



NMHS POLICY

Volunteers

Scope (Staff):	All Volunteers of North Metropolitan Health Service (NMHS) and those that manage them.
Scope (Area):	All Areas of NMHS

1. Aim

When managing volunteers, North Metropolitan Health Service (NMHS) managers and supervisors must ensure compliance with all industrial, legislative, safety and quality standards and requirements, and WA Health policies. This policy outlines minimum requirements for the selection, screening and ongoing management of volunteers.

2. Background

NMHS recognises the long established and valuable contribution that volunteers make to the delivery of health and community services. The use of volunteers to support NMHS service delivery and client experiences of health care is encouraged and valued.

3. Risk

If this policy is not adhered to, NMHS may face work health and safety risks impacting the organisation and/or volunteers and failure to comply with legislative and industrial requirements will place the organisation at risk of penalties associated with non-compliance and detrimental reputational impacts.

4. Definitions

Volunteer	An individual who chooses of their own free will to engage in specified, unpaid activities within NMHS.
Volunteer Coordinator/ nominated officer	An individual who coordinates all the elements of volunteering either within NMHS or for a specific site/service within NMHS. The role recruits and manages volunteers in accordance with this policy.

5. Principles

The work of volunteers should not replace the areas of work traditionally undertaken by paid staff.

While acknowledging the value and seeking to encourage the involvement of volunteers, NMHS will ensure that selection and screening processes are applied when recruiting volunteers including:



- the supply and review of relevant and current references and background information;
- criminal record screening and working with children check (where required) to meet the requirements of WA Health policy and relevant legislation; and
- Pre-employment Health Assessment (PEHA).

Where recruitment of volunteers is managed on behalf of NMHS by an external organisation, information will be sought from those organisations on a regular basis to ensure that selection processes comply with NMHS requirements.

NMHS Executives will ensure that there are governance structures in place to manage volunteers within their service. This is to include the allocation of a local volunteer coordinator / nominated officer that will provide a clear point of contact between the volunteers and the relevant service.

Ongoing volunteer arrangements are dependent on the operational requirements of NMHS Sites /Services and the volunteers' adherence to the WA Health Code of Conduct.

6. Application and Screening Processes

Prospective volunteers are to complete an [Application form](#).

NMHS will ensure that screening processes are applied and documented when recruiting volunteers.

Screening processes will include:

- an interview. Refer to [Record of Volunteer Interview](#) template.
- reference checks
- Criminal Record Screening. Refer to WA Health [OD 275/10 Criminal Record Screening Policy and Guidelines](#)
- a Working with Children Check if required. Refer to [WA Health Working with Children Check Policy](#).
- Aged Care Criminal Screening Check if required. Refer to [Australian Department of Health Police Certificate Guidelines for Aged Care Providers](#)
- health screening as per site or service-specific procedures.

Volunteer coordinators/nominated officers are to seek advice from site Human Resources when determining whether a volunteer role is child-related.

7. Volunteer Agreement (including Confidentiality Agreement)

NMHS will ensure that volunteers are fully informed of the conditions of volunteering.

New volunteers are to sign a [Volunteer Agreement](#), outlining the roles and responsibilities of both the NMHS and the volunteer.

Once formally accepted as a NMHS volunteer, personal accident cover under Riskcover will apply whilst the volunteer is undertaking voluntary work approved and authorised by NMHS.

Refer to: [Insurance Commission of Western Australia - Riskcover](#)

8. Roles and Responsibilities

NMHS Site and Services Responsibilities

- ensuring adequate insurance cover for volunteers in respect of their activities for NMHS.
- meeting the cost of volunteers undergoing the WA Health Criminal Record Check and, if required, the Working with Children Check, and the national Police Certificate for Aged Care Providers and medical testing (if required).
- reimbursing approved out of pocket expenses.

Volunteer Coordinator/Nominated Officer

Volunteer Coordinators/Nominated Officers will ensure that:

- volunteer roles are clearly defined and documented;
- advice is sought from site Human Resources to determine whether a volunteer role is child-related;
- prospective volunteers complete an application form
- relevant screening processes are applied and documented in the Record of Volunteer Interview;
- liaison takes place with external organisations engaging volunteers on behalf of NMHS to ensure that selection processes comply with the screening requirements set out in this policy;
- new volunteers understand the conditions of volunteering and sign a volunteer agreement, (including a confidentiality agreement). The volunteer agreement will identify the responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the volunteer and the health service;
- new volunteers are issued with an official identification badge;
- new volunteers receive appropriate induction prior to commencement of role. At a minimum, induction programs must cover emergency procedures, evacuation, manual/ safe handling, infection control procedures and the WA Health Code of Conduct;
- new volunteers to be on-boarded to the group, hospital and/or department within which they will perform the voluntary role and the specific volunteer service that they have joined;
- volunteers attend mandatory training sessions relevant to their role. At a minimum, mandatory training is to include emergency procedures, evacuation, manual/ safe handling and infection control procedures;
- volunteers are provided with opportunity for performance development (if required);
- volunteers have a safe working environment;
- volunteers report all hazards and incidents as per the OSH Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation policy; and
- appropriate volunteer records are maintained.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers will:

- participate in clearly established tasks in the delivery of services to satisfy the various needs of NMHS without financial reward (not including reimbursement of approved out of pocket expenses);
- endeavour to perform tasks assigned to the best of their ability and meet allocated commitments on time;
- refrain from offering counselling, spiritual help or medical advice to patients, clients or to their family and friends unless specifically authorised to do so;
- undergo a WA Health Criminal Record Screen;
- undergo a Pre-Employment Health Assessment (PEHA);
- if applicable, undergo a Working with Children Check;
- if applicable, undergo an Aged Care Criminal Screening Check;
- disclose any Conflicts of Interest. Refer to WA Health [MP 0113/19 Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy](#);
- sign and abide by a confidentiality agreement;
- abide by the WA Health Code of Conduct and all relevant legislation, policies and procedures;
- participate in an appropriate induction and on-boarding program;
- attend applicable mandatory training sessions;
- comply with workplace health and safety requirements and report any incidents and hazards as per the OSH Incident and Hazard Reporting and Investigation policy; and
- wear an official identification badge.

