

# Meeting the general equality duty

## Title: Volunteers

### **Which of the three aims is this information relevant to?**

**Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.**

**Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

**Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

### **How does this information help us to show we are paying due regards to advancing equality?**

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment extends to our volunteers and we welcome everyone from our community as a volunteer.

Each volunteer completes an application form and undertakes the registration process regardless of skills and experience they bring. Volunteers are encouraged to provide details of any special needs, disabilities or health issues to ensure we are meeting their needs and we aim to be inclusive.

Each volunteering opportunity is different and as new opportunities arise, any particular needs are addressed through the registration and induction processes to ensure needs are met as far as is possible. Each new volunteer has an introductory meeting with the voluntary services team to ensure that the tasks are understood and appropriate and that they are suitable to all parties. We can and do make adjustments for disabilities wherever we can, working within requirements for patient and staff safety and within the resources we have available.

Young people from the age of 17 years of age can access a supervised work shadow scheme where they will observe someone in their role to understand how they do their job and what it involves. The scheme has successfully enabled students from across Buckinghamshire to access placements at University in the healthcare field, particularly medicine.

## **Any other comments/actions**

The Trust recognises the value that people with different backgrounds, life experience, skills, and outlooks can bring via our volunteers. Our volunteers are seen as a valuable resource which staff and patients greatly appreciate. The Trust sees volunteering as a possible gateway to employment for those interested. For some this can be of benefit to future participation in public life.

We are working towards ensuring that volunteers are fully representative of the communities the Trust serves. The Trust has 394 volunteers registered providing a valuable contribution across its hospital and community services. Many of these volunteers provide support in patient-facing roles such as ward support, 'befrienders' on wards or 'meeters and greeters' on receptions. Other volunteers outside these roles perform administrative tasks to free staff up to spend more time with patients, or assist with work that helps to improve the patients' environment.

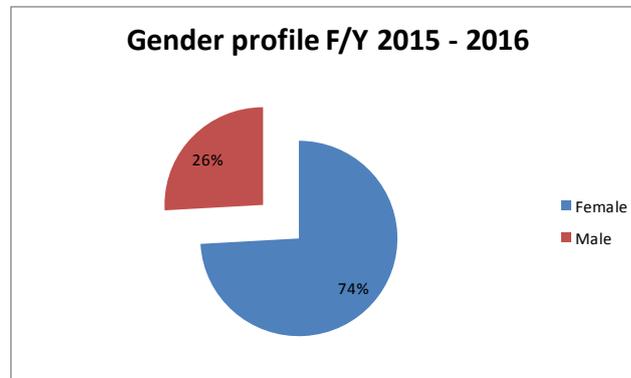
There is a broad range of volunteering roles across the Trust. Generally there are sufficient roles that suit a wide range of abilities including those with physical or sensory impairment or a learning disability. People volunteer for many reasons, some have conditions which may preclude them from working in paid employment or have just retired and wish to keep actively involved and others are seeking to build confidence back in the workplace post having a family or having been out of work for a while or due to illness.

The information collected below is part of regular monitoring of volunteer activity. The data is collected via an equal opportunities monitoring form which is given to volunteers during the application process.

**As at 31 March, there were 394 volunteers registered with the Trust.**

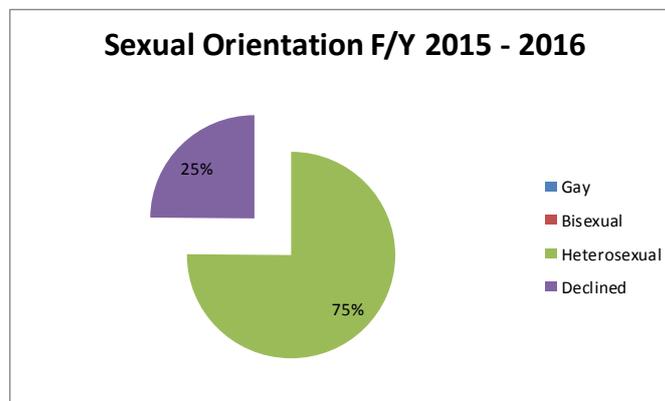
### **Volunteers by Gender**

74% of volunteers (292 individuals) are female and 26% (102 individuals) are male. This is largely representative of our overall workforce but not the demographic for men and women across Buckinghamshire.



