



Volunteer strategy

July 2024 – July 2027

“ An inclusive, values-based approach
to support our purpose. ”

With **all of us** in mind.

Contents

Section	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. About the Trust	4
3. Trust purpose and values	5
4. Our strategic approach	6
5. Our commitment to volunteers	7
6. Our volunteer approach	8
7. Volunteer supported projects and services	10
8. How we support volunteers	13
9. Governance	14
10. Our ambitions	15



Volunteer quotes



Staff quotes



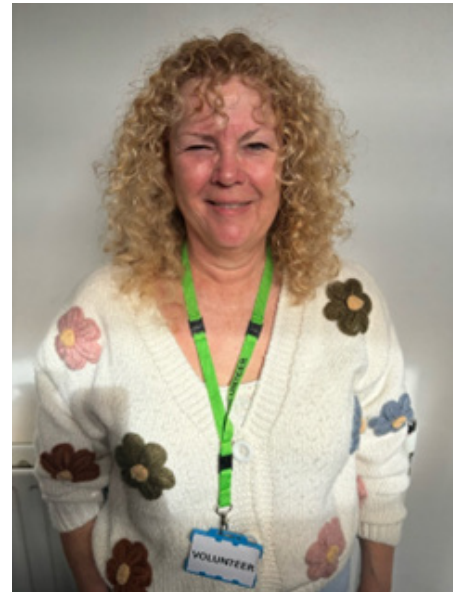
1. Introduction

Volunteers are the unpaid heroes of our Trust and we value each and every contribution from those who give their time, commitment and dedication to support our work. Volunteers enhance and add value to our Trust-wide service offer. This means our workforce can concentrate on providing the services people need. We know that having volunteers in service settings contributes to an improvement in outcomes and enhances the experience of those people who use our services.

People who volunteer come from the local communities we serve. These people offer an unprecedented wealth of insight, talent, creativity and skill. By capitalising on this wealth of assets we ensure that people who use our services feel supported by their own community. As a Trust we are committed to working in partnership with our communities to increase the range of volunteers in all our services and settings.

We know the more reflective our volunteers are of the communities we serve, the more relevant our services become. Volunteers can offer personalised, cultural, spiritual and creative contributions and offer the time that people need. By working this way our Trust can provide the best possible high-quality care so services are person-centred, compassionate, caring and effective.

We cannot express enough the amount of value volunteers add to our services. They complete the overall care package to ensure we can provide the best possible care for our service users and community. They are the golden thread.



“ All the staff have been fantastic, I’m always included, they have never said no to me. It’s win-win for me. ”



“ Volunteering is one of our golden threads of the Trust, volunteers are amazing. ”



2. About the Trust

South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is a specialist NHS Foundation Trust that provides community, mental health and learning disability services to the people of Barnsley, Calderdale, Kirklees, and Wakefield. The Trust also provides some medium secure (forensic) services to the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber and services in South Yorkshire.

The Trust serves over 1.22m people who live across the geography of South and West Yorkshire, predominantly in the local authorities of Barnsley (239,300 people), Calderdale (209,800), Kirklees (440,000) and Wakefield (332,000), with services also in Leeds, Sheffield, and Doncaster.

Most of the care we provide is delivered in local communities. This means we work in all the villages, towns, and cities from Todmorden and Hebden Bridge in the west, to Castleford and Pontefract in the east and to Hoyland and the Dearne Valley to the south of Barnsley – and all points in between. Our population is very diverse, and people live in a mix of rural and urban areas.



3. Trust purpose and values

Our purpose is to help people reach their potential and live well in their communities. We employ over 4,500 staff, in both clinical and non-clinical support services. Our staff work hard day in day out to make a difference to the lives of service users, families, and carers, how we work is as important to us as what we do. Our values and how we behave really matter to us. Set out below are our purpose and values.



Our purpose



We help people reach their potential and live well in their community.

Our values

We are a values-based organisation. This means our values are followed by all our staff and underpin everything we do:

- We put the person first and in the centre.
- We know that families and carers matter.
- We are respectful, honest, open, and transparent.
- We improve and aim to be outstanding.
- We are relevant today and ready for tomorrow.



