

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Grace Eyre recognises the value of volunteers involved in our services and believes that they should be given clear guidelines about their rights, roles and responsibilities. This document sets out Grace Eyre's responsibility to its volunteers and outlines what expectations the organisation has of them. The organisation will ensure volunteers have adequate knowledge about their role, responsibilities and rights.

### **Policies and Procedures**

Grace Eyre will ensure that volunteers have access to copies of all policies and are given a copy of the Volunteers Handbook.

### **Recruitment**

When recruiting staff who, through their work, will regularly be in contact with service users the following stages will apply:

#### **Stage One - Application form**

The applicant will complete a volunteer application form and submit it to the organisation. If there is a need to recruit volunteers in a certain area and the person appears to have the skills required within the organisation they will then be invited to an interview with a manager from one of the services. If the applicant is successful at interview they will be offered a role as a volunteer within Grace Eyre, subject to satisfactory references and CRB check. They will be asked to sign a volunteer agreement (see appendices) and will be given a copy of the 'volunteer handbook'.

#### **Stage Two – Training**

The new volunteer will receive any relevant training for the role that they are taking on. This could involve shadowing in relevant sessions, speaking to keyworkers and the person running the session and speaking directly to the service users that they will be supporting. None of this preparatory work should be undertaken, unaccompanied by another member of staff. Throughout this initial stage close contact will be kept with the person's supervisor who will be on hand to guide, answer relevant questions and support the new volunteer.

#### **Stage Three – Starting work**

Volunteers can support sessions but should not run group sessions on their own. An exception to this is when doing 1 – 1 work with an individual which is acceptable but not before a full enhanced CRB check has been approved and their supervisor is certain that this work would be beneficial and pose no risk to the service user or volunteer. A risk assessment should be done if appropriate.

## **Stage Four – Review**

A formal review of the volunteer placement should take place between the supervisor and the volunteer; this should take place after 3 months and again after 6 months. This will focus on skills required for the voluntary role, their approach to service users, achievements made in their work and future training and development needs.

## **Criminal Records Bureau Checks**

Prospective volunteers will be asked to complete an application form for Grace Eyre to apply to the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The existence of convictions/cautions would not necessarily preclude the individual from becoming a volunteer but we would need to consider any offences and cautions in relation to the potential risk to service users and to the organisation.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The recruitment of all volunteers will operate within the principles of the organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy which states that Grace Eyre is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in employment. This means that as a volunteer you will not receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, age, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability or political affiliation.

You can access a full copy of the Equal Opportunities Policy on the staff shared drive under policies and procedures.

## **Insurance**

Grace Eyre will provide relevant insurance cover for all approved volunteers through the organisation's Public Liability Insurance.

If volunteers use their own car for voluntary work purposes they must ensure that it is sufficiently insured for business use (class 2), if you take any service users or staff in your vehicle whilst volunteering this must be approved by your supervisor and your insurance must be fully comprehensive with class 2 business use. Please see the organisations Expenses Policy on the staff shared file, on the main server.

A copy of the Insurance Certificate must be forwarded to the Finance Department.

## **Code of Conduct**

As a volunteer you are expected to work within the organisation's code of conduct which is based on the General Social Care Council's guidelines for care workers. This is included in the volunteer handbook.

## **Support and Training**

All volunteers will receive supervision by a nominated member of staff. This will generally take place on a monthly basis. Please see the organisation's supervision policy and procedure on the staff shared file on the server.

Volunteers will be expected to attend relevant training as suggested by their supervisor, this training will be provided by Grace Eyre free of charge to the volunteer but if booked,

they must make every effort to get to the training or contact the HR Manager as soon as possible to enable them to cancel their place on the course.

## **Expenses**

For the agreed voluntary work that you do for the organisation you should not be out of pocket. You are entitled to claim back expenses for travel costs and refreshments etc. Amounts must be agreed with your manager and within the limits detailed out in the Grace Eyre Expense Policy.

## **Confidentiality**

The nature of the work undertaken by Grace Eyre allows volunteers access to privileged and/or sensitive information about service users and the organisation. Volunteers must understand that any information about service users and/or the organisation is confidential and must not be shared with anyone outside the services that we provide, unless previously agreed with the Director.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

All service users and funders have the right to expect the highest standards from Grace Eyre staff and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to uphold the same standards of conduct as paid staff and may be subject to action under the organisation's disciplinary procedures if this is not the case.

## **Principles**

1. All disciplinary matters will be dealt with promptly but allowing time for thorough investigation and preparation by all parties.
2. No disciplinary action will take place until the matter has been fully investigated.
3. Through the procedure the volunteer will have the opportunity to state their case and to be represented by a friend.
4. Volunteers will have the right of appeal against any disciplinary penalty imposed.

## **Grievance Procedure**

The object of this procedure is to establish a fair and efficient means by which a volunteer, with a grievance concerning their work or their conditions of service, can raise the matter and have it dealt with professionally and efficiently.

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that any volunteer within Grace Eyre who has a problem or grievance relating to their employment can seek a fair and prompt resolution of that grievance.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Stage 1**

Any volunteer having a grievance about Grace Eyre should raise it verbally with their line manager who will provide a written reply within three working days. If the grievance is against the immediate line manager, then it should be raised verbally with the manager one level higher within the organisation.

**Stage 2**

If the reply from Stage 1 does not satisfactorily resolve the grievance, the volunteer should, within 5 working days, state the grievance in writing to their line manager. The line manager will submit the grievance to their manager one level higher within the organisation. A response will be provided within 5 working days.

**Stage 3**

If the reply from Stage 2 does not satisfactorily resolve the grievance, that grievance should be stated in writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees within 5 working days. The decision of the Chair will be final and will be delivered within 10 working days of receipt of the written grievance.

**REPRESENTATION**

All volunteers have the right of representation at each stage of the procedure, by a friend or colleague.