# Haemochromatosis UK Volunteering Policy

## May 2023

*Who needs to read this policy and why?*

All staff, board members and volunteers should read this policy to understand how we can work together to support and achieve our strategic aims and improve the lives of people with and caring for others with genetic haemochromatosis.

*Key points at a glance*

- Volunteering is an activity entered into by choice. It is distinct from employment.
- Volunteering should be mutually beneficial to both the volunteer and our charity.
- All volunteers must have a written role description and volunteering agreement in place before they start to volunteer for the charity.
- Volunteering should be cost free to the volunteer.
- All volunteers will have a named staff member overseeing their activities and to act as a point of contact if problems arise.
- Where necessary, volunteers will be supported with training and other opportunities relevant to their role.

**Our volunteering policy**

**Introduction**

This policy focuses on volunteers and volunteering. All unpaid work is volunteering. Volunteers are distinct from employees.

There is no legal definition of the term volunteer, but it is widely recognised in the voluntary and community sector that volunteering is:

*"An activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone other than close relatives."*

Central to this definition is the fact that volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. (NCVO)

**Principles of volunteering with Haemochromatosis UK**

We will involve volunteers because:

- It brings the wider community into the lives of people we support
- It adds an extra social dimension to the lives of people we support
- It offers opportunities for volunteers to be positively involved with people affected by genetic haemochromatosis

- Volunteers bring special skills, experience and a new perspective
- Volunteers can become positive representatives of us in the community
- Volunteers enable us to better reflect the communities we serve

It is vital that volunteering is mutually beneficial to us and every volunteer. To ensure this happens we will follow these principles:

- We will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that procedures are in place for them to contribute to our activity in a meaningful way
- We will not replace paid staff with volunteers
- We will ensure that staff at all levels work positively with volunteers and where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- We will provide volunteers with the relevant induction and/or training for them to carry out their role effectively
- We value differences and want to recruit and retain volunteers from diverse backgrounds and actively encourage people with a learning disability to volunteer
- Volunteering should be cost free to the volunteer

If you are an employee of Haemochromatosis UK, this policy does not form part of your contract of employment with the charity and may be subject to change.

**The procedure**

The following procedure deals with practical aspects of enabling volunteers to get involved with us. More detailed information, including copies of the various policies referred to are available from our website : https://www.haemochromatosis.org.uk/volunteering

*Recruitment*

All prospective volunteers will be recruited in line with our diversity and equal opportunities policy. We will talk with potential volunteers to find out what they would like to do, their skills, and suitability and how best their potential might be realised.

*Role Description*

Each volunteer will have a written outline of the specific tasks and activities they will be undertaking, the location and frequency of their role and the skills and expertise needed to deliver the volunteering activity. The specific details should be agreed in discussion with the volunteer and staff team.

*Induction and Training*

All volunteers will receive an induction into our charity and their own area of work. Training will be provided that is appropriate to the role. This will include mandatory safeguarding training and assessment before commencement of volunteer activities. See https://www.haemochromatosis.org.uk/safeguarding

*Support*

All volunteers will have a named staff person as their main point of contact. They will be offered regular support and feedback on progress, and have an opportunity to discuss future development and raise any problems.

**The Volunteer's Voice**

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning us and our work. Volunteers can do this through:

- Our office team
- Volunteer Survey
- Problem Solving process
- Whistle-blowing process

**Expenses**

Depending on their role, volunteers are encouraged to claim reimbursement of actual out of pocket expenses, including travel in line with the charity's expenses policy. To avoid misunderstanding, we ask volunteers to agree potential/proposed expenses in advance in writing with our office before incurring out-of-pocket expenses.

**Insurance**

All volunteers are covered by our insurance policy whilst they are on our premises or engaged in any authorised volunteering on our behalf.

**Health and Safety**

We are committed to safe and responsible volunteer practices. Our Health and Safety Policy covers volunteers and details of our Health and Safety policy and procedures are made available to volunteers as part of their induction. Volunteers are expected to follow current coronavirus guidelines with regards, to testing, face coverings and PPE. We encourage all volunteers to be fully vaccinated.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We have clear policies on equity, diversity and inclusion at Haemochromatosis UK in respect of both paid colleagues and volunteers. Volunteers will be expected to have an understanding of and commitment to our policies, which will be discussed with volunteers during their induction.

**Problem Solving**

We aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure has been drawn up for dealing with complaints either by or about volunteers. Information about our procedures will be made available to volunteers as part of their induction.

**Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid colleagues and this will be made available to volunteers as part of their induction.

**Our values**

All volunteers are expected to embrace our values as we work to deliver our strategic mission.

*People first*

We act as the voice for change and improvement in the diagnosis and care of those affected by genetic haemochromatosis

*Living well*

Our work supports living well with genetic haemochromatosis with a focus on good mental and physical health

*Health equality*

We champion healthcare that is equal, accessible and non-discriminatory

*Clear communication*

We make sense of the science and are clear where evidence exists and where it does not

*Collaborative & co-operative*

We bring people together to solve problems and help those affected by genetic haemochromatosis

*Responsible & accountable*

We are open and transparent in our work as an independent charitable patient body

**Our strategy**

Our trustees, volunteers, members and staff worked together throughout 2022 to develop the charity's strategy for 2023-2028, which is published here :
https://www.haemochromatosis.org.uk/our-charity

**Further guidance**

For further information about this policy please contact our CEO or Lead Volunteering Trustee by emailing office@huk.org.uk or calling 03030 401 101 on weekdays 9am-3pm.