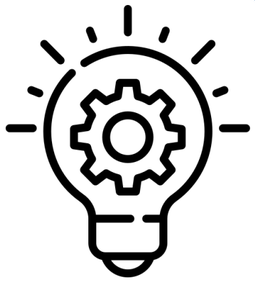
Training and development for people who manage volunteers

Volunteering for Health
Learning into action guide







Volunteering for Health

Volunteering for Health is a national programme being delivered by a partnership between NHS Charities Together, NHS England, and CW+ (the official charity of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) to test and build volunteering infrastructure in health and care.

It is funding 15 local partnerships to deliver volunteering infrastructure projects in their geographies over three years. Local partnerships include organisations across:

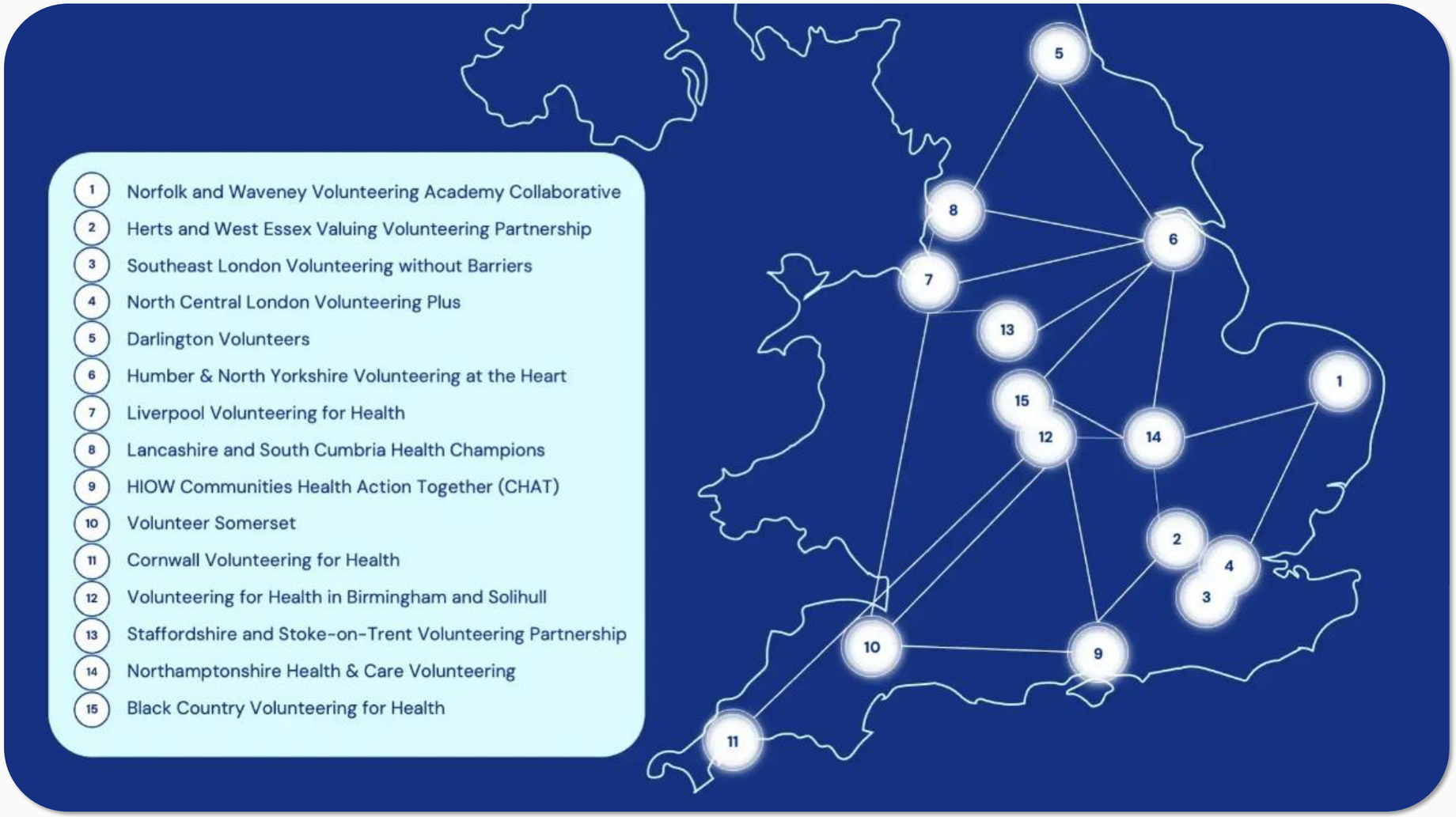
- Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)
- NHS trusts
- NHS charities
- The voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector including local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) which support local VCSE organisations to foster partnerships, build capacity and develop volunteering opportunities.

"Volunteers are crucial to the NHS's vision for the future of health and social care. 72,000 volunteers support NHS Trusts alone, while thousands more support healthcare in other parts of the NHS and within the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector."

