

# Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to  
St Nicholas Hospice Care



*because  
you matter*

**St Nicholas  
Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773



**Need to talk?**

01284 766133

[stnicholashospicecare.org.uk](http://stnicholashospicecare.org.uk)

# Welcome and introduction

Hello and welcome to St Nicholas Hospice Care. I look forward to meeting you, but in the meantime, I hope you find the information in this booklet useful as you settle in during your first few weeks. There is further detail on our shared drive (S drive), and you can speak to your line manager and colleagues. If you do not have access to a computer please discuss with your line manager how to access further information. If you have any questions please just ask.

**Dr Barbara Gale, CEO.**

## What we do

St Nicholas Hospice Care is a local charity providing help, advice and support to people in West Suffolk and Thetford who are living with dying, death and grief.

Our services are not just for patients, but their family and friends too. They include everything from specialist medical care to bereavement support and practical help.

We've been rated as **outstanding** by the **CQC**



## Our vision

For everyone to matter in life and death.

## Our mission

For everyone to be informed, equipped and able to live with dying, death and grief.

## Our values

### Compassion

From our people you can expect care, warmth, kindness and honesty.

### Listen

We listen to what is important to you. What you tell us will be understood and not judged.

### Team spirit

We work together with respect, friendship, trust and a touch of laughter.

### Learn

We lead and develop, sharing knowledge and skills generously.

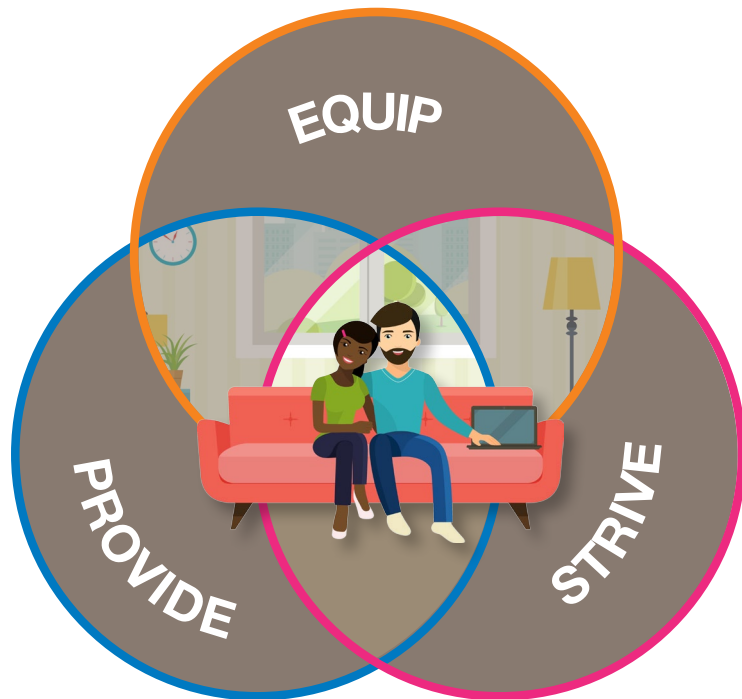
### Resilience

Our attitude towards change and the future has the courage to move and grow with life's changes.

# Our strategy

To ensure that more people living with dying, death and grief receive compassionate support we will focus on three ambitions:

- To **equip** people with tools and knowledge, so they are better prepared.
- To continue to **provide** direct care to people who need it.
- To continually **strive** for something better so the Hospice can move forward sustainably, is well-run and it makes the most of your donations.



The Hospice's strategy outlines the approach and direction we will be taking to deliver a new hospice model – for everyone to matter in life and death. You can read the full strategic plan on our website. [www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/strategic-plan-2019-2020](http://www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/strategic-plan-2019-2020)

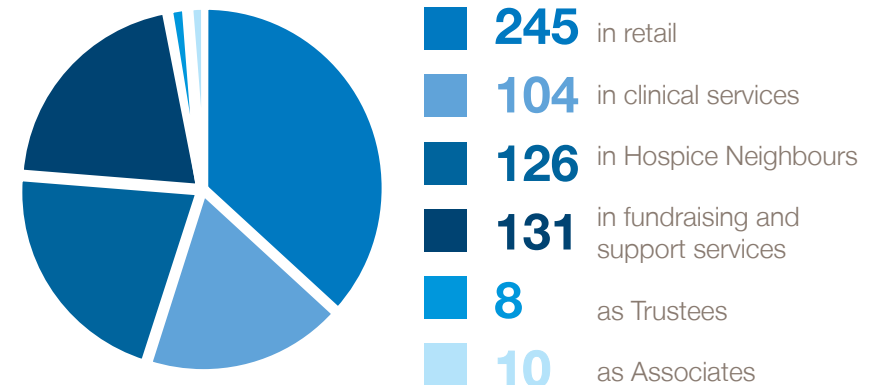
## What we offer you

Our volunteers play a massive role in helping us support the people in our community at the end of life. In return, we are creative in providing flexible and enriching volunteering experiences that will help people gain confidence, learn new skills and make a difference to the people we support.

