

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

#YourPreciousLife

A
PLACE
TO
THRIVE



**The Hospice
of st francis**
Reg. Charity No. 280825

WELCOME

Are you curious and kind?

Does equality inspire you?

Can you bring people together?

Have you spent years developing your skills and expertise?

Or perhaps you are at the start of your learning?

Does living right to the very last moment you can, make your heart sing?

Can you make, create, sell and persuade?

Can you sit quietly in the face of a storm?

Do you want to change the world, even just a little, whilst you are in it?

If your answer to one or all of these questions is 'Yes!' You are in the right place.
You already know The Hospice of St Francis is for you.

Welcome to the Team!

Thank you for your gift of time, which will help us to maintain the service we have offered in the local community for over 45 years. Volunteers have been at the core of our service since the very beginning, so you are part of a continuing thread of care, concern and skill which lies at the very heart of everything we do.

This booklet gives you a brief outline of who we are and what we do along with some basic information to get you started, and point you in the right direction for further information or help.

If you have any comments on this booklet or on your volunteering for The Hospice, please let us know.

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Our Vision, Mission & Aims

Our Vision is a community where people with life-limiting illnesses live well until the end of their lives and their families receive the support they require.

Our mission is:

- To achieve our vision by providing excellent care and support to patients and those close to them.
- To share expertise through collaboration, innovation and education.
- To sufficiently engage the support of our community to enable us to deliver our vision and mission.

Our stated aims for the charity are:

- To transform the quality of life for people living with life-limiting illnesses and provide support for those close to them.
- To ensure high quality provision of care through education and research.
- To sustain and expand our services through excellent financial management and governance.
- To continually improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The Hospice of St Francis provides free specialist care 365 days per year for people with life-limiting illnesses in North West Herts and the Chiltern area of Bucks. Our expert medical and support team provide a holistic approach to help patients combat pain and chronic symptoms.

It costs about £5 million to run The Hospice services each year. We receive less than 20% of this from the NHS – for the rest we are dependent upon the goodwill of our local community. The Hospice is grateful to all those who support it through donations of goods, time or money.

What services do we provide?

The Hospice of St Francis provides:

- Inpatient care for patients in beds at The Hospice.
We currently have 10 beds open and in the last year (April 2022-March 2023) had 216 admissions.
- Care for patients in their own homes through our team of specialist nurses (Community and RPCS – Rapid Personalised Care Service). In the period April 2022-March 2023 our Community Nursing team made 1773 visits and our RPCS team made 2294 visits. This support enables more patients to remain at home rather than being admitted to hospital.
- Our Spring Centre - a free health and wellbeing centre, which can help you to live well if you have a serious illness.
- Psychological support for patients and their families, both before and after a patient has died.

In addition:

- Our team supports on average 30 children per month with 1:1 support
- Our support line team made 1084 bereavement calls in April 2022-March 2023
- Over the past year we have supported 377 carers, through our carer support service.
- Education in palliative and end-of-life care, available to staff, volunteers and in the wider community.
- Workshops, courses and groups in our Spring Centre. Here we offer support to outpatients, those recovering from cancer, carers and the bereaved.

Where do Volunteers fit in?

In the beginning, everyone was a Volunteer! Currently we have over 210 full and part-time paid staff at The Hospice, complemented by over 1300 volunteers! Volunteers work alongside paid staff – and independently of them – in a wide variety of roles at The Hospice. There is no area of Hospice work in which a volunteer is not involved in some way.

Here are a few quotes from some of our volunteers:

“I’ve found my happy place” – Chapter two volunteer

“Since helping at The Hospice of St Francis I feel as though my life has been much enriched” – IPU Volunteer

“Everyone is so friendly and appreciates what I do.” – Admin Volunteer

“I love volunteering at The Hospice because it is such a special place. Volunteering makes me feel that I still have something to give and it gives me an interest to look forward to each week.” – Office volunteer

“Bright, lively and a fun place to work with brill people.” – Shop Volunteer

“Our aim is to maintain a beautiful garden for the patients to enjoy. The flowers and wild life must be a comfort and distraction to anyone lying in bed towards the end of their life. We know that the gardens are so much appreciated by patients, visitors and staff, and if they provide a little joy at that moment, then it is time and effort well spent. How could anyone not enjoy working in such beautiful, peaceful surroundings with good friends and colleagues?” – Gardener Volunteer

“I always say that, as a volunteer I give a little, but that I get back far more than I give. I love what I do and wear my badge with pride.” – Family support & shop Volunteer

HOW DO WE SUPPORT YOU?

Initial and on-going training

It is **compulsory** to complete **Core Mandatory Training** before starting your volunteer role. This covers Health and Safety, Fire Safety, Moving and Handling, Infection Control, Equality & Diversity, Confidentiality, Learning Disabilities & Autism and Working with Vulnerable People. The type of training you receive is dependent upon your role. It may be completed **Online** or in **Booklet Format**. Details will come from Volunteer Development and through your Team Leader.

*Once completed it is necessary to **refresh** your learning **every year**. Please ensure that you do this.*

You will be given a written **role profile**, giving clear details of what you have agreed to do and who you are responsible to.

