

Volunteer Recruitment Policy

Policy ID Number: V002
Policy Passed by Trustees: September 2019
Review Date: September 2022

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 RESTORE values and recognises the active participation and involvement of Volunteers in our organisation.
- 1.2 We aim to provide a positive, inclusive and mutually beneficial volunteering experience for people from across our community with a clear commitment to the principles of valuing and celebrating the equality, diversity and different skills that our volunteers bring to us.
- 1.3 We are committed to supporting our Volunteers to ensure they enjoy a positive beneficial experience from their volunteering activity whilst also respecting our Service User's needs and our service delivery priorities.
- 1.4 We will have systems in place to ensure that individuals are only recruited to Voluntary positions that are suitable for them and that neither they nor our Service Users are put at risk.
- 1.5 Individuals may not be a Service User and a volunteer at the same time, these are mutually exclusive.
- 1.6 This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant RESTORE Policies relating to Volunteer activity.

2. General Provisions

- 2.1 The work of RESTORE involves supporting vulnerable people. We have a duty of care to our Service Users and therefore must ensure that all volunteers who are involved in their support are placed appropriately and have the required skill, abilities and knowledge to be able to provide that support safely and effectively.
- 2.2 RESTORE have a thorough recruitment process that ensure the suitability of all applicants up until the point they have completed their six week trial period.
- 2.3 Our Recruitment practices are designed to follow best Equality and Diversity principles and do not inadvertently discriminate against particular groups or individuals.
- 2.4 The specific recruitment pathway we follow will be dependent on the nature of the positions available and will be driven by the general or specific skills required.
- 2.5 The numbers of volunteers and frequency of volunteering will always be determined by the needs of the project. The overriding principle will be to maintain the focus and culture of the project on the therapeutic needs of the service users.

- 2.6 We will assess on an individual basis whether an individual would benefit from taking a break as a service user before becoming a RESTORE volunteer.

3. Advertising and Promotion

- 3.1 Information about all our Volunteer opportunities will be made available via our website, at all our locations and via the Volunteer Centre
- 3.2 Information may also be posted at other sites according to the specific needs of the positions available.
- 3.3 We will aim to ensure that information is available to the widest range of potential volunteers that is economically viable.

4. Role descriptions

- 4.1 We have Role Descriptions available for all our Volunteer activity. This both helps potential volunteers to explore which roles they may prefer and be best suited to, and provides us with a structure against which to assess the suitability of candidates for any particular role

5. Application forms

- 5.1 Application forms will be designed to ensure that they do not inadvertently exclude or discriminate against particular groups, whilst ensuring an adequate test of core skills necessary for our roles.
- 5.2 Application will usually be by on-line application form. However, we will provide a paper form for those who are not able or who do not have access to use relevant technology.
- 5.3 Application forms will assess the applicants' motivations for volunteering.
- 5.4 To ensure safety of potential volunteers and our service users we will be alert for potential indications that applicants interests may be better served by referral to use our services rather than volunteer and will act accordingly

6. Interviews and Informal Visits

- 6.1 Interviews and informal visits provide an opportunity for the potential volunteer to meet us face to face before continuing the process and are a great opportunity to expand on the applicants' motivations for volunteering with us and to explore any questions or concerns that may arise on either side.
- 6.2 Interview questions are not designed to be difficult but are aimed at ensuring the applicant has a realistic understanding of the role they are applying for and can demonstrate they have the ability to effectively support people who experience significant mental health problems.
- 6.3 During the interview process volunteers are asked if they know any members using the service. Volunteers cannot volunteer at the same site or day as their relative or friend using the service. This is to prevent confidential information about the member being shared with the members' relative by staff, volunteers or other members. See Member's Relatives Volunteering at Restore policy.

- 6.3 During this process it will also be easier to identify people who may benefit from using the service and complete a referral form with them.

7. References

- 7.1 As part of our safe recruitment practices we will seek two references for volunteer applicants. This provides an additional opportunity to identify any issues that may be relevant to an individual whilst they volunteer with us.
- 7.2 We aim to have a flexible approach regarding referees as many people who apply to volunteer with us may have a limited employment or study history.

8. Disclosure and Barring Service Check

- 8.1 Where appropriate to the Volunteer role we will require Volunteers to have a Disclosure and Barring Service check. This will provide us with the ability to check the criminal record history of all volunteers applying to support RESTORE Service Users and will enable us to identify individuals who would not be suitable due to their previous criminal convictions.
- 8.2 Prospective Volunteers are given the opportunity to complete a voluntary Criminal Offences declaration.
- 8.3 RESTORE is an equal opportunities employer, so previous criminal convictions will not necessarily be a barrier to volunteering at RESTORE. Each situation is assessed individually by the Chief Executive and consideration given to the nature and history of offending behaviour and the relevance to the role applied for.

9. Introduction to the role and Support

- 9.1 Following successful recruitment new volunteers will receive an intensive period of support during which we will continue to assess their suitability to work with RESTORE Service Users.
- 9.2 During this period, participants are assessed on their understanding of the subject matter and on how they interact within a group, whether their comments are appropriate and bounded, whether they display an ability to maintain emotional stability and how they react when their viewpoint is challenged by others.

This process is set out in detail in the **Volunteer Support Policy**

10. Responsibilities and review

- 10.1 The Volunteer and Training Manager is responsible for ensuring the regular review and maintenance of this Policy.
- 10.2 All staff acting as Volunteer mentors must ensure they are aware of the aims, objectives and provisions of this policy and for providing consistent support to their Volunteers.
- 10.3 A volunteer's placement can be stopped at any time, particularly where concerns have been raised about the suitability of the volunteer to continue in the role and attempts to remedy the situation have not been successful.