## What do our volunteers do?

St Nicholas Hospice Care has more than 600 volunteers who dedicate their time, skills and energy to helping our charitable work. We could not continue to provide support and care to people and their families facing dying, death and grief without the support of our compassionate volunteers. Whether you are a volunteer or a member of staff, we are all part of one team.

Opportunities exist across a range of activities, from fundraising or supporting our shops to visiting people in their own homes to offer companionship and help with practical tasks.



## Recruitment and selection

The minimum age to volunteer at the Hospice is 13 in our shops, and for anyone under 16 a work permit may be required by the local authority. If you volunteer in our clinical services the minimum age is 18. We do not specify an upper age limit.

An online application is encouraged but non-digital methods of application are also available. All roles are advertised via our website [www.stnicholashospicecare.org.uk](http://www.stnicholashospicecare.org.uk).

The recruitment and selection of volunteers is designed to ensure that we recruit volunteers who are suitable for the role they would like to do.

Before their appointment, volunteers are invited to an informal discussion and shadow session. This is to establish your motivations for volunteering, and if you have the skills and experience relevant to the role. Volunteers will be encouraged to consider if it's the right role and commitment for them.

Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided with feedback and allowed to discuss alternative volunteering roles.

## Checks and screening

All volunteer applications require a minimum of a one-character reference. For some roles, additional checks, such as a DBS, health questionnaire and any necessary risk assessments will need to be completed.

For roles which involve caregiving and/or sustained and direct contact with young people or adults at risk, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check, which will be arranged by the organisation. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering.

We expect you to let us know about any convictions as this might affect your suitability for the volunteer role you've applied for. While volunteering for us, we also expect you to let your manager know as soon as possible if you become subject to any criminal proceedings, charges or convictions.

## Role description

This will give you a good idea of what your role involves - please read it carefully so that you understand the different tasks you may be asked to carry out. The role description will also detail the training you will need to complete for the role.

## Equal opportunities and diversity

The Hospice is committed to promoting equal opportunities. Volunteering opportunities are open to all regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. The Hospice recognises the positive benefits a diverse volunteer pool can bring to the organisation and is committed to ensuring our recruitment and our selection procedure reflects this.

# Our commitment to you

## What you can expect from us

### We will:

- Value and respect you
- Make sure you know what your role is and how to do it
- Give you training to enable you to do your role and support you while you learn
- Ensure you are safe while volunteering
- Recognise your contribution
- Deal with any complaints promptly and fairly
- Give you regular updates and the latest news about the charity's work

## What we need from you

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to perform their role and responsibilities to the best of their ability and to meet their agreed commitments.

### We expect you to:

- Understand what St Nicholas Hospice Care does, and embrace our values
- Treat others with respect, consideration and appreciation, no matter who they are and where they come from
- Work co-operatively with other staff members and volunteers
- Take part in any training required for your role
- Be professional and safe when volunteering
- Understand your role and keep to your role description
- Talk to us and let us know how you are doing, particularly if problems or concerns arise

## Induction

Your manager will help you get started and your induction will vary depending on your role, but a typical induction will include:

- A tour of the building you are volunteering in (and importantly where to find the tea and coffee)
- Introduction to staff and volunteers
- Advice on health and safety measures including fire procedures and first aid
- Assessment of any special requirements in order to carry out your role

Your manager will go through an induction checklist with you on your first day that you will be asked to sign once you are happy with all the information that you have been given.

We also run volunteer networking mornings throughout the year to allow you to meet other volunteers and members of staff from across the Hospice. We hope that these social events will help you to learn about our different services and meet new friends.



## Training and support

Your manager will be your main contact, helping you with any queries and providing continuing support.

You will have important mandatory training modules that you must complete within the timeframes set out by your manager. To find out what mandatory training you must complete visit our training requirements database on the shared drive **S:\Organisational\Human Resources\Training** or speak to your manager.

