AOTI Guidelines on Best Practice for Qualified Occupational Therapists Working as Volunteers in Occupational Therapy Services

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Working as Volunteers in Occupational Therapy Services

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Abbreviations:
Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland – AOTI
National Occupational Therapists in Management Advisory Group – NOTMAG
Section 1

1.1 Introduction

The Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI) guidelines on Best Practice for Qualified Occupational Therapists Working as Volunteers in Occupational Therapy Services was prepared by a working group on behalf of the National Occupational Therapy Managers’ Advisory Group (NOTMAG) of AOTI.

The overall aims of the working group were to:
- clarify the situation for Occupational Therapists working as Volunteers in Occupational Therapy Services in Ireland and to provide OT Managers and the profession with a set of good practice guidelines
- assist managers in facilitating an Occupational Therapist to take on a role as a Volunteer
- facilitate a structured implementation for Occupational Therapist volunteers
- provide support and knowledge regarding expectations and the preparation required for Occupational Therapist volunteers

A summary of the project process and a list of the working group members are included in Appendix 1.

1.2 Background/Rationale

The guidelines were developed in response to the increasing number of qualified Occupational Therapists seeking non-paid work experience in Occupational Therapy services in order to gain experience in a preferred area of Occupational Therapy practice, to seek to maintain/gain competencies in their Occupational Therapy skills, and to gain experience in a work setting that may be of assistance for inclusion in their curriculum vitae to support their seeking future paid employment.

The guidelines were also developed to assist:
- Occupational Therapists who have trained in non WFOT OT Schools who are required to work additional hours as OTs in a voluntary capacity in order to acquire validation as per CORU
- Occupational Therapists returning to clinical practice after prolonged absence may also seek to take on a role as Volunteer Occupational Therapist

NOTMAG aims to promote organisational best practice to facilitate Occupational Therapist Volunteers in Occupational Therapy Services. However, as part of AOTI’s strategic commitment to ensuring that the highest possible standards are promoted for and by the Profession, there is a need to communicate a common understanding on the purpose of this practice for the benefit of the Occupational Therapy community and for the wider audience of the public and service providers with whom we work. As part of quality improvement, there is also a recognised need within the Profession to promote common guidelines for how Occupational Therapists working as volunteers should best be facilitated.
1.3 Purpose of NOTMAG Volunteering Guidance Document

It is important to note that OTs volunteering in an OT Service is viewed as an initiative which aims to improve the quality component of a service. In no circumstances should volunteering be used to either increase the capacity of employees, or act as a substitute for paid staff. Clear roles should be established to foster mutually beneficial and complementary relationships between the volunteer and staff.

What follows in the document is an explanation of the purpose and functions of the Occupational Therapist in the role as a Volunteer in Occupational Therapy Services and a practical guide on how to implement their placement within the work setting. Much of the good practice guidelines offered in this document have been drawn from both Occupational Therapy literature and from the broader field of international practices.

1.4 Relevant AOTI Position Documents to be regarded where Qualified Occupational Therapists are taking up roles as Volunteer Occupational Therapists in Occupational Therapy Services

- AOTI the professional body has an ongoing strategic commitment to promoting Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for its members as part of its vision for quality Occupational Therapy services (AOTI Strategic Plan, 2009-2012).
- AOTI has produced a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development Portfolio (2006) which is a tool to support individual therapists to reflect on their knowledge, skills and attitudes in providing a quality service to clients. The maintenance of a portfolio is the responsibility of the individual therapist. Recording the reflections of the experiences of the volunteering experience and opportunities for action learning would benefit the individual therapist. With this as guidance for professional development, Occupational Therapists who take on a Volunteer role, hold a professional responsibility to maintain their professional competencies.
- The Therapy Project Office “Occupational Therapy Competencies (2008)” document reinforces the ability to utilise supervision as a core area of competence for an Occupational Therapist. Therefore, AOTI would recommend that Occupational Therapists that volunteer in Occupational Therapy services must ensure that they are adequately supervised in undertaking the role of Volunteer OT.
- AOTI’s Standards of Practice Statements (2008) likewise reinforce the need for therapists to “engage in and provide supervision for staff to support their practice and professional development”.