At my interview to be a volunteer I talked about what I wanted to do.



The difference that volunteers make is immediate, service users see people who are like them, they are not health professionals, they are role models with lived experience, they're real people.



4. Our strategic approach

This volunteer strategy is a sub-strategy of the Trust's equality, involvement, communication and membership strategy which can be found on the Trust's website: <https://www.southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk/get-involved/equality-and-involvement/>

The volunteer strategy is one of the Trust's approaches to involving the local community. Volunteering provides an opportunity for diverse representation of local communities in service settings. The strategy describes in more detail our approach to volunteering.

The volunteer strategy also has strong links with the Trust's workforce strategy, ensuring that our volunteers are recognised for the role they play in supporting services. Volunteers are not a paid workforce but they are part of a staff team.

As a team member our volunteers are afforded the same care as our workforce. This includes access to the same training opportunities, with a specific focus on mandatory training and training specific to their volunteer role. The Trust also offers every volunteer support through the Trust occupational health service. Volunteers are fully supported in their role through a designated, trained supervisor, regular support and supervision.

Volunteering is a key enabler in transforming the way the NHS works with people and communities. It is essential for the success of the NHS long term plan which sets out the need to encourage and embed community volunteering, working alongside our partners.



5. Our commitment to volunteers

Volunteering improves self-esteem, provides a wealth of experience and can increase employment opportunities. By becoming a volunteer, a person can provide additional support to clinical teams enabling them to provide the best possible care to service users, families and carers. Volunteers help the Trust connect further with our communities, providing insight and experience that adds value to the work we do.

Volunteers support us to think differently and, using fresh eyes, add value to our service offer in a variety of ways. There are many quotes that demonstrate the impact a volunteer can have on service provision. We have included examples of these quotes throughout the document.

People using our services who have received support from a volunteer tell us that volunteers play a vital role in tackling loneliness and reduce the feeling of isolation. In particular, a volunteer with a lived experience can provide vital insight, helping staff respond to the needs of an individual. Volunteers help us remain relevant, often acting as community connectors.

Our commitment to volunteers is evident through our investment in a dedicated Trust- wide volunteer service. This service was established in 2015 to support a growing number of volunteers in the Trust. To date there are over 170 volunteers supporting more than 25 different and varied roles in the Trust, with numbers growing year on year.

Our vision is to continue to grow the volunteer service ensuring that we attract a more diverse range of people into our organisation, who are both reflective and representative of the communities we serve.



“ We all support each other, all the staff and the volunteers are so approachable, I love it. ”



“ Volunteers are an absolute pleasure; I feel it is a privilege to work with them - I think I have the best job in the Trust. ”



6. Our volunteer approach

The Trust offers a range of volunteering opportunities, all of which enhance the services we provide. At the heart of volunteering is the Trust-wide volunteer service. The service headquarters are based at Fieldhead Hospital in Wakefield. The Trust-wide volunteer service aims to ensure that all our volunteers feel valued and are at the centre of our approach. We do this by:

- Recognising individual talents, skills, and valuing diversity.
- Making volunteers feel welcome in a dedicated volunteer lounge.
- Offering a range of volunteering opportunities in several different settings and services.
- Providing a respectful and compassionate recruitment experience.
- Offering additional support, training, and a full induction process.
- Providing strong governance and processes to ensure our volunteers feel protected.
- Gathering feedback from volunteers so their voice, experience and 'fresh eyes' approach can help support service improvement.
- Having a visible volunteer charter in all service settings.
- Recognising the commitment and dedication of all our volunteers during national volunteer week across our services.



All our formal volunteers are recruited through the volunteer service which means each person has an opportunity to volunteer in wide range of inpatient and community service roles. As an NHS service provider and specialist provider of mental health, learning disability and autism services, a volunteering experience in our Trust can provide a unique and diverse experience.

In addition to volunteering in our inpatient and community services the Trust has a number of innovative and volunteer-supported services and programmes, including:

- Befriending service
- Canine befriending
- Recovery colleges
- Creative Minds
- Live Well Wakefield self-management service
- Lay chaplains

The diagram below sets out the relationship of each of these projects and services with the Trust-wide volunteer inpatient and community service offer.

