



The following represents the St Francis Policy on Volunteering and also provides the code of conduct that St Francis asks all volunteers to abide by at a minimum. We welcome volunteers for different roles as they arise from time to time. This is not limited to volunteering in the practice but extends to volunteering in fundraising.

## **1. Volunteer Mission**

St Francis is dedicated to maintaining a quality programme where volunteers in collaboration with staff can unlock their potential and learn from each other in a supportive environment. St Francis provides services to the general public and we would not be able to provide added value services to them without the time, energy and commitment of volunteers.

St Francis prides itself on developing exciting volunteer opportunities for potential volunteers from all walks of life. We strive to maintain best practice in all areas of our work from recruitment to onsite support to ensure that our volunteers have the best possible experience and the opportunity to gain a thorough understanding of and contribution to work of St Francis.

### **We aim:**

- To enable volunteers to develop and contribute to all areas of the work of St Francis.
- To offer a more holistic and varied experience to volunteers.
- To work to ascertain volunteer requirements and roles with a view to developing service potential.
- To offer a variety of quality volunteer opportunities to encourage members of local and over-seas communities to volunteer in St Francis and thus gain an understanding of our work.

### **We achieve this through:**

- Working closely with volunteers to assess requirements and role development
- Maintaining links with Volunteers to promote St Francis volunteer opportunities to potential volunteers.
- Providing thorough induction, selection and training programmes for all volunteers.
- Matching volunteers' skills with roles to ensure they are exploring their full potential.
- Striving to maintain best practice in our work with volunteers

## **2. SCOPE**

All St Francis volunteers and employees operate in accordance with organisational

Policies & Procedures. The following are some of those relevant to volunteering:

- Volunteer Management Procedure
- Professional Boundaries
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Confidentiality
- Equal Opportunities

## **3. PURPOSE**

**3.1** To provide a framework of guidelines that deals broadly with the practical aspects of involving Volunteers.

**3.2** To provide a Policy that can develop good and consistent practice with regard to involving Volunteers.

**3.3** To respect and accommodate the diversity of volunteers' backgrounds and to be sensitive to the diversity of arrangements and relationships that this creates.

## **4. PRINCIPLES**

**4.1** St Francis ensures that those volunteers offering a regular commitment are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to its work.

**4.2** St Francis recognises volunteers as a core part of the team in roles which complement, but never substitute, the work of paid staff.

**4.3** St Francis expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work.

**4.4** St Francis recognises that volunteers require satisfying volunteering experiences including personal development and seeks to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the necessary training for them to undertake their voluntary activity effectively.

## **5. RECRUITMENT**

**5.1** St Francis implements a fair, effective and open system in the recruitment and selection of volunteers.

**5.2** St Francis strives to create a diverse and inclusive volunteer programme and is committed to ensuring equality of access to its volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment for volunteers in all its policies and practices. St Francis regularly reviews the makeup of the volunteer team through diversity monitoring.

**5.3** St Francis uses appropriate means to widely advertise for volunteers on both a local and global (where required) level that takes into account the principles of its Equal Opportunities Policy.

**5.4** St Francis implements a recruitment and selection process that is appropriate to the role offered to potential volunteers. St Francis aims to allow both parties to give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteer opportunities available match the potential volunteers' skills, qualities and interests.

**5.5** All applicants for volunteering with St Francis are required to complete an application form; assistance can be given with this if necessary.

**5.6** Additional measures may be implemented depending on the nature of the volunteer role. St Francis undertakes other checks (Garda) to ensure a volunteer's suitability where applicable.

**5.7** If unsuccessful, applicants will be offered an opportunity to discuss the outcome and identify possible alternative volunteering activities within or outside of St Francis

## **6. INDUCTION AND TRAINING**

**6.1** All volunteers, whether volunteering for ongoing, short-term or “one off” roles, undergo an induction/briefing that provides all the information appropriate to their role to help them understand the work of St Francis and fulfil their role.

**6.2** Induction arrangements vary according to the service and the nature of the voluntary activity to be undertaken.

**6.3** Where possible, volunteers are offered additional training to enable them to fulfil their voluntary role more effectively.

## **7. TRIAL PERIODS FOR VOLUNTEERS**

**7.1** All volunteers start with a 3 month trial period where either St Francis or the volunteer may choose to withdraw from the volunteer agreement.

## **8. VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION AND AGREEMENT**

**8.1** Volunteers are given an agreement and specific role description which outline the expectations and responsibilities of both the volunteer and St Francis. These documents are not legally binding nor are they a contract of employment or for paid provision of a service.

## **9. SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION**

**9.1** Whilst all staff have a role to play in supporting volunteers, managers and volunteer Coordinator have responsibility for the overall management of volunteer involvement including overseeing the implementation of this policy. Volunteers have the opportunity to attend individual and/or group supervision meetings (where appropriate) where they are provided with support in order to feedback on progress, discuss future role development and raise any ideas or concerns. This may be offered through a variety of systems, such as briefing/debriefing, supervision, volunteer forums etc.

**9.2** All staff required to undertake such duties are provided with training in the management, supervision, support and training of volunteers.

## **10. COMMUNICATION AND RECOGNITION**

**10.1** St Francis recognises the core role that volunteers fulfil within the organisation. It endeavours to communicate with volunteers in appropriate ways, for example meetings, notice boards and email. It also recognises the importance of seeking volunteers' ideas and opinions at regular intervals each year by various means.

**10.2** St Francis appreciates the valuable contribution its volunteers bring to the organisation and makes regular efforts to recognise and celebrate them.

**10.3** St Francis provides volunteer references on request.

**10.4** An exit evaluation of the volunteering experience is provided for all volunteers leaving St Francis to enable them to give feedback on their experience.