NHS Volunteering webpages, NHS Business Services Authority



Volunteering for Health – 15 local partnerships

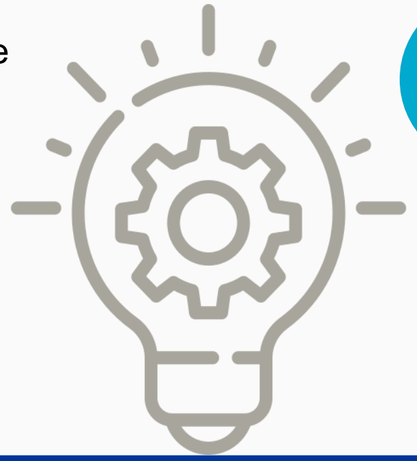


Supporting health and care services through Volunteering for Health

Sharing learning from the programme is vital to help grow and strengthen volunteering in health and care systems. This learning can improve equity of access to services and support better outcomes for everyone.

The theme of this learning into action guide is **Training and development for people who manage volunteers**

This guide is one of five covering key areas of focus for the programme, presenting innovative approaches that are being taken by the local partnerships and how they can inform volunteering strategies.



The learning into action guide follows a ‘what’, ‘so what’, ‘now what’ structure:

WHAT? What is training and development for people who manage volunteers?

SO WHAT? What are local partnerships doing to support the training and development of people who manage volunteers?

NOW WHAT? What actions can health and care system leaders take to to improve training and development for people who manage volunteers?

WHAT?

What is training and development for people who manage volunteers?

As volunteering becomes increasingly embedded within wider health and care system ambitions, Volunteering for Health partnerships have identified the need for stronger infrastructure, guidance and capability-building for people who manage volunteers.

This will support more consistent and sustainable practices across health and care and wider community support settings.

People who manage volunteers play a key role in shaping the volunteer experience and enabling volunteers to contribute effectively through their roles. Providing them with support through training and development has often been overlooked, despite the role requiring specific skills and knowledge.

Volunteer management is carried out by many people across health and care organisations, just like staff management.

Training and development can support people who manage volunteers by:

- Providing guidance on best practice to recruit, retain and support volunteers
- Helping managers to recognise and understand the distinct role of the volunteer in comparison to paid staff
- Supporting managers to create an inclusive and accessible experience for all volunteers.



SO WHAT?

What are local partnerships doing to support the training and development of people who manage volunteers?

Developing good practice guides and resources for people who manage volunteers

North Central London partnership has developed shared standards and resources for volunteer management across a range of topics, including: widening engagement; recruitment, onboarding and training; and volunteer recognition and retention.

Organisations that use volunteers shared existing resources that were reviewed and collated into a best practice toolkit. The toolkit has been shared across system partners through a website, a network for people who manage volunteers and a network for stakeholders with an interest in volunteering.

Benefits of the approach

The partnership has found that wide engagement of people who manage volunteers has supported and promoted the ongoing development of best practice in this area. Further information here.

Developing training for organisations that involve volunteers

Norfolk and Waveney partnership has developed a learning platform for both volunteers and organisations that involve volunteers. Training courses and e-learning modules are also available for those that manage volunteers and leaders responsible for ensuring good volunteering practice.

The learning platform brings together training and supporting materials across a range of topics, including: safeguarding; neurodiversity; communications; and volunteer development. Further topics will be proactively identified and added as the platform develops.

Benefits of the approach

The partnership has found that a shared learning platform can offer accessible training on current and developing volunteering topics for organisations that involve volunteers. Further information here.

Developing networks to connect people who manage volunteers

Lancashire and South Cumbria partnership has developed an online forum for people who manage volunteers and those with an interest in health and care volunteering.

The forum is hosted by an LIO, connecting a diverse range of VCSE and NHS organisations. Partners have worked together in the forum to develop a shared vision for volunteering and to complete a training needs analysis for people who manage volunteers. Meetings include a spotlight section for participants to discuss their experiences of volunteer management and share learning across organisations.

Benefits of the approach

The partnership has found that connecting people through a forum builds relationships across the system, as well as supporting volunteer management practice.
Further information here.

NOW WHAT?

Actions for health and care system leaders

The local partnerships have shared emerging learning to how their programmes are looking to improve training and development for people who manage volunteers.

Based on this learning, it is recommended that leaders across health, local government and VCSE organisations consider the following actions to ensure health and care systems make best use of the activities of the partnerships.



Action 1:
Organisations that involve volunteers in health and care roles should have a senior leader responsible for volunteer management

Action 2:
Organisations that involve volunteers in health and care roles should work together to develop and adopt shared local principles for volunteer management

Action 3:
ICBs should work with system partners to establish a network for people who manage volunteers to support and enhance volunteer management practices across partners

NOW WHAT?

Action 1: Organisations that involve volunteers in health and care roles should have a senior leader responsible for volunteer management

All organisations that involve volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that they are managed well.

