

# Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre

## POLICY ON VOLUNTEERING

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## **Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre Volunteer Policy**

### **1. General Principles**

The Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre regards volunteers as a valuable resource and encourages them to get involved at all levels of the organisation and within all appropriate activities. We aim to train, support and supervise our volunteers to the best of our abilities, and to act quickly and fairly if difficulties arise.

#### **Eligibility**

The Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre will consider involving anyone as a volunteer. Individuals must, however, be able to demonstrate a commitment to the aims of the organisation and may only be placed if their needs as volunteers match the needs of the organisation. No person who has a conflict of interest with any aspect of the organisation will be accepted as a volunteer.

#### **Relationship with paid staff**

Volunteers are appointed to enhance the capacity of paid staff, not as a substitute for them. Conversely the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre does not accept the services of its paid staff as volunteers. Clear roles are established to differentiate between paid staff and volunteers to foster mutually beneficial and complementary relationships.

#### **Working conditions**

Volunteers are treated as full members of the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre team. They are treated as fairly as paid staff and are included in the organisation's functions and decision making process wherever practical. Volunteers are provided with appropriate work sites and have access to the space, equipment and facilities necessary to volunteer effectively and comfortably.

#### **Working times**

Working times are negotiated between the line manager and the volunteer and are as flexible as the tasks allow. Voluntary time commitment is never expected to match that of full-time paid staff, but unscheduled absences can create organisational problems. When expecting to be absent, volunteers should inform their line manager as soon as possible, so that alternative arrangements can be made.

#### **Appropriate behaviour**

Volunteers are expected to work within the policies and procedures of the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre and adhere to its ethos. As representatives of the organisation, they are responsible for presenting a positive image of the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre to the outside world.

## **Representation of the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre**

Volunteers must seek prior approval from their line manager before undertaking anything which might significantly affect the organisation. This includes, but is not limited to, statements to the press, joint initiatives with other bodies, and agreements involving contractual or financial obligations.

## **Confidentiality**

The Gary Kelly Cancer Support centre respects the volunteer's right to privacy and confidentiality. In turn, volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed while volunteering with the centre.

## **Records**

A system of records is maintained on all volunteers, including their 'Volunteer Position Description', duties performed, evaluation of work, etc. Volunteer records are accorded the same confidentiality as staff records.

## **Service at the discretion of the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre**

Any voluntary service is at the discretion of the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre. The Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre may, at any time, and for whatever reason, decide to terminate volunteers' relationships with the organisation. Similarly, volunteers may at any time, and for whatever reason, decide to terminate their relationships with the GKCS centre. Notice of such decisions should be communicated at the earliest opportunity, preferably in writing.

In the event that a Volunteer has a cancer diagnosis, they will resign from their position with immediate effect.

## **2. Recruitment**

### **Role descriptions and person specifications**

Like paid staff, volunteers require a clear and accurate description of the tasks and responsibilities they are expected to undertake. Prior to any volunteer assignment or recruitment effort, a role description should be developed for each voluntary opportunity. This must include a title of the volunteering role, starting and finishing dates, hours and place of work, name of supervisor and tasks to be undertaken. If appropriate, a brief person specification may also be drawn up. The role description may be amended in joint agreement with the volunteer and the line manager. A copy of the final version must be given to the volunteer before commencing voluntary work as it will be used in supervision and evaluation sessions. Role descriptions must define a time limit (no longer than one year) for voluntary involvement, after which time they are reviewed, and updated if appropriated.

### **Applications**

Potential volunteers may apply speculatively. Volunteers are recruited in accordance with the GKSC's equal opportunities policy. All volunteers are required to complete an application form or provide a CV.

Any person who has had Cancer and is applying to volunteer at the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre must be two years free from the end of their cancer treatment.

### **Interviews**

If necessary, applications are shortlisted and suitable candidates are invited to attend an informal chat with the line manager, to ascertain their interest in and suitability for the role. Written records of all interviews are kept. All unsuccessful candidates are thanked for applying and encouraged to reapply for other volunteering opportunities, either currently or in the future.

### **Checks for suitability**

References are always taken up. Other checks may also be completed (for example, ascertaining professional qualifications). Volunteers will be asked for their consent in advance of the intention to make these checks.

### **Appointment**

Formal appointments are made only after the role description has been agreed and all necessary checks have proved acceptable. No placements are made unless the requirements of the volunteer and the volunteer's supervisor can be met.

### **Probation**

All placements are subject to an initial trial period of three months. At the end of this period, the line manager meets with the volunteer to discuss the volunteer's suitability for their role. At this point, volunteers may continue in their current role, be reassigned to a more suitable role, or asked to leave.

## **3. Training**

### **Induction**

All volunteers should receive induction when they begin voluntary work with the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre. This consists of a general introduction to the organization, as well as a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of their volunteering role.

### **On-the-job-training**

Volunteers receive initial and ongoing on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their tasks well. The training must be appropriate for the demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer.

### **Additional training**

Volunteers are actively encouraged to identify training courses, seminars, conferences, and so on, which would help them to perform their roles better and which would aid their personal development. Approval to undertake such training free-of-charge must be given by the Board of Trustees and this will only be done if sufficient funds are available. Priority is given to long standing volunteers and those who have received little or no training in the past.

If training was paid for by the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre, any course or other materials belonging to the centre must be filed in the centre office. All volunteers are required to submit a short report outlining the content and usefulness of the course or meeting attended. Training information must be disseminated to relevant people within the organization.

### **Supervision**

Volunteers are required as part of their role to attend supervision sessions.

These sessions enable them to develop and improve their roles within the Gary Kelly Cancer Support Centre and also to enhance their own well-being as individuals.

These sessions are arranged to cover a twelve month period and also contain an educative element