### **Volunteers by Sexual Orientation**

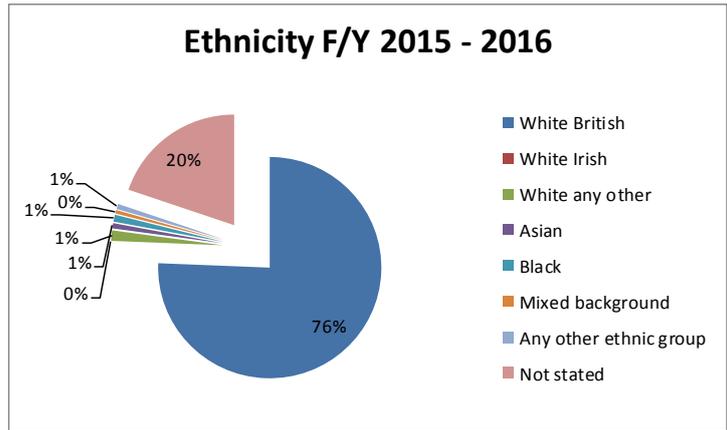
75% of volunteers chose to disclose their sexual orientation. Of those who declared their sexuality, all were heterosexual.



### **Volunteers by Ethnicity**

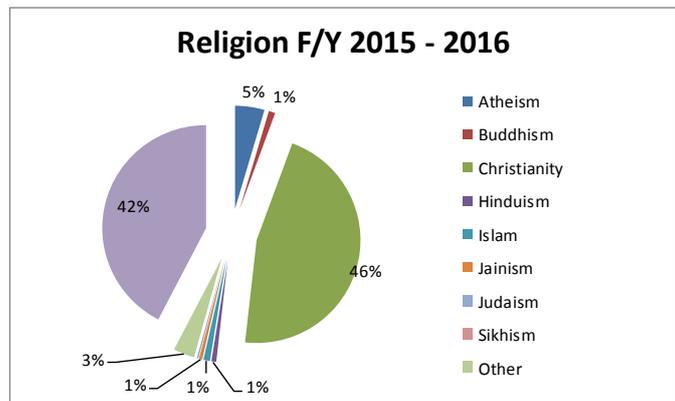
The data on volunteers by ethnicity shows that the majority of our volunteers are white British at 75% with 5% across the other categories. It should be noted that 20% of volunteers declined to complete this section. Across Buckinghamshire it is just under 20% i.e 18% that declare themselves as BME and in the Trust it is 21% so this is disproportionate. We will look into this in our recruitment for the future.

See over for graph.



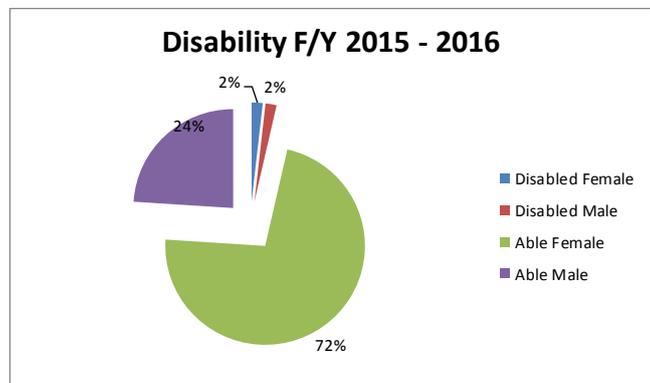
### Volunteers by Religion and Belief

42% of volunteers did not state any religion or belief. 46% have Christianity as religion with 12% a cross other religions/beliefs.



### Volunteers by Disability

The data on disability shows that 4% of volunteers have a disability. 96% stated they do not have a disability. This is higher than the overall representation of disability across our workforce.



### Age Profile of Volunteers

The majority of our volunteers (263 individuals, 66%) are over 61 years of age. 34% (131 volunteers) are in the 16 to 60 age range; the largest group of volunteers are those aged over 71, with 148 volunteers.

