

Meeting the general equality duty

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 undergraduate healthcare courses at universities.

Any other comments/actions

The Trust value difference, and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our volunteers bring to the organisation. Our volunteers are a valuable resource which staff and patients greatly appreciate. Volunteering is also a possible gateway to employment at the Trust. 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 492 volunteers registered; this is an increase of 113 from last year. 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 support with more 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 best suit them. 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 Equal Opportunities monitoring form which is given to volunteers during the application process. All volunteer data is kept on a secure database system.

Volunteer workforce profile

Gender

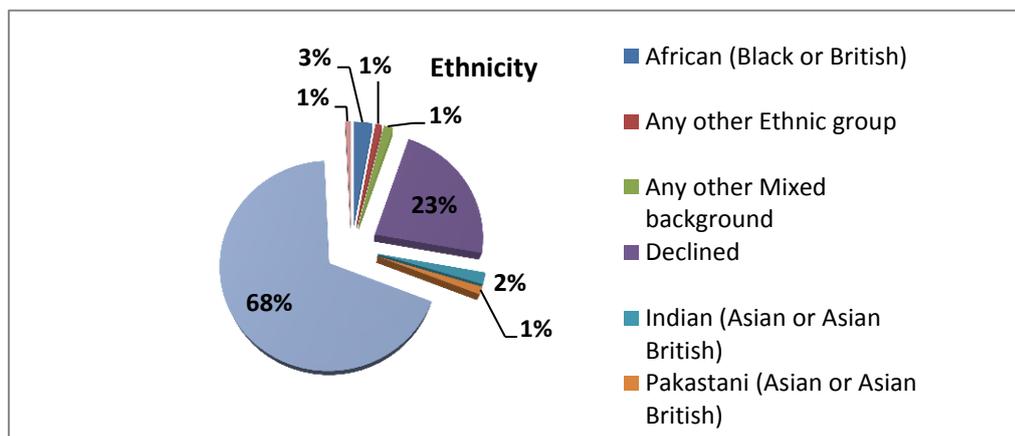
379 (77%) of volunteers are female; 112 (23%) are male. This is broadly similar with the profile last year.

Sexual Orientation

64% of volunteers declare their sexual orientation as heterosexual, 35% do not wish to clear and 1% declare their sexual orientation as gay.

Active & Occasional Volunteers by Ethnicity

The majority of our volunteers (68%) declare their ethnicity as white British at 68%, 8% declare their ethnicity as Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic; 23% of volunteers declined to complete this section.



Religion and Belief

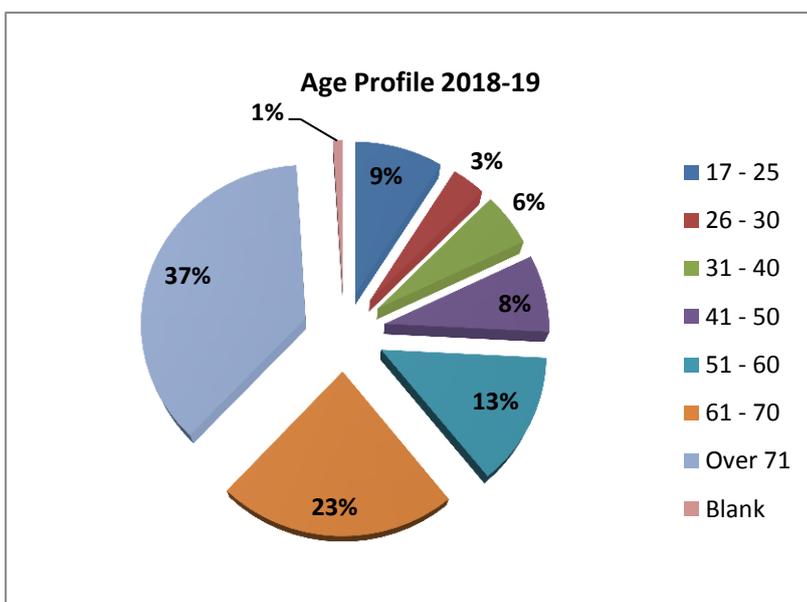
44% of volunteers indicate Christianity as their religion; 37% of volunteers declined to declare their religion or belief and 10% selected atheism.

Volunteers with a Disability

4% of volunteers declare that they have a disability.

Age Profile of Volunteers

The majority of our volunteers (60%) are over 61 years of age. 39% are in the 16 to 60 age range, and the largest representation of volunteers is the over 71 age group with 182 volunteers, an increase of 34 on the previous year.



Geographic Distribution of Volunteers

The geographic distribution of volunteers reflects the number of services at the Trust's sites. The proportion of volunteers at Stoke Mandeville has grown over the last year from 47% to 54% which is a result of projects such as Horatio's Garden.

Volunteers supporting Community Services remain at 15% of the total establishment.