You will be given a **Role Induction** by your Team Leader, so that you are clear about how to do what is expected of you.

You will receive **training** in the use of any equipment, or in any particular skills you need in the course of your volunteering. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your Team Leader.

Other more general training and education sessions are available from the Education and Learning Department. Details of courses can be obtained by phoning 01442 869566, emailing education@stfrancis.org.uk or traininganddevelopment@stfrancis.org.uk - by looking at our [website](#) and the Volunteer Information Folders.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I claim expenses?

Volunteering should cost you nothing. If you would like to claim your **travel expenses** or reclaim **incidental expenses**, please speak to your Team Leader **before** incurring expense. Your Team Leader can give you a form to complete.

What happens if there is a complaint?

We hope that if anything is wrong, you will raise it with your Team Leader in the first instance, and that matters can be resolved informally. However, The Hospice has a policy for dealing **with complaints about volunteers** and **complaints by volunteers**. This is intended to ensure that all get a fair hearing, and includes an appeal procedure. A copy of the policy is available from **Volunteer Development** at The Hospice.

The Hospice also has a general policy for dealing with complaints about its services; if you have received a **complaint about The Hospice**, please pass it on to your Team Leader as soon as you have received it.

I'm finding it a bit upsetting

Working in The Hospice or the Hospice shops brings volunteers face to face with patients, relatives or their stories. Anyone can be affected by this. If you would like to talk to someone about something you have seen or heard, please contact your **Team Leader**, the **Head of Spiritual Care** or **Volunteer Development**.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM YOU?

Hospice Values

The Hospice has a set of **Hospice Values**; see page 13 of this handbook. We ask all volunteers to uphold these values when volunteering for the Hospice.

#APlaceToThrive

We ask our volunteers to ensure they are aware of our Diversity Statement found on page 14 of this handbook and on our [website](#)

Ambassador for the Hospice

All volunteers are **ambassadors** for The Hospice of St Francis and may find themselves, consciously or unconsciously, talking about the Hospice to friends, family or strangers. Please use your discretion and be aware that others may judge the Hospice by what you say or do.

Covid-19 Precautions

Please speak to your team leader about Covid-19 precautions that are required for your role.

Dress code

We do not enforce a formal dress code, but volunteers are asked to make sure that they are dressed appropriately for their role. Some volunteers (e.g. on IPU) may be asked to wear a particular uniform. Your Team Leader can advise you on this.

Communication channels

We would like to keep you updated with news and developments at The Hospice. You can help us to do this cost effectively by providing us with your **email address**. We send our **Volunteer Bulletin** once a month and a Training & Education Bulletin is sent once a quarter, both on email. A printout of the latest emails will be available on the notice board in shops. Additionally, you will find regularly updated **Volunteer Information Folders** throughout The Hospice and in our Shops, which contain information useful for volunteers. You will also find information about Hospice policies in the folders. Please take a little time to read through these whenever you visit The Hospice or a shop. Communication regarding your role and specific training will be done by your Team Leader.

If you would like to receive our general supporter update by email, please sign up at the bottom of our website home page - www.stfrancis.org.uk

Social Media

We encourage all volunteers active on social media to follow us on our channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and TikTok). Please read our social media policy before contributing to digital conversations about The Hospice. We welcome your positive contributions and sharing our events and stories with your network.

Responsibility regarding rota

Many roles involve a commitment to a rota. Please bear this in mind when you start your role, and try to ensure, as far as possible, that you are always free for your 'slot'. If you are unable to fulfil your commitment, please check with your Team Leader about notice of absence, and whether you need to arrange cover.

What to do if you are ill

Due of the nature of the work that we do, our patients are particularly vulnerable. We are also mindful of the risks of infection to other staff members. If you are suffering from **sickness, diarrhoea** or you are **infectious**, please do not come in, but ring your Team Leader to advise them. If you are unsure whether you should come in, please ring your Team Leader to check at the earliest opportunity.

Confidentiality

During your time at The Hospice you may have access to confidential information. Please ensure that you do not discuss any of this information with anyone outside the Hospice, without clear permission. You agreed to our confidentiality declaration when you completed an application form.

Name badges

All volunteers must wear **name badges** while on duty in The Hospice; this helps members of the public to identify them, and helps identify strangers within The Hospice. It is also a Care Quality Commission (CQC) requirement. A badge or appropriate ID will be supplied when you start your volunteering. Please look after this, but let your Team Leader know if you need a replacement. In our shops, volunteers wear a generic Volunteer badge rather than a badge with their own name. Any badge supplied should be returned to your Team Leader when your volunteering commitment ends.

First Aid while on Hospice Premises

If you are injured or feel unwell while on Hospice premises, please let your Team Leader or another member of staff know as soon as possible. We have trained First Aiders on site.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Freedom to Speak Up

The Hospice takes all forms of malpractice very seriously. If you see anything that concerns you, please speak to your Team Leader, the Volunteer Development Team or any member of the Senior Team at the earliest available opportunity.