People who manage volunteers should be able to seek **advice and support from** an appointed person with responsibility for ensuring **best practice in volunteer management**. Volunteer management should be delivered in line with an **established organisational policy**.



Volunteer management is performed by many people across health and care organisations, just like staff management. Local partnerships have found that people who manage volunteers are not always supported to do this well.



A senior leader can ensure that volunteering has the focus it requires, that policies and practice are up to date and that volunteers are being managed in a safe and legal manner.

Where is this happening now?

South East London

Each of the organisations in the South East London partnership have appointed a senior leader to review volunteer recruitment, onboarding and training processes. These leaders have collaborated with people who manage volunteers and other senior colleagues to develop best practice in volunteer management and update organisational policies where appropriate. Further information here.



Questions to test progress against Action 1:

- Do organisations that involve volunteers have a senior leader with oversight for volunteer management?
- Does each organisation know who is responsible for managing volunteers? Have they confirmed that they have the required support in place?
- Are organisations working to an established policy for volunteer management which implements best practice?

NOW WHAT?

Action 2: Organisations that involve volunteers in health and care roles should work together to develop and adopt shared local principles for volunteer management

People that give their time to health and care organisations should be well supported to have a good volunteering experience.

NHS organisations, local authorities and LIOs should work together to **develop shared local principles for volunteer recruitment, retention and development** and ensure these are adopted by people who manage volunteers.



Volunteer management processes will vary between organisations due to the size or focus of the organisation and the tasks required by the volunteering role. Shared principles allow for variation within a framework of best practice, making volunteer management processes proportionate to the volunteering role and adaptable to meet the needs of diverse communities, addressing barriers to volunteering.



The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) provides best practice guidance on involving volunteers and Investing in Volunteers offers a framework to assess and improve volunteer management practice.

Where is this happening now?

Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire partnership has introduced a good practice toolkit to establish shared principles for volunteer management across the system. Developed with organisations that involve volunteers, the toolkit includes practical guidance on improving accessibility to roles for people with mental illness, learning disabilities and autism.
Further information here.



Questions to test progress against Action 2:

- Are there shared principles in place for volunteer management across health and care organisations within the system?
- Are people involving volunteers trained and supported to co-design more inclusive volunteer roles with diverse communities?

NOW WHAT?

Action 3: ICBs should work with system partners to establish a network for people who manage volunteers to support and enhance volunteer management practices across partners

Sharing learning across organisations offers support to people who manage volunteers and develops best practice in health and care volunteering.

ICBs should work with LIOs to develop volunteer manager networks. **People who manage volunteers should be given time to attend network events and to access training and development opportunities**.

Local partnerships have found that some people who manage volunteers feel isolated within their roles and not linked into professional development opportunities. Networks have offered people the chance to engage with colleagues and share best practice.

Some local partnerships have used networks to review existing volunteer management resources across organisations and identify best practice to share more widely across system partners. Training needs analyses for people who manage volunteers have also been completed to inform future development.

Where is this happening now?

North Central London

North Central London partnership has developed a network which offers volunteer managers working in health and care across the system the opportunity to meet and discuss approaches to volunteer management. Meetings have covered topics including volunteer recruitment and maintaining volunteer engagement. Further information here.

Questions to test progress against Action 3:

- Does the system have a network to link up people who manage volunteers from across health and care organisations?
- Do people who manage volunteers have protected time to access networking and training and development opportunities?

NOW WHAT?

For more information

This is one of a series of five learning into action guides.

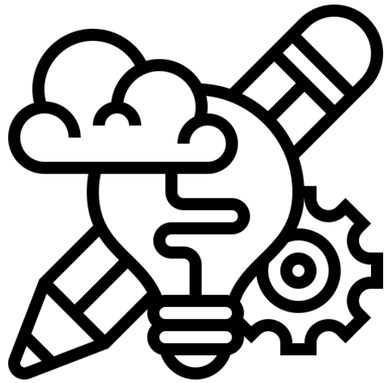
All the guides in this series provide specific examples of how volunteering can support system ambitions. System leaders should consider the actions across all of the guides in support of their volunteering strategies.

- Embedding volunteering within neighbourhood health
- Developing the health and care workforce through volunteering
- **Training and development for people who manage volunteers**
- Developing volunteer passporting across partners
- Diversifying volunteering opportunities to widen participation.

The full series of learning into action guides is available to access on the Volunteering for Health website.



Contact us



https://www.cwplus.org.uk/volunteering-for-health/

volunteering@anhsc.org.uk

Volunteering for Health Programme group



Acknowledgements

This learning into action guide has been produced with the support of the Volunteering for Health programme team and local partnerships.

This guide was prepared by The Strategy Unit.



Icons used in this guide have been sourced from www.flaticon.com. Icons have been made by:

- adityayoga
- Eucalyp
- Freepik
- gibranicon
- gravisio
- pojok d
- shmai
- smashingstocks
- Uniconlabs
- Witdhawaty