“ We are always kept in the loop by the volunteer service, and about volunteer to career – it's so nice to be invested in. ”



Volunteer service

For inpatient and community services – central hub for recruitment, training and checks

**Recovery
Colleges**

**Live Well
Wakefield**
self-
management
service

Lay chaplains

**Creative
Minds**

Befriending

**Friends of
the recovery
college**

**Canine
befriending
service**

“ *Applied, had an informal interview, took my dog who was assessed by a pet therapist, tests on response to loud noises, wheelchairs, vigorous stroking, then three-day training course – great!* ”



“ *There are so many benefits to involving volunteers, they bring their lived experience, they alleviate pressure on staff, and there are lots of career opportunities for volunteers.* ”



7. Volunteer supported projects and services

Volunteer supported projects and programmes provide an opportunity for a volunteer to offer their skills and talents in a dedicated role. Not all volunteers supporting these projects and services are formal volunteers supported by the Trust-wide volunteer service. Some volunteers come from our local NHS and third sector partners in each of our places.

By working this way, it means that the Trust can offer a flexible and responsive volunteering opportunity. Working in partnership means we can benefit from volunteers recruited in partner organisations who want to give up their time to support us as and when they can. For each of the listed projects and services, additional training and support is provided.

7.1 Recovery Colleges

Recovery and wellbeing colleges cover Wakefield, Barnsley, Calderdale, and Kirklees, as well as supporting inpatient services across the Trust patch. Each service runs a range of co-produced workshops and courses which promote wellbeing and good mental and physical health, as well as developing knowledge and skills.

Recovery colleges do not usually support a person to gain a formal qualification, but instead help a person learn how to stay well and be well (or learn the information and skills to be able to support someone they care for). There is a focus on personal development, wellbeing, and recovery.

Recovery colleges have several Trust volunteers and in addition have a network of helpers and supporters known as 'Friends of the recovery college,' or simply "Friends". The "Friends" are people who are not formal Trust volunteers but offer support to recovery colleges as part of their own recovery journey. Recovery colleges will ensure that "Friends" are properly supported and supervised and that their skills are used appropriately.

7.2 Befriending service

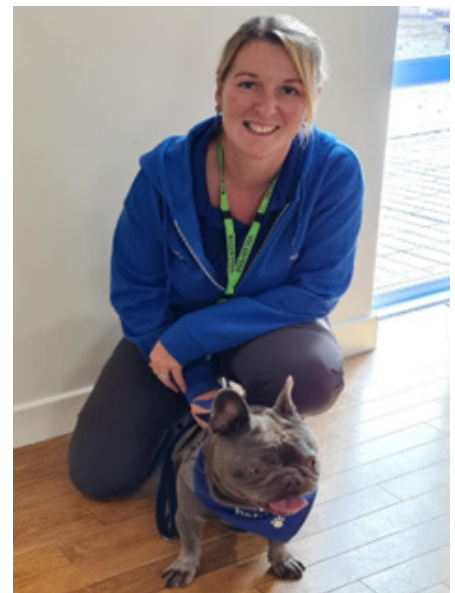
The befriending service recruits volunteers through the Trust volunteer service to become a companion to someone, especially when they need help or support.

The befriending service supports people by helping to reduce stigma, increase confidence and self-esteem of the individual to support and develop positive mental health. By helping people connect with their local community it in turn encourages positive mental wellbeing and reduces isolation. In addition to the Trust-wide formal recruitment and training offer the befriender service requires befriender volunteers to complete a two-day befriender training course to support them in their role.



Canine befriending service

The befriending service also recruits canine befrienders (temperament and behaviour assessed dogs) who work alongside their handlers in spending time with service users and staff within the Trust. They visit inpatient units within the Trust, staff teams and attend various Trust events. The dogs can have a calming effect on people's moods and create a positive and relaxed atmosphere on the units. They can also help people to develop their communication and social skills and can be particularly beneficial for individuals who struggle to form connections/relationships with other people.



7.3 Creative Minds

Creative Minds is a charity hosted by the Trust and is all about the use of creative approaches and activities in healthcare, increasing self-esteem, providing a sense of purpose, restoring hope, and promoting social inclusion.

