

Working with volunteers

Why do we need this procedure?

The help and support that volunteers provide for Creative Choices and for the people who are using it is greatly appreciated. We have a responsibility to make sure that volunteers are screened in a similar way to prospective workers, that they have the information and training to equip them for their role and that their health, safety and well-being are safeguarded as well as that of other people using or working in the service.

How will this happen?

Volunteers are recruited through a process which includes:

- completing a simple application form;
- checking proof of identity;
- taking up at least 2 written references;
- carrying out a criminal records check (the level will depend on their role and tasks in the service, but will be an enhanced check if they are directly involved in supporting people who are using the service);
- cross-references to the Health and Care Professions Council or other professional bodies where appropriate;
- an interview;
- demonstrating they have the attitude and abilities for the role and tasks they will be undertaking.

If volunteers are likely to be working alone with people who are using the service, recruitment checks will be extended to be in line with those for paid workers (although they will not be required to have any professional or QCF qualifications). There is more information about this in our policy for Recruitment and employment of workers and managers.

New volunteers will follow an induction programme and/or training that is tailored to their role and tasks. If this involves working directly with people who are using the service it will be in line with the Skills for Care Common Induction Standards. The induction includes:

- values underpinning the service;
- the organisation of the service and the roles and responsibilities of other workers;
- policies and procedures;
- up-to-date knowledge and good practice guidance;
- the importance of listening to people who are using the service and of the link between continual development of workers (whether paid or unpaid) and the continual improvement of the quality of the service and outcomes;
- understanding the limitations to their own knowledge and skills and responsibilities and when to involve someone else .

We give volunteers clear written guidelines on their role, the tasks they should carry out and also the tasks they should not be involved in. We will identify a trained and competent worker who will provide them with support and supervision. The frequency and amount of supervision will depend on the volunteer's role but will be stated in the written guidelines and will include regular opportunities to talk about how they are getting on, any problems encountered and their plans for the future.

Volunteers will be able to take part in further training and/or learning and/or development opportunities appropriate to their role. Volunteers supplement the work of paid workers and do not replace them or undertake tasks that are the responsibility of paid workers.

People who use the service are involved in the recruitment and ongoing development of volunteers through:

- participation in pre-interview meetings;
- representation on the interview panel;
- participation in induction training;
- providing feedback on their work.

We will end the involvement of any volunteer whose work or conduct does not meet the standards required. We will give them a written explanation of the reason(s) for this. They can appeal against the decision by writing to Sally Shorrock or Gary Baxter, Directors.

See these other policies, procedures and documents for further information on:

- Standards of conduct and practice
- Equality and diversity
- Health and safety
- Learning and development
- Recruitment and employment of workers and managers
- Continual improvement in the service
- Consultation and participation in the service