1.5 National and Organisational Considerations to be adhered to when qualified
Occupational Therapists are taking up roles as Volunteer Occupational Therapists in Occupational Therapy Services

- Section three of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 states that employers are primarily responsible for creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.
- This includes providing and maintaining welfare facilities for employees at the workplace. Given that Occupational Therapists deal with the complexities of health and social care throughout their career, there is an onus on the organisation to provide support mechanisms to promote safe practice and to help therapy staff deal with the challenging emotions of daily work within the healthcare setting. This is needed not just at times of crisis, but on an ongoing basis. The Occupational Therapist who takes on the role as Volunteer must also be afforded the level of safety and health in the workplace.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) has been introduced as part of the implementation of the Action Plan for People Management in the Health Services (2002). Gaining experience in a variety of service areas to develop competencies promotes the professional development of the Volunteer OT and will enable them to have a knowledge base that is broad ranging and comprehensive.
- The Union, IMPACT issued a statement in relation to a national agreement regarding qualified professionals volunteering to work in service delivery areas: this ensures that professional staff vacancies may not be filled by people participating as Volunteers in the workplace. Therefore, where a post is vacant due to a retirement, resignation, career break, maternity leave or leave for any reason, there is national agreement that a qualified professional volunteering may not fill these posts.

1.6 Guiding Principles of Volunteering

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteering is unpaid.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- Volunteering takes place in designated volunteer positions only.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work.
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers.
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others. (Adapted from Volunteering. Australia Inc 2005)
1.7 Benefits of taking on Occupational Therapists as Volunteers

Benefits for the Occupational Therapist Volunteer include:
• Develop, maintain and enhance Occupational Therapy knowledge and skills.
• Gain ‘on the job’ experience which may be of assistance when applying for paid employment.
• Personal satisfaction for Volunteer Occupational Therapist through active involvement in
  • Occupational Therapy with service users.
• Opportunity to participate in in-service training.
• Opportunity to 'network' with other therapists and services which can often be an informal route hearing about job opportunities.

Benefits to the Occupational Therapy Services providing placement for the Volunteer:
• Complement the work of staff and enhance quality of services delivered.
• Volunteers bringing diverse skills, knowledge and fresh ideas.
• Access to potential future employees.
• Enhancing access and quality of service to service users through addition of Volunteering.
• Access qualified Occupational Therapists with recent skills sets/ experiences that add real value to the Occupational Therapy Service.

Benefits to the Occupational Therapy Profession:
• Fostering the professional growth of the Occupational Therapy community.
• Contributing to ongoing Continuing Professional Development for the profession.
• Fulfilling ethical commitment to development of the profession.
• Contributing to innovation and quality within the profession.

What having an Occupational Therapist working as a Volunteer is not?

Exclusion factors that define parameters can further increase our understanding. The Occupational Therapist working as a volunteer should not be:
• Used as an unpaid member of the Occupational Therapy service.
• Given the responsibility of carrying a case load that is not directly under the direct case load of a qualified Occupational Therapist
• Viewed as an internship.
• Viewed as an Occupational Therapy Student Placement.
Section 2

2.1 Scope & Eligibility

Taking on the role of a Volunteer Occupational Therapist is open to Occupational Therapists who have obtained a recognised University Degree or equivalent in the Republic of Ireland or the equivalent overseas which has been validated or is in the process of being validated. This may be newly qualified Occupational Therapists, unemployed Occupational Therapists or Occupational Therapists who are returning to Occupational Therapy Practice.

Who is Eligible to apply to take up a role of an Occupational Therapist Volunteer in an Occupational Therapy Service?

Candidates must, on the date of seeking to take on the role of Occupational Therapist Volunteer in an Occupational Therapy Service, possess a qualification in Occupational Therapy:

• Bachelor in Science Honors Degree in Occupational Therapy from the Trinity College, University of Dublin, National University of Galway, University College Cork.
  or
• MSc in Occupational Therapy, Professional Qualification from University of Limerick
  or
• Diploma of the College of Occupational Therapy, UK
  or
• Recognised qualification at least equivalent to the above

Please note that under EU regulations, those holding a qualification obtained outside the Republic of Ireland may not be employed in the Irish Health Service unless the qualification obtained has been validated/registered by CORU.

2.2 Process for taking on an Occupational Therapist as a Volunteer in an Occupational Therapy Service

Guidelines have been devised to support four stages in an OT Volunteering Programme for both the OT Volunteer and Occupational Therapy service provider:

• Initiating Stage
• Preparation Stage
• Participation Stage
• Quality Review Stage
2.2.1 Initiating Stage

- The Occupational Therapist may send their CV to or directly contact an Occupational Therapy Manager of an Occupational Therapy Service in which they may hope to volunteer.
- A service may advertise a volunteer position where a volunteer has been identified as complementary to existing staff in a service area.