Your role-specific training may take the form of a face-to-face session, guidelines or peer-to-peer coaching and shadowing—some will be paper-based, some hands-on and practical and some will be provided online. If you have a specialist role or will be working with those we care for, you will have more detailed training.

You'll be asked to complete refresher training to make sure you are up-to-date with the latest policies and procedures. You must complete this training when required as we might have to ask you to temporarily stop volunteering until refresher training is completed.



## Key policies

While you are volunteering with us, there are some policies and procedures that will apply to you. They help us make sure volunteering is safe and consistent with other areas of the Hospice's work. You should be familiar with our policies and guidance on:

### Dignity at work

The Hospice is committed to the welfare of its people and does not tolerate bullying or harassment. We expect everyone to treat each other, and our service users, with dignity and respect.

### Equal opportunities

The Hospice promotes equal opportunity for all and a working environment free from discrimination and harassment. We strive to ensure that everyone we work with share this commitment

### Data management and IT guidelines

The Hospice is committed to ensuring that information is handled as set out by law, statute and best practice. Our guidelines on IT use set out the behaviour expected of staff and volunteers when using the internet and email.

### Acceptance of gifts

You must not accept gifts from service users and their families. Small gestures of thanks (usually with a monetary value of less than £10) may be accepted at your manager's discretion.

### Fire and health and safety

We are committed to ensuring your well-being and safety whilst you are volunteering and, in turn, we expect our volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe working environment. All volunteers must:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others

- Co-operate with staff by assisting them to fulfil their statutory duties
- Follow the health and safety policy and measures in place
- Report accidents/incidents to a member of staff, irrespective of whether any person has been injured

If you witness an accident, incident or near-miss while volunteering, please report it to your manager as soon as possible. Your manager will complete an incident report form so that the risk can be assessed and resolved quickly.

You can view these and other policies, in full, at

[www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/about-us/charity-information/policies](http://www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/about-us/charity-information/policies)

### Expenses

We reimburse our volunteers for any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred while on Hospice business as outlined in our Expenses Policy. Your manager can give you more details and show you how to make a claim – remember to keep all your tickets and receipts. You can obtain a claim form from your manager.

### Driving

If you are driving on Hospice business as part of your role you will be asked to provide the following documentation to the HR department:

- Drivers Licence- we will need to view and check your licence on an annual basis. To share your driving information you will be asked to provide us with a check code from the DVLA website: [www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence](http://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence).
- MOT certificate- you must hold and provide us with a copy of your MOT certificate if your vehicle is more than three-years-old.
- Insurance - ensure that you have informed your insurance company that you will be using your vehicle for voluntary work. You will need to provide a copy of your insurance certificate to the HR department on an annual basis. Most insurance companies agree to cover car journeys at no extra charge but make sure you check this with your own insurance company.

Your vehicle must be roadworthy and serviced regularly. We suggest you read the **RoSPA volunteer drivers handbook**.

Your role may require you to assist passengers getting in and out of your vehicle and to transport patients who carry portable oxygen. You will need to make sure you have attended the appropriate training before starting your role.

## Managing personal safety (including lone working)

While volunteering for the Hospice some volunteers may be required to work alone. We have processes in place to protect you from risk and to ensure your safety. Please familiarise yourself with our Lone Working Procedures, which are available through your manager. This will form part of your induction training where applicable.

## Data protection and confidentiality

You must maintain confidentiality during your time with the Hospice. You will be asked to read and sign a confidentiality agreement during your induction. You will need to keep confidential all information about the people we support, our volunteers, our employees and our work unless sharing this information is required by law. If you have any concerns about the safety of a patient or their family, please let your manager know in confidence and they will know how to help.

We will always make sure we keep your details safe and secure too. At the start of your role, you need to complete the Data Security Awareness training course on the eLearning for Healthcare website or on paper– this is where you can find more information about keeping data safe and confidential.

## Drugs and alcohol

Being under the influence of recreational drugs or alcohol while volunteering for the Hospice (including at events and activities) is not permitted. Any breach of this will result in bringing your volunteer placement to an end with immediate effect.

## Social media

Social media can be seen by everyone so be careful if you are talking about the Hospice online. Remember that you are not posting on behalf of the Hospice. Any posts on social media that are considered offensive or put the Hospice's reputation at risk may result in your volunteering being reviewed or ended. Ask your manager about our social media guidelines for more information.