Conditions specific to a site or service may also apply.

Volunteer Drivers have the following additional responsibilities:

- completing an [Authorisation to Drive a Government Vehicle](#) form;
- notifying their Volunteer Coordinator/Nominated Officer immediately should their licence be suspended or disqualified.

In accordance with the *Road Traffic (Administration) Act 2008*, volunteer drivers who may be driving a NMHS vehicle must report any medical conditions and or medications which may affect perception, judgement, response time and general physical capabilities. This includes any permanent or long term mental or physical condition which may include a dependence on medications/drugs/alcohol.

Volunteers are also obliged to report to the Department of Transport, as any conditions should be shown on their drivers licence.

Refer to [Road Traffic \(Administration\) Act 2008](#) Duty to reveal things which might impair ability to drive and [Notification of Driving Impairment](#).

Human Resource Department Responsibilities

Human Resources will provide advice and support to facilitate the implementation of the human resource requirements for volunteers at NMHS.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counselling service paid for by NMHS. Volunteers can access a limited amount of counselling sessions from the EAP for assistance with personal or volunteer related issues.

Refer to the [EAP NMHS Information Hub](#) for details on the two providers available at NMHS.

9. Compliance and Evaluation

Compliance

Each NMHS site or service Executive Director is to ensure compliance with this policy. Storage and retention of documents is to be compliant with the NMHS Records Keeping Plan 2015.

Complaints

Any issues, concerns or complaints regarding volunteers must be referred to the relevant Volunteer Coordinator/Nominated Officer.

The Volunteer Coordinator/Nominated Officer will assess the complaint and determine management and reporting requirements.

Complaints about volunteers from patients or families will be managed in accordance with the WA Health Complaints Management Policy.

Legislative obligations

There are legislative obligations relating to this policy for which a statutory penalty is imposed for a breach. Legislation referenced in this policy include, but is not limited to:

- Aged Care Act 1997
- Corruption Crime and Misconduct Act 2003
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1984
- Road Traffic (Administration) Act 2008
- Working with Children (Criminal Records Checking) Act 2004

Related internal policies, procedures and guidelines

[Volunteer Application Form](#)

[Record of Volunteer Interview template](#)

[Volunteer Agreement \(including Confidentiality Agreement\)](#)

[MP 0010/16 - Patient Confidentiality Policy](#)

[MP 0124/19 - Code of Conduct Policy](#)

[OD 275/10 Criminal Record Screening Policy and Guidelines](#)

[OD 0454/13 WA Health Working with Children Check Policy](#)

[MP0113/19 Managing Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines](#)









[NMHS Infection Prevention and Control Policy](#)

[NMHS Motor Vehicle Fleet Policy](#)

[NMHS OSH-Incident/Hazard Reporting and Investigation Policy](#)
[NMHS Employee Induction and On-Boarding Policy](#)
[NMHS Mandatory Training Policy](#)
[NMHS Records Management Policy](#)
[NMHS Pre-Employment Health Assessment \(PEHA\) Policy](#)
[MP 0130/20 Complaints Management Policy](#)
[COVID-19 Public Hospital Volunteer Guidelines](#)
[COVID-19 Volunteer High Risk Category Assessment Form](#)

References

[Public Sector Commissioner's Circular 2009-16 Guidelines for Successful Partnerships Between Public Sector Agencies and Volunteers](#)
[Insurance Commission of Western Australia - Riskcover](#)
[Aged Care Act 1997](#)
[Road Traffic \(Administration\) Act 2008](#)
[Working With Children \(Criminal Records Checking\) Act 2004](#)
[Corruption Crime and Misconduct Act 2003](#)
[Working with Children Check website](#)
[Notification of Driving Impairment](#)
[OSH Legislation](#)
[NMHS Record Keeping Plan 2015](#)
[Employee Assistance Program website](#)

Sponsor	Executive Director, Business and Performance				
Contact	Manager Workforce Planning				
First Issued	16/10/2017	Last Reviewed:	04/12/2020	Review Date:	04/12/2023
Approved	Executive Director, Business and Performance			Date:	03/03/2021
NSQHS Standards Applicable:	<input type="checkbox"/>  Std 1: Clinical Governance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  Std 2: Partnering with Consumers <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 3: Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infection <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 4: Medication Safety		<input type="checkbox"/>  Std 5: Comprehensive Care <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 6: Communicating for Safety <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 7: Blood Management <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 8: Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration		
National Standards for Mental Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Std 1: Rights and Responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Std 2: Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Std 3: Consumer and Carer Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Std 4: Diversity Responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Std 5: Promotion and Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Std 6: Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Std 7: Carers <input type="checkbox"/> Std 8: Governance, leadership and management		<input type="checkbox"/> Std 9: Integration <input type="checkbox"/> Std 10: Delivery of Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 10.1 Supporting Recovery <input type="checkbox"/> 10.2 Access <input type="checkbox"/> 10.3 Entry <input type="checkbox"/> 10.4 Assessment and Review <input type="checkbox"/> 10.5 Treatment and Support <input type="checkbox"/> 10.6 Exit and Re-entry 		
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The health impact upon Aboriginal people have been considered, and where relevant incorporated and appropriately addressed in the development of this health initiative (ISD Record ID 12).

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