# Hospital Volunteer – role description

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| What is a Hospital Volunteer? | |
| Hospital Volunteers provide support for patients who are in hospital for mental health reasons.  They help our clients:   * be heard when it matters most * stay in control of decisions around care and treatment whilst in hospital * ensure their rights are met, including access to an Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA)   They volunteer alongside our paid IMHAs, who provide the statutory support patients are entitled to under the Mental Health Act. Hospital Volunteers have a designated IMHA to partner with, so they understand one other’s role and work together to provide the best service possible to our clients. | |
| What will I do? | |
| **Before you start**  Complete our application process, training, and shadowing to a satisfactory standard. Then, depending on your preferences, set a day and time to regularly volunteer a few hours. You’ll then be introduced to an IMHA who will provide practice support for you.  **At your first session**  We will agree with you a hospital ward to work on. You’ll introduce yourself and engage proactively with staff and patients on the ward, explaining about our service and how we can help. You will speak to any patients one to one, if they want outcomes achieved or their voices heard with respect to their care and support whilst in hospital.  **At sessions that follow**  You will continue to introduce yourself to new patients and staff. You will work on ongoing outcomes with any patients from previous weeks.  **What next?**  At the end of the session you will feedback to us on how the session has gone. You will write up notes and send these to a delegated IMHA and the Volunteer Co-ordinator. Experienced volunteers may be able to provide support on a second ward – but only if they can do so within their usual volunteering hours. | |
| Is this role suitable for me? | |
| This role is currently available in the following areas: | Hampshire and Southampton |
| Do I need to be able to travel? (reasonable expenses always covered). | Yes - to reach a local mental health hospital. |
| Can I do this role at the evenings and weekend? | No – except research or reporting. |
| Is this role suitable for under 18s? | No. |
| What is the usual time spent volunteering in this role? | 2-3 hours every week. |
| What can I expect from VoiceAbility? | |
| * the opportunity to make a positive difference to people with care and support needs * the opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people and gain experience in your chosen volunteering role/s * the opportunity to help us develop our volunteering work * volunteer induction training and training specific to any volunteering role you undertake * 1:1 Support from VoiceAbility staff including regular feedback * a reference if you complete over six months of volunteering * the equipment you need to complete your role * reimbursement of expenses and travel costs in line with VoiceAbility policy | |
| What do VoiceAbility expect from me? | |
| * to complete the recruitment process including providing two references and complete a DBS check (VoiceAbility will cover the cost of this) * to complete all necessary training * understand and sign the Volunteering Agreement * to perform your role in a way that is consistent with VoiceAbility’s values | |
| What do I need to do next? | |
| Please download and complete an application form from voiceability.org. If you have any problems doing this email [helpline@voiceability.org](mailto:helpline@voiceability.org) or call the helpline on 0300 303 1660. Our local team contact you to arrange a 30–45-minuts meeting to check volunteering with us is right for you. **We would like to encourage people with lived experience of care and support needs to apply for our role.** | |