Creative Minds develops community partnerships to not only co-fund but also co-deliver projects for local people. Creative Minds draws on a network of community volunteers that support projects and contribute towards decision making in their locality.

The bulk of volunteers within projects are supported by partner organisations. Volunteers fulfill many roles within projects and partner organisations. They develop their social skills, increase confidence, meet new people, and develop employable skills. Creative Minds also plays a role in encouraging volunteering and signposting people to volunteering opportunities in Trust-wide services and partners in the community.

7.4 Live Well Wakefield self-management service

Live Well Wakefield provide social prescribing and self-management services to people aged 18+ who live within the Wakefield district or those who are registered with a Wakefield GP.

The service offers single workshops and longer self-management programmes, offering practical tools and techniques to help participants manage the impact of any long-term health condition more effectively. Carers of anyone with a long-term health issue are also welcome to attend.

These programmes are led by trained volunteers and staff who have lived experience of long-term health issues themselves and have been a participant on one of the programmes offered by Live Well Wakefield. Volunteers support delivery of the longer programmes, which are all delivered as group sessions, empowering participants to better self-manage their health and wellbeing. See the Live Well Wakefield website for further information: <https://www.livewellwakefield.nhs.uk/>

All volunteers are recruited through the volunteer service and are supported with mandatory training. Additional training to support their role is delivered by the Live Well Wakefield service.

7.5 Lay chaplains

Volunteer lay chaplains go through the Trust's formal recruitment and training process and are required to undergo comprehensive training. The pastoral and spiritual care strategy is to attract people from a variety of faith and non-religious backgrounds to the role.

A volunteer lay chaplain will visit, listen, empathise, offer compassionate care, and refer to a senior member of the chaplaincy team anything they consider to be beyond their role in the promotion good mental health care.

The lay chaplain service offer is a unique and vital role in the provision of pastoral, spiritual and emotional support in the multi-disciplinary environment of mental health care. They embrace the values that underpin the role of a chaplain and are committed to deepening their understanding of the role through reflective practice, continued learning and training.

“ I feel so valued, they [staff] always say thank you, always appreciative, they know that you are helping, and I am learning all the time. ”



8. How we support volunteers

The Trust-wide volunteer service is at the heart of all volunteer opportunities, acting as the main hub for all inpatient and community service opportunities. The service is based at Fieldhead Hospital in Wakefield where it is equipped with a dedicated volunteer lounge and training space. The fully accredited service is the central hub for all formal volunteering opportunities. The service consists of:

- ✓ A formal recruitment process using a central reporting system in line with the Trust's human resources (HR) process.
- ✓ Managing a sensitive and confidential DBS service which includes personal references and occupational health referrals.
- ✓ Volunteer mandatory training through a comprehensive learning and development offer which meets both statutory and legal obligations of core mandatory training using the same system as staff.
- ✓ Support and guidance to all inpatient and community service volunteers, volunteer supervisors, staff, and managers.
- ✓ A central hub to attract volunteers through an opportunities board in the dedicated volunteer lounge, a dedicated page on the Trust website and Trust- wide promotional materials.
- ✓ Volunteer supervisor training for all new supervisors.

As part of the Trust-wide approach to recruiting volunteers, all Trust volunteers can be identified by wearing an official green volunteer lanyard and identification badge.

The Trust believes in investing in our volunteers, and those who are recruited through the formal volunteer process receive additional training as part of a comprehensive induction. This includes any training which may be required to support specific projects.

By working this way every volunteer is given an opportunity to feel part of the Trust. We know that volunteers are an asset to a team. The training a volunteer receives is in line with that of the staff who work in services. As a Trust we want volunteers to enjoy being part of our Trust and for those considering a career in the NHS, it provides a perfect platform to look at any workforce opportunities and gain skills and experience.



9. Governance

Day to day operational responsibility for the Trust's volunteer service and for ensuring the correct policies and processes are followed lies with the head of volunteering and administration officer.

The volunteer service sits within the strategy and change directorate and is overseen by the director of strategy and the Trust's assistant director of marketing, communication and volunteering. A board of directors oversee Trust business.

