



## Volunteer Role Description

<b>Volunteer role:</b>	<b>Ward Volunteer – Mary Seacole Nursing Home</b>
<b>Based at:</b>	<b>39 Nuttall Street, N1 5JS</b>
<b>Days/times:</b>	11.00 - 14.00 hours , 17.00 – 18.30 hours Monday to Sunday
<b>Volunteer Supervisor:</b>	Ward Manager/Nurse in Charge
<b>Main purpose:</b>	To assist patients at mealtimes, to help patients at other times as required, and to support staff in providing engagement and activities for patients.

### Background

Mary Seacole Nursing Home is part of the Homerton Hospital. We cater for the needs of up to 50 frail elderly residents aged 60 and over. We maintain strong links with the local community. We are committed to helping our residents continue to lead positive and rewarding lives and to maintain independence for as long as possible. We attend to patients with a wide range of conditions needing nursing and medical care. Some of our patients also suffer from dementia which makes the disorientation of staying in a new environment particularly difficult to manage.

A key part of this volunteer role will be to provide reassurance and company to patients within the home. Help at mealtimes is also crucial to ensure patients have a nutritious diet – and it's an area where patients and carers often say they would like more support. We also like our volunteers to be available to help in facilitating our structured patient's activities on a day to day basis.

As the nursing home is a busy environment, it is essential that volunteers are able to take a proactive approach to the role, whilst always being guided by the Nurse in Charge and wishes of the individual patient.

Experience of caring for friends or relatives with dementia would be particularly useful in this role, although it is not essential.

## **Duties**

1. To check with the Nurse in Charge about priorities and any issues the volunteer should be briefed about.
2. Ensuring patients are ready for their meal – e.g. that they've washed their hands and have a clear table.
3. Taking trays of food to individual patients as directed by the Nurse in Charge. This could be either delivering food to patients' own room or in the dining room.
4. Helping patients who need assistance with eating, e.g. cutting up food, ensuring the tray and napkin are in the right position and their drink is within reach, clearing away the tray when the patient is finished.
5. Where patients have a food chart, noting what the patient has eaten and taking the chart to the Nurse in Charge for completion.
6. Asking patients if they need help and responding to their requests, e.g. making refreshments outside the main drinks rounds, running errands (e.g. on-site shopping at the hospital, posting letters, buying phone cards), tidying the bedside, reading.
7. Chatting to patients if they would like company – this could be either in the patient's own room, communal areas like the lounges and outside garden.
8. Helping and supporting our patients as they participate in structured activities with the supervision of our activity facilitator.
9. Meeting and greeting visitors as they come onto the ward/into Mary Seacole and directing them to the patient they've come to see.
10. Assisting nurses with making up beds. If this is identified as something a patient can do, then, assisting patient with making up their beds and tidying their wardrobe and room.
11. Assisting with general ward tidiness.
12. Asking patients to give feedback on their experience of the ward by completing a hand-held survey device.

## **Person Specification**

### **Ward Volunteer - Mary Seacole Nursing Home**

#### **Essential**

- Aged 18 or over
- Able to commit reliably to at least 3 hours a week for a minimum of six months
- A commitment to improve the patient's experience of their time in hospital
- Well presented, with a friendly and approachable manner and good verbal communication skills
- An ability to relate well to people on a one to one basis and be sympathetic to others' situations
- An ability to be patient and calm even in the face of difficult situations
- An ability to act on own initiative within the role description
- A willingness to be flexible and to follow the guidance of a Volunteer Supervisor
- A commitment to the trust's equal opportunities and diversity policies
  
- A willingness to abide by the Homerton's volunteer guidelines, including rules on confidentiality, health and safety, safeguarding adults and children and manual handling
  
- To be willing to receive training in customer care, communication skills and any other areas as appropriate to the volunteer role

#### **Desirable**

- Experience of caring for friends or relatives with dementia.

#### **General information**

- Volunteers should not undertake duties outside this role description without checking first with their Volunteer Supervisor.
- Volunteers must not undertake any manual handling tasks.
- A volunteer can offer emotional support and empathy but must under no circumstances offer advice or a medical opinion on a patient's treatment or assist with anything of a clinical nature.
- Volunteers are reminded of the importance of confidentiality at all times. They must under no circumstances discuss patients' affairs with any person other than the relevant staff. If a patient discloses information relevant to their condition, the volunteer should direct the patient to speak to the Nurse in Charge.

- Volunteers are complementary to paid staff and must not be used to replace roles that are usually undertaken by hospital employees.