

Volunteer Induction

Guidance to NHS Scotland Boards

July 2010



1. Guidance on Volunteer Induction

This guidance has been produced for NHS Boards in Scotland as part of the Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering, launched by the Scottish Government in February 2008.

All volunteers should have an induction appropriate to their level of involvement and the nature of their volunteering role which helps them to understand how they contribute towards the day to day activities of the area in which they are involved and also covers how they contribute towards an NHS Board's goals.

A well structured induction programme ensures that the volunteer is fully informed of what is expected in their volunteering. It also prepares them for their role and gives them the information and understanding they need to help them be as effective as possible in contributing towards the health and wellbeing of NHS patients/users and/or their families/carers. It is assumed that prospective volunteers would, where appropriate, go through for example occupational health checks and disclosure checks before starting their induction. It is also assumed that volunteers own aspirations and intentions regarding their volunteering would be covered at the recruitment stage which takes place prior to induction.

Useful Tips

Induction can often be referred to as getting ready or introduction - using less formal business like vocabulary could be more appropriate for use with volunteers.

The next sections provide advice on the key components of volunteer induction

- Content
- Planning and Delivery
- Monitoring and Evaluating

2. Suggested content of induction programmes for volunteers

Induction content should include NHS wide issues which all volunteers should receive. This should be supplemented with information on operational matters which are specific to the ward/service/project in which a volunteer is to be involved.

2a NHS Board Level – Suggested Content

- The strategic goals of the Board and an overview on how it plans to meet them;
- Where volunteering fits within the structure of the Board, and information on Investing in Volunteers;
- NHS Board Volunteering Policy and an overview of other relevant policies for example equalities and diversity, health and safety;
- Clarify the limits of volunteers' roles, specifying anything they are not allowed to do, including the need for patient confidentiality;
- Ensure that volunteers are advised of, and understand, acceptable behaviour and are made aware of the procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour;
- Ensure that volunteers are advised of, and understand, the procedure to use if they wish to feedback any ideas or concerns.

Expenses

- Volunteers should be informed of what out of pocket expenses can be claimed, and the procedure for reimbursement.

Welfare Benefit Claimants

- Prospective volunteers in receipt of welfare benefits should be advised to inform the Benefits Office that they are planning to volunteer and should be given/ directed towards relevant Department of Work and Pensions literature on volunteering whilst on benefits.

2b - Ward/service/project areas- Suggested Content

Settling In

- Ensure new volunteers are introduced to the relevant paid staff and other volunteers with whom they will come into contact, where things are kept etc
- Identify any specific knowledge, skills and competences that individual volunteers feel they could improve upon that would help them in their volunteer role

Expectations

- Explain what is expected of volunteers in their particular roles.
- Explain what volunteers can expect from your organisation in terms of support, training, supervision and involvement in the wider activities of your organisation.

Advise volunteers who to approach on a daily basis for help, support or advice, and how to do so.

Health and Safety

- Ensure that volunteers are informed about health and safety, including first aid and accident and emergency procedures
- Where appropriate volunteers should be informed about moving and handling procedures, infection control and occupational health checks.
- Ensure that all volunteers are provided, where available, with copies of the risk assessment undertaken on their role.
- Volunteers should be informed of what insurance cover is in force and what they need to do in order to remain covered by insurance.

Boundaries

- Check that volunteers understand, and are prepared to volunteer within, the limits of their roles.

3. Advice for those responsible for the planning and delivery of induction for volunteers

Planning

- Identify the general information about the Board and its policies, and details about particular volunteer roles.
- Involve relevant people, including existing volunteers, in developing induction plans.
- Ensure Induction complies with legal requirements, for example health and safety, and your organisation's policies.
- Prepare induction plans that meet volunteers' identified induction requirements and state who is involved in meeting those requirements.

Delivery

- Take account of volunteers' diverse abilities, motivations, experiences, knowledge, skills and competences.
- Present information in a clear and concise way that volunteers can understand quickly.
- Reinforce the importance of volunteers in meeting the organisation's goals.
- Record information accurately and treat all information confidentially.
- There can in some cases be a lot of information for a volunteer to take on during Induction. Consideration should be given to varied learning styles for example mixing talks with other activities such as discussion groups or quizzes, information leaflets, coaching, buddy system, volunteer handbook.

Useful Tips

Involve relevant people in the development of information and guidance materials and gain their approval of the materials prior to use/publication.

Ensure that information and guidance materials are available when volunteers need them.

Review materials in response to changes in information/guidance to be provided or feedback from users.

One NHS Board has developed an online Induction Programme. This enables the Board to check and record that volunteers have read and understood induction information. It also allows volunteers to undertake certain parts of their induction at a time and place that best suits them.

4. Monitoring and evaluating induction

Feedback should be obtained from volunteers and other relevant people on the induction process to inform and improve the process in the future.

Useful Tips

Produce a self assessment form to be completed by volunteers upon completion of induction asking them to rate the usefulness of the content of induction, rate how it was delivered and give their views on how the induction might be made more effective.

Valuable feedback could also be gained by asking a sample of volunteers to complete a further self assessment on the induction programme after two/three months of involvement. By this stage they should have a better understanding of how well the induction prepared them for their volunteering role.

A further way of evaluating induction is to monitor the number of volunteers who undertake the induction and then do not start their volunteering role.

It is also good practice to check the effectiveness of induction provided to volunteers with the staff who work alongside volunteers and to formally review the induction programme on a regular basis to ensure it complies with current Board policies and with legislation.

Induction for Volunteers – Checklist

Responsible Staff Member (s)	
Name of Volunteer	

Aims and Policies	Date completed	Staff member initials	Volunteer initials
Brief explanation on the strategic goals of your organisation and how it plans to meet them			
Explain where volunteering fits within the structure of your organisation e.g. Nominated Lead on Volunteering, Volunteering Action Group, which Board committee oversees volunteering			
Provide copy of Board Volunteering Policy and explain key points			
Clarify limits of volunteers roles including the need for patient confidentiality			
Explain procedures for volunteers acting in discriminatory ways and for volunteers themselves in receipt of such behaviour			
Explain the procedures for volunteers raising concerns and/or complaints			
Explain procedures used for dealing with any inappropriate behaviour from volunteers			
Outstanding matters	Queries		
Notes			

Expectations	Date completed	Staff member initials	Volunteer initials
Explain what is expected of the volunteer			
Explain what the volunteer can expect from your organisation in terms of support, training and involvement in the wider activities of your organisation			
Advise volunteers who they should approach for help and support and how to do this			
Outstanding matters	Queries		
Notes			

Settling in	Date completed	Staff members initials	Volunteer initials
Introduce volunteers to relevant staff and explain practical matters such as refreshments, location of toilets, any dress code etc			
Identify any specific skills and knowledge volunteers feel they might need to help them in their role			
Outstanding matters	Queries		
Notes			

Health and safety	Date completed	Staff members initials	Volunteers initials
Inform volunteers about health and safety, including first aid and accident and emergency procedures			
Where appropriate inform volunteers about moving and handling procedures and infection control			
Inform volunteers of the insurance cover for them			
Outstanding matters	Queries		
Notes			

Expenses, Boundaries and Welfare Benefits	Date completed	Staff members initials	Volunteers initials
Inform volunteers about the procedures for claiming allowable expenses			
Volunteers in receipt of state benefits should be given information from Department of Works and Pensions or directed to Department for Works and Pension			
Explain the limits of the volunteer's role and check they understand them			
Outstanding matters	Queries		
Notes			