

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.

The volunteering registration procedure is open to all protected characteristics. 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.

Each volunteering opportunity is different and as new opportunities arise, equalities 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 that they are suitable to all parties. Some adjustments can be made for disabilities according to the resources 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 enabled students to access medical placements at University.

Any other comments/actions

The Trust values difference, and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our volunteers bring to the organisation. 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 those who share a protected characteristic 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 350 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 and individuals can select roles that are in their own time, and of their own choice. Generally there are sufficient roles that suit a wide range of abilities and some suit those with a physical or 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.

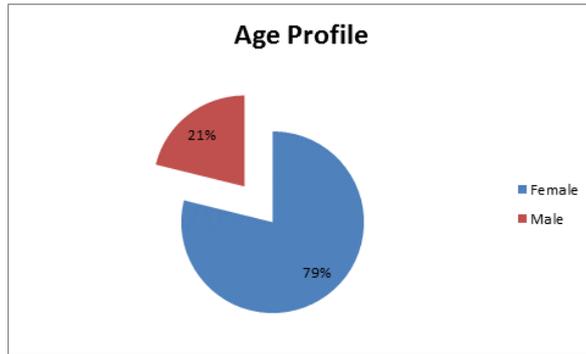
The information collected below is part of regular monitoring of volunteer activity. The data is collected via an equality monitoring form which is given to volunteers during the application process. All volunteer data is kept on a secure database system.

Voluntary Services

As at 31 March 2017, there were 350 volunteers registered with the Trust, a reduction of 44 from March 2016.

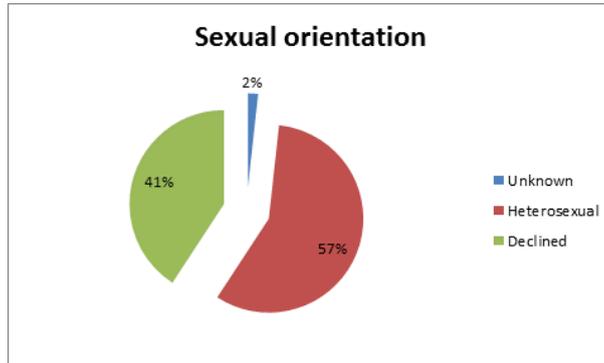
Volunteers by Gender

79% (276) of volunteers are female and 21% (74) are male. There has been a 5% reduction in the proportion of male volunteers in comparison to the previous year.



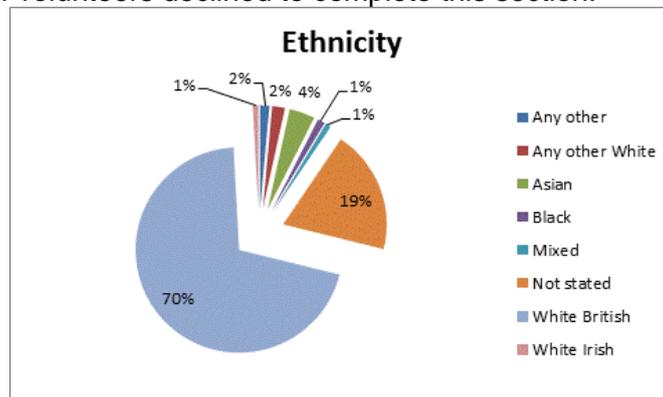
Volunteers by Sexual Orientation

The data on sexual orientation demonstrates that a significant proportion, 41%, do not wish to disclose their sexual orientation. Of those who declared their sexuality, all were Heterosexual.



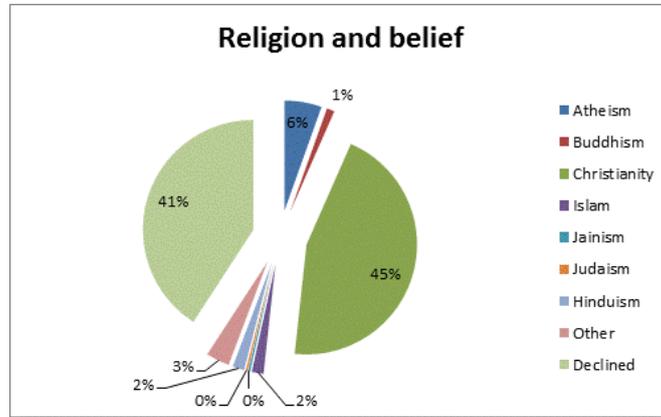
Volunteers by Ethnicity

The data on volunteers by ethnicity shows that the majority of our volunteers are white British at 70%; 7% of volunteers declare their ethnicity as BME which is a 5% increase on F/Y 2015-16. 19% of volunteers declined to complete this section.



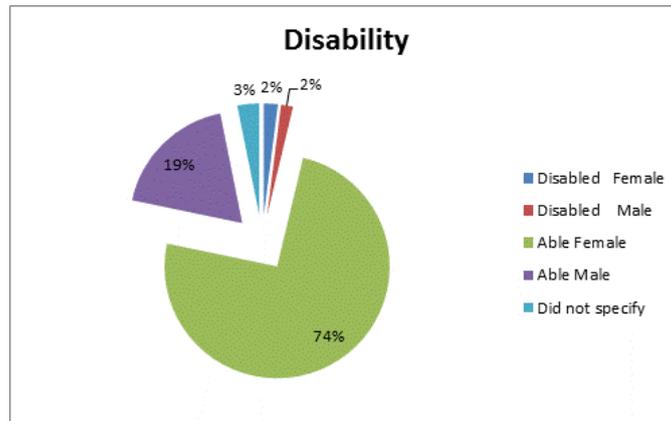
Volunteers by Religion and Belief

41% of volunteers do not state any religion or belief and 45% have chosen Christianity. The outcome of this is similar to F/Y 2015-16 where the two categories tallied 42% and 46% retrospectively.



Volunteers with a Disability

The data on disability shows that 4% of volunteers are registered disabled, the same total as the previous year. 93% stated they are non-disabled.



Age Profile of Volunteers

The majority (67%) of our volunteers are over 61 years of age, with 148 aged over 71. 31% are in the 16 to 60 age range.

