



Policy and Procedures for Volunteers

1. Introduction

The aim of Windmill is that of supporting adults, with mild to moderate intellectual disability, to develop and employ the skills necessary to enable them achieve a sense of self-worth, self-actualization and fulfilment and achieve their rightful place in their community as equally valued citizens.

This aim is achieved by employing a person centred approach and scaffolding facilitated through the provision of a safe and supportive therapeutic training framework/programme. The therapeutic framework together with the person centred approach is aimed at enabling, growth and development of both personal and practical skills. The Programme, being responsive to needs and goals identified in the personal centred planning process, takes place internally and external to the Unit, in the wider community and occurs within regular working hours and beyond.

- 1.1 In Windmill volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to our aim outlined above. We intend to encourage, develop and support volunteer involvement in our work in which volunteers are already important stakeholders. In doing so we recognise volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid staff
- 1.2 The time, energy and skills offered by our volunteer's benefits our work and help us to achieve our aims. Experience has shown that volunteering also brings benefits to volunteers themselves and to those with whom they work.
- 1.3 In Windmill a volunteer is understood to be a person who does voluntary work on our behalf. It is undertaken by choice and it is unpaid. Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit undertakes to organise it effectively.
- 1.4 In Windmill volunteers play a supportive role in co-operation with the staff team, working with those who access the service.
- 1.5 Windmill believes that our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment, within which Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit and our volunteers both have rights and responsibilities. We hope that volunteers will enjoy their involvement and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

2. Purpose and Advantages of Policy and Procedures for Volunteers

- 2.1 Windmill's purpose in adopting this policy is to:

- highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers
- reflect the purpose, values, standards and strategies of Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit in its involvement of volunteers
- recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers and Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit
- confirm Windmill commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers
- clarify the roles of volunteers within the service
- reflect Windmills commitment to take account of the wishes and interests of those who benefit from the work of our volunteers
- help to ensure the ongoing quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by our volunteers
- acknowledge the current areas of volunteer involvement.
- Ensures that Windmill retains the right to end the Voluntary arrangement if a valid reason arises.

2.2 The advantages of this policy are:

- it provides a basis for the expansion, if required, of volunteer involvement
- it sees volunteer involvement not as a cheap alternative to paid staff, but as a valuable way of extending and adding choice to those who access the service and as a resource which we cannot afford to lose
- it gives a framework for recruiting and supporting volunteers including people from under-represented groups

3. Statement of Principles of Good Practice

3.1 General

In involving volunteers we will be guided by the following principles of good practice:

- The tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities

- The organisation will keep records of the attendance of volunteers
- Volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff

3.2 Recruitment and Selection

- Windmill equal opportunities statement will be adhered to when recruiting and selecting volunteers.
- Volunteers will be required to complete a volunteer's application form.
- Volunteers will be required to comply with Garda vetting procedures.
- We will request references from volunteers.
- People who offer to volunteer will have their offers dealt with as quickly as possible.
- On entry volunteers will be asked to complete a Volunteers Entry Form.
- Placements will be aimed at matching the volunteer's skills, talents and interests with the voluntary work to be carried out.
- Once placed, we will expect volunteers to read, sign and comply with all existing policies and procedures.
- Windmill does not accept volunteers under the age of 18. Students under 18 are only accepted when on school work placements/experience and are insured by their school. A copy of the schools insurance must be provided and will be held on file at Windmill.

3.3 Support for Volunteers

- We will provide an induction period and a review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and to resolve any problems at an early stage.
- Windmill will comply with all insurance legislation regarding volunteers.
- Volunteers will be given information on legislation and policies which may affect them e.g. Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities. In these respects volunteers will be treated in the same way as paid staff for liability purposes.
- Volunteers will be offered access to appropriate and upcoming training to enabling them to develop their capabilities and personal competence appropriate to their volunteering role.
- Opportunities will be provided for changing and/or upgrading volunteer responsibilities as desired by the volunteer and appropriate to Windmill Therapeutic Training Unit's needs.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support.
- Volunteers will be made aware of their duty of care under Trust in Care Policy, Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy and who to contact in the event of any related concerns.
- Volunteers will be made aware of Windmill's complaint, grievance and disciplinary procedures, and who to contact if they have a grievance about any aspect of their work.
- A designated person will be assigned responsibility for dealing with complaints about a volunteers' conduct in accordance with the general procedures of Windmill.

3.4 Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers

3.4.1 In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers to:

- know what is expected of them and to be given clear information and an induction into the Windmill
- have clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- be shown appreciation

- have safe working conditions
- be insured
- know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong
- be free from discrimination
- experience personal development through their participation as volunteers
- ask for a reference, where appropriate
- be consulted on decisions that will affect what they do
- withdraw from voluntary work

3.4.2 We expect that volunteers will

- respect the Ethos and Philosophy of Windmill and must adhere to the Code of Practice, policies and procedures of the service
- carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of Windmill
- work within agreed guidelines and remits
- be reliable
- respect confidentiality
- attend training and support sessions.

3.4.3 Confidentiality and Access to information and or files.

Volunteers must agree to abide by Windmills Policy on Confidentiality and must sign a Confidentiality Agreement at the commencement of their placement. All requests for access to information regarding those who access the Service must be made to the Head of Unit volunteers are not allowed give out information to third parties regarding those who access the service, the confidential business of the service and any such queries sought must be referred on to management

3.4.4 Relationship with Paid Staff

- Steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff at all levels are clear about the role of our volunteers, and that good working relationships are fostered between paid staff and volunteers.

- The roles of volunteers and paid staff will be complementary and mutually supportive.
- In the event of a paid position arising in Windmill the process will remain the same, the position will be advertised and the successful candidates will be notified for interview stage and the selection process will continue until the relevant candidate has been selected. Please note that by Volunteering in Windmill this does not automatically give you a direct line to the next payable employment position.
- Volunteers will also be given clear information about the roles undertaken by paid staff and their value to Windmill

3.4.7 Responsibility

4.12.1 Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of the policy and procedures lies with the Chair of the Management Committee (or Board of Directors) and, on a day to day basis, with the senior staff.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Head of Unit

Policy No: _____