

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Greater Glasgow Health Board Consultation Paper: Volunteering in the NHS
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 24 August 1999	
REPORT AUTHOR: George McNally	
REF: JD/GMcI/DH	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Social Work Committee of the publication of a consultation paper by Greater Glasgow Health Board on Volunteering in the National Health Service (NHS) and to recommend support for the suggested proposals.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In their consultation paper the Health Board refer to the long history of volunteering, in the NHS particularly in hospitals, hospices and day centres, the contribution which has been made to the quality of care for those experiencing illness or disease.
- 2.2 The Board recognises the innumerable benefits to the Health Service of volunteering e.g. improvements in self esteem, improvements in health, more effective services and the improvement of links between secondary care and community care.
- 2.3 The Government is committed to supporting voluntary action, in 1998 it requested the Health Board in partnership with other appropriate bodies to:
- Draw up a policy statement on NHS Volunteering in their area, and
 - Co-ordinate, monitor and support the development of these services.

The publication of consultation paper is therefore a response to the request made by the Government.

3 VOLUNTEERING PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The report gives the following definition of volunteering - 'volunteering' is: "the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individual outside one's family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain".

- 3.2 It is acknowledged that volunteering has a distinctive value and quality that comes from the fact that volunteers choose to be there and that they are giving their time and involvement as a gift. It should bring added value to the work of paid staff but should not be used as a substitute for it.
- 3.3 The Health Board apart from its strategic role in health improvement, planning and commissioning care services in its area, accepts that volunteering has a key role to play in meeting these objectives. Therefore it acknowledges a responsibility to fund, encourage and enable volunteering to take place.
- 3.4 The Board, having recognised the importance of volunteering, have appointed their Director of Health Promotion to take responsibility for the development of its volunteering policy across the Board area.
- 3.5 Within the draft policy, the rights of volunteers have been clearly set out and include for example, matters such as what is expected of them, their rights and responsibilities, their training and opportunities for personal development; the provision of adequate insurance of volunteers, safe working conditions; the appreciation of their contribution.
- 3.6 In relation to recruitment of volunteers the policy states that as "much care needs to be exercised in the recruitment of volunteers as paid staff". However it also advises that the opportunities for volunteering will be promoted on a regular basis, in ways that are accessible to all sections of the community.
- 3.7 The volunteering policy will ensure that paid staff at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers and that good working relationships are fostered between paid staff and volunteers.

4 THE WAY FORWARD

- 4.1 Following the consultation period on the Boards policy, the Director of Health Promotion will convene a Volunteering in the NHS Implementation Group. It will be the responsibility of this group to ensure the objectives of the policy are incorporated into the Health Improvement Programme and into local Trust Implementation Plans.
- 4.2 The Board have commissioned Glasgow's local Volunteer Development Agency to undertake a review of the existing patterns of volunteering. It is hoped the review can build on the current strengths look at the gaps and opportunities which exist for further development.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The consultation paper sets out a comprehensive policy on volunteering within the NHS in the Greater Glasgow Health Board area. When implemented it will result in positive developments for the NHS, the volunteers and not least for the patients who use NHS services.

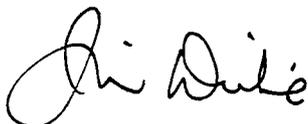
6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Committee is requested to

- i) To advise Greater Glasgow Health Board of its support for their policy of volunteering in the NHS.
- ii) Otherwise note the terms of this report

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 A full copy of the Greater Glasgow Health Board consultation paper "Volunteering in the NHS", can be made available to members on request.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
17 August 1999

For further information on this report please contact . Principal Officer (Strategy) (TEL: 01698 332063)