## **11. EXPENSES**

**11.1** St Francis values our volunteers and actively works to ensure that barriers do not exist to volunteer involvement. All volunteers are offered reimbursement of any expenses incurred as a result of purchases made at the request of St Francis or in the course of their voluntary activity. This should be authorised by the practice manager before the expense is incurred.

## **12. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

**12.1** St Francis takes care to protect volunteer information as part of its data protection responsibilities in paper format and/or electronically. All such information is treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and volunteers are entitled to inspect such information pertaining to their own involvement with St Francis. Likewise, St Francis expects volunteers to protect any personal or confidential information to which they may have access through their volunteering with St Francis.

## **13. MANAGING RISK**

**13.1** St Francis is committed to ensuring the well-being and safety of its volunteers and, in turn, expect volunteers to contribute to maintaining a safe volunteering environment.

**13.2** All volunteers are covered by St Francis employer liability insurance policy whilst they are on St Francis premises or engaged in voluntary activity on St Francis behalf. In the event of

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specific activities that require personal liability insurance, this will be highlighted in the volunteer Role description before any activity is undertaken.

**13.3** Volunteers are thoroughly inducted into St Francis in which they are volunteering and introduced to all relevant health and safety aspects to their area of volunteering in accordance with local Health and Safety Policies.

**13.4** All services identify possible areas of risk specific to the involvement of volunteers and produce written risk assessments for eliminating or minimising such risks. Volunteers are expected to cooperate with staff and follow Risk Assessments relating to their volunteering.

**13.5** Where a volunteer, as a direct consequence of his or her voluntary activity with St Francis suffers emotional harm to the extent of requiring counselling or therapy, St Francis will support the volunteer in exploring suitable options.

## **14. VOLUNTEER CONDUCT**

**14.1** All Volunteers will have access and must adhere to the St Francis Code of Conduct Policy, Professional Boundaries, Complaints, Equal Opportunities Policy and the Confidentiality Policy.

### **14.2 Resolving Concerns/Issues**

**14.2.1** St Francis aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. St Francis seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly and aim for a positive and amicable solution based on St Francis guidelines for settling differences. If a volunteer has any problems or complaints about volunteering, they should talk to staff immediately. St Francis takes the concerns of its volunteers very seriously and will make every reasonable effort to resolve any difficulties.

**14.2.2** In the event of a problem, all relevant facts should be obtained as quickly as possible. Support will be provided by St Francis to the volunteer while it endeavours to resolve the problem in an informal manner. If an informal resolution does not prove impossible,

St Francis wider Complaints Policy will be referred to. If a volunteer's behaviour is repeatedly or seriously unacceptable, they will be asked to leave the organisation.

**14.2.3** If circumstances arise where the organisation deem a volunteer not a good fit for a particular role, they may be asked to change their role or will be signposted to other volunteer opportunities outside the organization or may be asked to leave.

## **15. THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

**15.1** To support, guide and advise individual Services, Teams and Departments in their involvement of volunteers, and to provide staff training in volunteer management.

**15.2** To maintain an overview of St Francis strategies in recruiting, recognising and retaining volunteers.

**15.3** To collate, monitor and evaluate trends and statistics on St Francis Volunteer Programmes.

**15.4** To offer training and support to individual volunteers and to volunteer Teams.

**15.5** To ensure the dissemination of volunteering 'good practice' principles throughout St Francis.

**15.6** To promote volunteering to the wider community.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY**

**1.1** The Code of Practice sets out the expectations of the Organisation on all those who work for it - Council of Management members, paid volunteers, locums, volunteers and students known subsequently as volunteers unless otherwise stated.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANISATION**

**2.1** All volunteers should uphold and seek to achieve the objectives of St Francis .The conduct of volunteers should reflect the high quality standards the Organisation is striving for, in its work with the general public, and with all those who work for the Organisation. This encompasses an understanding and awareness in relation to race, religion, culture, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation and HIV status, and the Organisation is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all volunteers.

### **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND INTEGRITY**

**3.1**Volunteers shall avoid any act which may St Francis bring into disrepute or diminish the Organisation and confidence of the public and stakeholders.

**3.2** Volunteers should maintain appropriate professional relationships with colleagues. Where volunteers feel a colleague's behaviour, competence or integrity is defective or deficient, they should discuss this with that colleague. If no satisfactory outcome is achieved, or it is a matter of serious concern, the complaint should be referred to the Line Manager.

**3.3** It is the responsibility of volunteers to be aware of the social, legal and professional consequences of any act but which may be professionally, morally, legally or ethically questionable.

**3.4** It is important that volunteers are reliable and punctual and that volunteers appearance is appropriate

**3.5** The use of violence or abusive language/ behaviour is unacceptable.

**3.6** Volunteers may not consume drugs or alcohol whilst on duty, nor may they carry out their duties whilst under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances. Any exception to this rule must be approved by the Management.

### **PUBLIC PROFILE**

**4.1**Volunteers are expected to be committed to the aims and objectives of the Organisation and promote the work and policies of the Organisation in external contacts. Invitations to speak on behalf of the Organisation should only be accepted with prior permission of the Practice Manager unless this is an integral part of the job and contained within a person's job description.



## **FINANCE**

**5.1** All financial transactions should be properly authorised and recorded and unnecessary or wasteful expenditure should be minimised. Wherever possible, external receipts for expenditure should be obtained.

**5.2** All financial donations should be notified

**5.3** All fees, payments and gifts received from external sources by any individual working for St Francis that are made as a result of that person's connection with the Organisation, should be given to St Francis unless otherwise authorised by Manager