Volunteer Policy

1. Introduction

Live Well with Cancer (LWWC) places great value on the involvement of volunteers in its work, ranging from office and clerical tasks to decision and policy making in Committees. Volunteers help enhance the range and quality of services provided by LWWC by putting their time, skills, knowledge or experience at its disposal. They help keep LWWC's work relevant to the community in North Tyneside by bringing a range of personalities, backgrounds and experience into the organisation.

This policy is intended to ensure good practice in the involvement of volunteers in LWWC's work, and promote understanding of the respective roles of staff and volunteers in the organisation.

2. Role of Volunteers and Task Specification

2.1 The voluntary role must allow for job satisfaction on the part of the volunteer, as well as meeting a need.

2.2 Volunteers should be consulted on the creation of new roles for volunteers that are likely to affect them and, if appropriate, a relevant Trade Union should be consulted.

2.3 When a role for volunteers is identified and approved a role description outlining the general tasks, required skills or qualities, and conditions of service (i.e. expenses, insurance) should be available in writing.

3. Recruitment and Selection

3.1 Nominated Trustees with the appropriate skills will be responsible for the selection of volunteers who would be working under their supervision.

3.2 Volunteers will be recruited from the widest possible base and selected according to their own individual ability to perform the required tasks.

3.3 A clear description (verbally and in writing) of the volunteer's role will be given.

3.4 A volunteer will be invited to commence working for a trial period prior to either side agreeing to a longer term arrangement.

3.5 If unable to involve a particular volunteer, the staff responsible for the selection must make the reasons clear in a sensitive manner.

4. Support

4.1 A Trustee should be nominated to provide support to individual volunteers. Clear lines of communication should be identified.

4.2 Staff need to devote time to support volunteers, and if necessary be provided with training in relevant skills.

4.3 Where appropriate, additional methods of support will be used e.g. volunteer meetings, newsletters, or other tokens of appreciation.

4.4 Note should be taken of individual volunteers needs for support.

5. Induction and Training

5.1 All volunteers will be given an induction to LWWC and its work, including an information pack.

5.2 Any training required to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles will be arranged and paid for by LWWC.

5.3 Volunteers should be encouraged to take additional training that will enhance their role within LWWC to be paid for by LWWC.

6. Role in Decision Making

6.1 Volunteers will be consulted on any major policy or operational changes in LWWC that will affect them.

6.2 Volunteers will be encouraged to express their opinions on the work of LWWC and to develop their role within LWWC

6.3 Volunteers may be invited to attend and to speak at committee meetings.

7. Conditions

7.1 Volunteers will not be asked to work in conditions considered unsuitable for paid staff, and will have the same provisions made regarding Health and Safety.

7.2 Insurance arrangements will be made for volunteers to cover them whilst undertaking duties on behalf of LWWC.

7.3 Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed including travel to and from the project, and the cost of childminding or other care arrangements up to an agreed amount.

7.4 If a grievance arises for a volunteer which cannot satisfactorily be resolved by their supervisor, it should be brought to the Chair. If it cannot be resolved, it will be referred to the Trustee Board.

7.5 All volunteers should be made aware of the above rights and conditions without having to ask. Details of current rates for expenses, how to claim, and the nature and extent of insurance cover must be readily available.

7.6 Conditions such as rates for expenses, allowances, etc. will be reviewed periodically.

8. Equal Opportunities

8.1 LWWC relies on volunteer involvement to keep it relevant to the community it serves and so encourages involvement from all sections of the community.

8.2 LWWC operates a Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy. It should ensure that it does not unfairly exclude or discourage the involvement of potential volunteers because of:

- class
- race, colour, nationality or ethnic background
- disability
- sex or marital status
- sexual orientation
- unrelated criminal record.

8.3 Each volunteer job specification should make clear the requirement that volunteers adhere to LWC's Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy.

8.4 If a volunteer has a special need or disability that makes their involvement difficult, every effort will be made to involve them. An explanation will be given if this is not possible.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy.

9. Document details

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This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to updated regulations or guidance.