a friendly, open and approachable persona
- be reliable and able to make a long-term commitment
- be committed to all Trust's policies
- have a relaxed and friendly manner
- be willing to receive training appropriate to the volunteer role
- be an ambassador for Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) and our PRIDE values
- have a flexible approach to your role and be willing to undertake additional tasks which are mutually agreed between yourself and the Voluntary Services Manager.

We will:

- provide you with support and supervision
- provide you with an induction and local induction
- be a reference on request after the successful completion of one year volunteering
- provide you with a luncheon voucher
- reimburse your out of pocket expenses for fares (conditions apply).

Equal Opportunities

It is the aim of the Trust to ensure that no job applicant, employee or volunteer receives less than favourable treatment on grounds of sex, marital and civil partnership status, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, colour, creed, religion or belief, physical disability, mental health, learning difficulty, age or sexual orientation and is not placed at a disadvantage by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. To this end the Trust has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and it is for each person to contribute to its success.

We take a zero tolerance approach to any form of inequality, and are committed to ensuring you volunteer in an environment which:

- treats all individuals fairly
- demonstrates dignity and respect
- embraces diversity
- actively includes all staff
- understands the needs of all staff including minority groups
- aims to eliminate discrimination in the workplace
- is everyone's responsibility.





Infection Control

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to prevent and control infections within our hospitals. This includes ensuring personal and team compliance with all relevant policies; especially hand hygiene, the Trust dress code policy, and MRSA screening policies and Bare Below the Elbows.

Health & Safety Policy

Employees must be aware of the responsibilities placed on them under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure that the agreed safety procedures are carried out to maintain a safe environment for employees and visitors.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Child protection issues, if identified must be notified promptly in accordance with our Child Sexual Exploitation Policy (CSE), the Safeguarding Children and Young People (Child Protection) Policy, and our Safeguarding Adults Supervision policy.

Data protection

All voluntary roles have a confidential aspect. If you are required to obtain, process and/or use information held on a computer, word processor or medical record you should do it in a fair and lawful way. You should hold data only for the specific registered purpose and not use or disclose it in any way incompatible with such a purpose and ought to disclose data only to authorised persons or organisations as instructed. Breaches of confidence in relation to data will result in disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal.

Confidentiality

Maintaining the security and confidentiality of both patient and staff information is a priority for us, not only to comply with the obligations of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Department of Health's recommendations of the Caldicott Report, but in order to provide a professional health service. You are required to maintain the confidentiality of any information concerning patients or staff which you have access to or may be given in the course of your volunteering, in accordance with current policies on confidentiality in place.

No smoking

As a healthcare provider the Trust recognises the need to go further in promoting healthy living. This includes explaining that smoking is one of the main remediable causes of illness, early death and health inequality. It is the main reason why those living in the poorest areas will die seven years earlier, living for 17 years with ill health. We operate a Smoke Free Policy as part of our commitment to a healthy lifestyle. You will be required to work within the framework of our Smoke Free policy. Smoking is not permitted within the Trust premises or on Trust grounds, for more information please refer to the Smoke Free Policy.