Safeguarding

The Hospice's first priority is the safety and protection of adults and children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you have any safeguarding concerns please refer to our safeguarding policy (CO61 – which can be found in the Volunteer Information Folder) or speak to your team leader. Our safeguarding lead is Polly Traxler.

Data Protection

We hold your details on our Volunteer Database, and a copy of your application form and other supporting paperwork will be held on our paper files. These are stored confidentially. If you would like to see these at any time, please ask Volunteer Development.

Policies

All The Hospice policies can be found on the “Policies icon” on the desktop when logging on to a Hospice computer. If you need help accessing any of our policies please speak to your Team Leader. If you do not have access to a computer, details of our key policies can be found in the Volunteer Folders.

Throughout the year we will also send out a link to the policies via the Volunteer Bulletin

No Smoking Policy

To comply with legislation, there is a ‘No Smoking Policy’ within The Hospice buildings and grounds for staff and volunteers, including the shops.

Acceptance of gifts

The Hospice’s general policy is that volunteers must not give the impression to anyone that they may be influenced by any inducement or reward, and if in any doubt they should consult their Team Leader for advice. There is a distinction between personal gifts and donations to The Hospice. Please refer to the ‘Offering and Acceptance of Gifts Policy and Guidelines’ for further guidance.

Refreshments

The Hospice offers hot and cold drinks to volunteers free of charge. Meals are offered at cost to volunteers working at Spring Garden Lane, and should be paid for at the time of ordering.

Personal property

All personal property should be safely stored away, out of sight and locked if possible while on Hospice premises. If lockers are provided, please use them but make sure you return the key when you go home, as someone else may need to

use the locker after you. Loss of property or theft should be reported to your Team Leader as soon as possible.

When you fancy a change

We recognise that from time to time you may wish to move from your existing role, or take on an additional role. Details of current vacancies for volunteers are available from Volunteer Development, are on our website and are also circulated with the Bulletin. Please ask Volunteer Development for more details.

Feedback

We welcome your feedback on your volunteering experience. Each month via the Volunteer Bulletin there is an opportunity to provide feedback via an online questionnaire, but please feel free to email us at any time.

Saying farewell

If you would like to give up volunteering for us, please talk to your Team Leader or Volunteer Development. It is helpful for us to know why you are leaving, in case there is anything we can change to improve the experience for other volunteers.

Where it is necessary to end a voluntary role against the wishes of the volunteer, the Team Leader or Volunteer Development will meet with the volunteer to explain why and, where possible, find an alternative role.

Time to Retire?

There may come a time when you can no longer carry out your volunteering responsibilities, and it is best to stand down from your role. Please speak to your Team Leader or Volunteer Development about this and do not feel that you are letting us down by leaving us.

OUR HOSPICE VALUES

Respectful Relationships

We create a caring and compassionate environment: demonstrating appreciation and respect in all our interactions, and taking account of individual's needs and circumstances.

Constructive Communication

We encourage open, clear and honest communication, where everyone can be heard.

Excellence through Innovation

We strive for excellence in everything we do; encouraging innovation, maximising opportunities and exploring fresh ideas in order to see continuous improvement.

Integrity and Trust

We act with integrity, building trust by demonstrating our loyalty to the Hospice, its people, aims and vision.

Encouraging Learning

We educate and develop to enhance knowledge and skills, improve performance and help people reach their potential.

Sustainable Service

We aim to provide a professional and sustainable service, which is fair, efficient and co-ordinated.

Community Engagement

We involve and engage with our community, building mutually supportive relationships which maximise our contribution.

Thank you

for helping us to uphold these values in all that you do at the Hospice.

#APlaceToThrive - Our Diversity Statement

Our founder Pam Macpherson said: “The Hospice of St Francis is for absolutely everyone, terminal illness is no respecter of age, race or sex.” She said, “Everyone has a talent and The Hospice needs all the talents” and she was passionate about this.

To be valued for who you are is not guaranteed in our society. If our everyday experience is prejudice, discrimination or hatred, we learn to expect it, every day. Discrimination can shorten life expectancy and increase the likelihood of terminal illness and frailty. The stigma attached to illness, dying and bereavement can make people shun us. One of the sparks that fired the passion of our founder was to show how, by working together, with compassion, knowledge and expert care, we bring about change.

At The Hospice of St Francis, we want to:

- Be a Hospice trusted by everyone
- Draw our strength from many different faces and life experiences
- Be open, respectful and welcoming to human differences
- Stop discrimination

If we are seen, heard and valued for who we are, it creates the best possible start to being able to experience the life lasting difference of hospice care. At The Hospice of St Francis we want everyone to have that experience without fear of prejudice.

- To be able to relate to all the people we care for, we recruit people with different expertise and different life experiences.
- To explain Hospice care, we showcase many different life-stories.
- To help equip everyone for their role, we provide training about history, the law and the power of inclusion.
- To create a truly inclusive culture, we help each other to call out and change language and behaviours that, if ignored, could perpetuate discrimination.

Our aim is for everyone to be able to recognise themselves in our Hospice.

For your notes

Team Leader Name:

- Email
- Phone numbers

Volunteer Development

Volunteering@stfrancis.org.uk

01442 869550