The volunteer service is supported by an internal volunteer policy which is updated every three years. The policy review will align with the updated strategy and ensure the strategy is delivered in line with Trust-wide policies and procedures. The supporting policy will be reviewed by an internal policy group and signed off by the Trust's operational management group (OMG).

The head of volunteering provides quarterly reports into OMG to provide updates and assurance on the volunteer service, including exception reports and data on the status of volunteer placements, training, and DBS.

The volunteer service sends quarterly reports to NHS England on the number and equality data of all volunteers currently in services within the Trust.

The benefits of a national accreditation outlines and demonstrates improvement year on year in Trust processes through the lens of an external assessor. Volunteers and stakeholders also benefit from continuous change and improvement to enhance their journey with the Trust.



“ I’m at university doing a forensic psychology course and wanted mental health experience – the ward manager is fab, I am learning so much. ”



“ I started as a learner, went on to be a volunteer, now I’m a member of staff, really opened up my world – a massive impact on my life. ”



10. Our ambitions

	Access and inclusion	Value and recognition	Volunteer experience
Our ambition	Volunteering is more accessible to a wider, more diverse population	Volunteering is better understood and valued across the system	South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is a great place for all to volunteer
Making it happen	• We will develop flexible routes into volunteering for those experiencing the greatest barriers and health inequalities • We will learn from evidence-based good practice to be more inclusive • We will ensure we monitor volunteers, so they reflect the population using equality	• We will develop an evidence base so that the current investment and real cost of volunteering is understood by the Trust • We will collaborate with partners to bring additional investment to volunteering • We will create a network of volunteers who can become advocates for volunteering • We will work with the wider NHS and the community	• We will use feedback to ensure we can evidence the experience of volunteers • We will embed the West Yorkshire ICB volunteering principles into our Trust approach • We will share good practice and identify opportunities for collaboration across partners and the ICB • We will celebrate excellence in volunteering
Make a difference	• Volunteers will report a better experience in accessing volunteering • We will increase the diversity of volunteers to reflect our local community • People will experience better care because they connect with volunteers they can relate to	• We will have a strategy and policy in place • We will work together to ensure our volunteer offer is co-designed with volunteers, service managers and partners • We will maintain volunteer accreditation	• We will ensure volunteers report a positive and rewarding experience and continuously improve • We will align to West Yorkshire ICB principles • We'll share good practice using stories and case studies

If you require a copy of this information in any other format or language please contact the Trust.

إذا كنت تحتاج إلى نسخة من هذه المعلومات بأي تنسيق أو لغة أخرى، فيرجى الاتصال بـ Trust. (Arabic)

اگر شما به یک نسخه از این اطلاعات در هر قالب (فرمت) یا زبان دیگری نیاز دارید، لطفاً با بنیاد (Trust) تماس بگیرید. (Farsi)

Ha a jelen információk másolatát más formátumban vagy nyelven szeretné megkapni, akkor kérjük, hogy lépjen kapcsolatba a trösztel. (Hungarian)

ئەگەر پوونووسی ئەم زانیاریانەت بە هەر زمان یان فۆرماتیکی دیکە پێویستە تکایە لەگەڵ ئیمە پێۆهندی بگرە. (Kurdish Sorani)

Jeśli potrzebują Państwo uzyskać kopię niniejszej informacji w innym formacie lub języku, prosimy o kontakt z Funduszem Zdrowia. (Polish)

Se necessitar de uma cópia destas informações em qualquer outro formato ou idioma, entre em contato com a Fundação. (Portuguese)

جے تہانوں ایس جانکاری دی اک کاپی دی کسے ہور فارمیٹ یا بولی وچ لوڑ اے تے مہربانی کر کے ٹرسٹ نال رابطہ کرو۔ (Punjabi Pakistani)

Dacă aveți nevoie de o copie a acestor informații în orice alt format sau limbă, vă rugăm să contactați Trustul nostru. (Romanian)

اگر آپ کو اس معلومات کی ایک کاپی کی کسی دوسرے فارمیٹ یا زبان میں ضرورت ہو تو براہ مہربانی ٹرسٹ سے رابطہ کریں۔ (Urdu)