## Safeguarding

We have a duty to adults, children and young people, to protect them from harm.



# Promoting a safer Hospice

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Hospice care and activities is the responsibility of every single one of us.

## Our commitments

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and our responsibilities as individuals working for the Hospice
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Safely recruiting and supporting all our staff who work with children and vulnerable adults
- Appropriately caring for individuals affected by abuse
- Caring for those who are at risk

If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from your Safeguarding Lead or in their absence then contact MASH directly or the Police without delay.

**Contacts available within the Hospice to speak to if you have any concerns:**

### Pippa Wilding

Head of Education

**Tel:** Extn 234

**E-mail:** Pippa.Wilding@stnh.org.uk

### Jessica Hulbert

Quality and Service  
Design Lead

**Tel:** Extn 234

**E-mail:** Jessica.Hulbert@stnh.org.uk

### Dawn Prigg

Clinical Care and Support Services  
Operations Manager

**Tel:** Extn 197

**E-mail:** Dawn.Prigg@stnh.org.uk

**MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0345 606 1499**

MASH will give advice but not take a referral. This needs to be made on-line to Customer First.

**IF THERE IS IMMEDIATE RISK OR DANGER PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999**

## Problem solving

The Hospice encourages volunteers to talk openly with their manager if they have any concerns or complaints. We will always aim to manage problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. Should your manager not be able to resolve the problem satisfactorily, volunteers should follow the complaints procedure - include link to complaints process

If there are concerns around a volunteer's behaviour or contribution, the matter will be discussed amicably and steps agreed to address it, this may include further training or mentoring. If these concerns cannot be resolved within a reasonable timeframe, we may bring the volunteering placement to an end.

## Bereavement

During your time volunteering, you may meet bereaved people. Please remember to act sensitively and offer support where you feel you can. Our grief and bereavement training sessions aim to equip our staff and volunteers with the skills and confidence to have conversations with people around death and dying. Your manager can book you a space on these face-to-face sessions.

## Parking

There is limited parking at the main Hospice site between 9am – 5pm, and we would request that volunteers park off-site whenever possible between these hours. We cannot guarantee free car parking at any of our sites.

## Absence

Volunteers are asked to inform their manager as soon as possible of any absence or lack of availability. If their circumstances change, volunteers are encouraged to discuss their situation with their manager.



# Keeping you informed

## Network Magazine

Our magazine for staff and volunteers is published quarterly and is packed with the charity's news.



## Our website

You can go online at [www.stnicholashospice.co.uk](http://www.stnicholashospice.co.uk) to find out more about what we do, including information on our services, job opportunities and our strategic plans.

## Feedback

Sometimes we ask our volunteers for their opinion on the work we're doing – it could be your views on strategic decisions or resources we're developing. Outside of this if you ever have any feedback or thoughts please discuss these with your manager or the HR team. We'd love to hear from you.

## Volunteers Week

Volunteers' Week is a time to say thank you for the fantastic contribution volunteers make.



It's a national event and takes place from 1–7 June each year. We use this special week to say thank you to all our amazing volunteers for their hard work. Check our website, Facebook and Twitter nearer the time to see what we've got planned or ask your manager.

## Our Bistro and Haven Café

Tea and coffee are provided free of charge to volunteers at all Hospice locations. Volunteers are welcome to stay and purchase a meal from the Bistro in Bradbury Green or The Haven Café at The Haverhill Hub.

## Recognition

We put our volunteers in the spotlight in our monthly newsletters and emails to recognise their hard work and contribution to the charity.

Each year, your manager will organise an event to say thank you for all of your hard work and commitment. This can range from picnics and tea parties to quiz nights!

## Leaving the Hospice

If you would like a break from volunteering or feel it's time to move on, please let your manager and the HR team know. We'd value your feedback on how we can improve the volunteer experience for others. You will be sent a leavers questionnaire to complete by email.

# FAQ's

Still have questions that haven't been answered in this handbook? Visit the FAQ page on our website or speak with your manager.

[www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/how-you-can-help/information-on-volunteering/frequently-asked-questions-volunteering/](http://www.stnicholashospice.org.uk/how-you-can-help/information-on-volunteering/frequently-asked-questions-volunteering/)



We offer a **24 hour telephone advice line**

**01284 766133**

for all patients and family members as well as healthcare professionals including general practitioners, district nurses and carers.

*because  
you matter*

This leaflet is available in different formats upon request. Please contact the Marketing and Communications Department for further information on 01284 766133.

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