

## **Volunteer Role Description Emergency Department Volunteer**

### **Overview of role**

The Emergency Department (ED) is a demanding, fast-paced environment where the staff are always busy and rarely have sufficient time to direct or oversee volunteers. Therefore, the ability to work independently, without supervision, is absolutely critical.

Volunteers who thrive in this role need to be very practical, to easily see what needs to be done to complement the work of the wider ED team and not mind 'rolling their sleeves up' to get a job done where they can. They will need the ability to quickly change the direction of work to meet the varying demands on their time during the shift, but to remain positive, enthusiastic, approachable, dependable and, most importantly, to remain calm and composed no matter what the situation.

In order to enjoy this role, a volunteer should ideally have a caring, sympathetic, sensitive manner and a non-judgmental approach. Good listening and talking skills are critical and volunteers should genuinely enjoy talking and spending time with patients in ED, who are often there on their own and simply need the reassurance of talking to someone who has the patience and the time to talk.

### **Main aim of ED Volunteer**

The prime role of the Emergency Department Volunteer would be to form a key part of a dedicated team of ED volunteers offering support to staff and non-medical assistance to patients accessing St George's emergency services.

It is expected that most of a volunteer's time will be spent between Majors A and Majors B departments, where there is constant flux of patients and need for Volunteer support; a lesser amount of time is spent in Resus, the Urgent Treatment Centre, reception and paediatric ED departments.

### **Key duties**

It is important to note that this list of duties gives a general indication of where and how ED volunteers spend most of their time, but it is expected that you will be very flexible in your approach. Basically, where you see a job needs to be done, it is expected that you do it without the need for direction from the ED staff.

- Talking to patients and spending time with them, especially those who are there on their own or who have spent a considerable amount of time in ED already.
- Checking if patients require anything additional for comfort (eg, blanket/pillow, bed position)
- Referring any patient concerns to a nurse (eg, need for toileting)
- Serving refreshments (tea/coffee/water/sandwiches) and replenishing water jugs, cups from the water fountain (checking with nurse in charge to see if there is any patient that is nil by mouth or not suitable to attend to)
- Tidying bed spaces in support of the cleaning team
- Helping visitors to find their family member or friend
- Replenishing supplies in the Majors A and B department cupboards that contain fresh gowns, sheets, blankets, pillow and pillowcases, pads and personal hygiene items

If you spend time in the ED reception area:

- Keep the waiting rooms tidy
- Offer non-clinical help to anyone in the waiting room needing help
- Accompanying patients to the Urgent Treatment Centre
- To ensure patients know where other hospital facilities are located

**What can the volunteer gain from volunteering in the Emergency Department?**

- A greater insight into the workings of a busy emergency department
- Working within a committed team
- Knowledge that volunteering is contributing to patient care
- Supervision and support from a team of specialist nurses
- Induction to the hospital and the emergency department
- Involvement with departmental training
- References (on completion of 6 months minimum commitment)

**A volunteer is a valued member of the Trust and is expected:**

- To volunteer within the guidelines agreed by Voluntary Services and named Volunteer Supervisor
- To carry out their duties with consideration and respect to all staff, general public, Foundation Trust members and patients at all times
- To always maintain confidentiality
- To maintain good standards of communication with staff, general public and patients at all times
- To comply with all Trust Policies

**General guidance**

Volunteers:

- will be exposed to the wide and varied aspects of the Department, remembering that this is not a clinical role and you will not be shadowing or assisting staff in clinical areas.
- should not undertake duties outside this role description without checking first with their Volunteer Supervisor.
- must not undertake any manual handling tasks if not had the appropriate training.
- can offer emotional support and empathy but must under no circumstances offer advice or a medical opinion on a patient's treatment or assist with anything of a clinical nature.
- are reminded of the importance of confidentiality at all times. They must under no circumstances discuss patients' affairs with any person other than the relevant staff.
- complement the work of the paid staff and are not used to replace roles that are usually undertaken by paid hospital employees.
- should receive regular support, supervision and training where applicable.
- are bound by the "Volunteer Agreement" which includes their rights and responsibilities, and Trust Policies also apply to volunteers.
- will be expected to attend MAST Volunteer Induction and receive a local induction upon arrival of their first shift.

**Additional information**

**Location:** Emergency Department – St George's Hospital

**Hours:** Flexible over Monday to Sunday with a minimum commitment of 2 hours per session. You must be able to commit to a regular shift each week.

**Accountable to Voluntary Services Manager:** Zoe Holmes

**Responsible to Volunteer Supervisor:** ED Nurse in Charge

**Role of the Department:** Care provision to acutely unwell patients and patients accessing unscheduled care