

Why volunteer at Bedford Hospital?

Volunteering is a great way of giving something back to your local community.

Being involved can give you the opportunity to:

- ☺ Meet new people
- ☺ Gain new skills
- ☺ Make a difference to patients, visitors and staff

Roles and activities

Below are just an example of the types of role you can be involved with as a volunteer. For more information or to express your interest just get in touch.

Ward helper:

Help patients fill out their menus, talk with them, make their beds and help out at meal times.

Clinic Helper:

Be involved in the running of a demanding outpatient clinic, welcoming patients, assisting reception with various tasks and activities.

Maternity Helper:

As part of our busy maternity team, you can volunteer within several areas assisting staff and ensuring a pleasant and positive stay for our patients.

Collecting prescriptions from pharmacy, meeting and greeting visitors and filing are all important, helpful activities involved with most volunteering roles.

**Those who can, do.
Those who can do more, volunteer.**

Please note, the decision to place a volunteer rests with the voluntary services management team.

If you would like to find out more about Volunteering at Bedford Hospital NHS Trust you can:

Write to:

Voluntary Services Department
Bedford Hospital NHS Trust
Kempston Road
Bedford
MK42 9DJ

Telephone:

01234 792213

Email:

Voluntary.services@bedfordhospital.nhs.uk

Voluntary Services Manager:

Deborah Allman

Visit our website:

www.bedfordhospital.nhs.uk

Voluntary Services

Volunteering at Bedford Hospital



An information leaflet about
volunteering at Bedford
Hospital NHS Trust.

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Volunteering at Bedford Hospital

Each year more than 200 people give their time unpaid as a Bedford Hospital Volunteer. Their role is to complement and enhance the care provided by our paid staff and their contribution to the hospital is greatly appreciated.

Bedford Hospital is committed to providing equal opportunities and welcomes requests to volunteer irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, marital status, disability, mental health problems, age or sexual orientation.

What opportunities are available?

There are a number of opportunities available for volunteers around the hospital in wards and clinics. There are some spaces available in administrative and clerical areas although these are limited.

Will I be involved in patient care?

Not in clinical care, but you may be asked to keep patients company, help them at meal times and accompany them to certain appointments or treatments. Our volunteers pride themselves in being able to give time and energy to our patients to ensure a positive experience during their stay.

Where will I be placed and what will I be doing?

Volunteers are placed in a specific role in the same area, at the same time each week. Here you will be involved in the smooth running of the area as well as helping us promote a positive patient experience. This may be, for example, helping patients fill out menu cards or running errands for staff.

Can I change the area I'm placed in if I do not like it?

We usually ask that you stay in the area you are given for 6—8 weeks to give both you and the department time to adjust. If after that time you are not happy, just give the voluntary services manager a call to discuss.

Do I need special skills or experience and will I need training?

In order to be a volunteer at the hospital you should meet the requirements of the person specification for this role. A copy of this can be obtained from the voluntary services department at the hospital or when you attend one of our Open Days (held throughout the year).

Volunteering in a hospital can be demanding, emotionally and physically. You should also be prepared to attend mandatory training and an induction. Time and energy are therefore important attributes for this role.

Who looks after the volunteers?

The voluntary services department has a dedicated manager, responsible for engaging volunteers within the hospital and discussing any aspect of their placement. On a day-to-day basis, volunteers also have what is called 'volunteer supporter'. This person is a paid member of staff who works in the volunteer's placement area and is there to delegate activities. They will also be your main point of contact for reporting absence or leave.

How do I register as a volunteer?

You can get in touch using the contact details overleaf or complete an 'expression of interest' form available to collect from the voluntary services notice board within the main hospital (opposite the chapel). Once completed, simply send this to our office and, where possible, your name will be added to the next available Open Day.

Why do you have Open Days?

Due to the sheer volume of enquiries we receive we hold regular open days to allow people the opportunity to find out more about volunteering—and if it's what they have in mind—before committing to an interview.

What happens after the Open Day?

If you decide you'd like to proceed you may be offered an interview. More information is provided in our document 'Stages of Volunteer Engagement', available upon request.

If I am successful how quickly can I start?

Once we have received the necessary clearances, and if an opportunity is available, you will be offered a start date. From start to finish, we hope you will not have to wait more than 10 weeks to complete this process.

I need work experience. Is this right for me?

Volunteering and work experience are not the same. **The minimum age for volunteering at Bedford Hospital is currently 18 years of age.** If you are under 18, please visit our website and click on the section entitled 'working here' for details of work experience available. If you are over 18, and require a period of work experience as part of a college or university course, please ask the voluntary services office for information about our Student Involvement Programme.

What's in it for me?

Benefits of volunteering at Bedford Hospital include:

- 😊 Learn new skills, use your existing expertise, develop new interests, meet people and have the opportunity to be and feel involved.
- 😊 Receive a meal allowance and 'out of pocket expenses' where applicable and free parking (subject to availability).
- 😊 Become a Foundation Trust Member and receive Members Matters, a regular feature offering a chance to find out more about what's happening in the hospital.

Many of our volunteers say they find the time they spend with us very rewarding and have been with us for many years.

How can I find out more?

Contact the voluntary services office using the information overleaf for more information.