2.2.2 Preparation Stage

Preparation to be undertaken by the OT Manager/Service Provider - Administration

In preparation for the Volunteer OT to work in the Occupational Therapy service, the OT Manager should:

- Ensure that the organisation is in agreement with the OT service’s involvement in taking on an Occupational Therapist as a volunteer and comply with all organisational requirements before embarking on a programme.
- Give particular attention to the organisation’s insurance and health and safety requirements for Volunteers and comply with same.
- Define Scope of OT Volunteer’s participation – This opportunity should be open to Occupational Therapists who have obtained a recognized validated University Degree or an equivalent validated qualification in this profession.
- Complete risk assessment as per the organisation’s policy e.g. HSE guidance on Professional Volunteers circular (Appendix 2).
- Foster a culture within the service that encourages all multi-disciplinary staff to participate in the provision of learning opportunities for OT Volunteers.
- Together with his/her staff, identify and plan the potential learning opportunities that the service has to offer to OT Volunteers, which should include opportunities for multidisciplinary learning.
- Create a Volunteer Role Description which defines what the Volunteer’s purpose is and the benefit to the service and the service users. This will clarify expectations of the service provider, employed staff, and can assist in determining an applicant’s suitability for the Volunteer OT role during the recruitment process (Appendix 3).
- Screen and interview Volunteers in accordance with organizational procedures.
- Ensure that references for the Volunteer are sought and checked before they commence work.
- Ensure that Garda Clearance is applied for. Where applicants have supplied a valid Garda/Police clearance from their college and/or a statutory declaration, they may be able to start the programme while Garda clearance is being processed, where such arrangements are in accordance with the organisational requirements.
- Ensure a Statutory Declaration Form is completed and retained on file if awaiting Garda clearance where such arrangements are in accordance with the organisational requirements.
- Draw up a document outlining the Terms of Agreement for the volunteering assignment which should be jointly signed by the OT Manager and the Volunteer OT. Example included in Appendix 4. Include a declaration in the Terms of Agreement which documents that the volunteers will enter into a trial period, e.g. 2 weeks, at the end of which a decision will be taken on suitability for continued volunteering for both parties.
• Have an induction policy and process in place for Volunteer OT’s. Induction information to the Volunteer should include a service profile, learning opportunities, relevant organisational policies and any specific Health & Safety requirements.
• Make available to the Volunteer, practical information, including but not limited to the following:
  - the name and contact details of service and staff
  - directions and transport details
  - hours of engagement
  - dress code
  - recommended reading or materials that would enhance preparation for the volunteering assignment
• Ensure each step of the Volunteer Induction process is documented and signed off by the Volunteer and the OT manager/assigned staff member who is completing the induction.

Preparation to be undertaken by the Occupational Therapist Volunteer

In preparation for the OT to participate as a volunteer in an OT Service, the OT should:
• Ensure that they are eligible for an OT volunteering programme by having evidence of a validated qualification recognized by the Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI).
• Be of good character and in a state of health to render regular and efficient participation.
• Be prepared for the administrative responsibilities of the Volunteering assignment by ensuring that all documentation and Health & Safety requirements are carried through prior to commencement.
• Be familiar with the AOTI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (2007) and in agreement to abide by same.
• Accept responsibility for his/her own learning and have clear learning goals.
• Accept responsibility for managing professional relationships within multidisciplinary settings.
• Be willing to engage in a supervisory relationship with designated OT.
• Abide by the guiding principles of volunteering as outlined by AOTI.

2.2.3 Participation Stage

OT Service Provider/Manager – Clinical & Professional
In actively participating in the taking on of an Occupational Therapist as a Volunteer, the OT service provider (Manager) should:
• Initiate the induction process in accordance with organisational requirements, including any relevant training.
• Clarify reporting relationship for volunteer and designated supervisor within the staff complement. Please see Appendix 5.
• Establish hours of engagement, employing flexibility where possible balancing the needs of the service and those of the Volunteer.
• Clearly outline the designated service area and scope of therapy activity for the Volunteer taking into account the best interest of service users, particularly with regards to continuity of care and clinical governance.

• Ensure that the OT service and staff continue to be clinically responsible for aspects of service user care delegated to the Volunteer OT.

• Clearly outline duties which will include both clinical and administrative tasks and which will vary in accordance with needs of service.

• Set up the supervision system with a designated supervisor in accordance with the AOTI ‘Guidelines for professional Supervision’ (2010) and/or organisational procedures.

• Ensure that the supervision process includes documentation.

• Endeavour to ensure that the programme runs without placing undue strain on staffing resources, and in the knowledge that Volunteers are qualified Occupational Therapists. To balance the above responsibilities and demands, supervision of Volunteers is essential to the programme’s effective and efficient operation.

• Assign tasks to the Volunteer. Include access to learning resources such as textbooks, journals or library and/or opportunities to observe or visit other services or agencies in accordance with learning objectives.

• Continue to monitor and review the Volunteer’s participation beyond the trial period through a supervision mechanism.

• The service provider will continue to be responsible for aspects of service user care delegated through this programme, and our first concern is that service user’s benefit by its operation.

• In the instance of concerns arising with regards to the performance, competence or professionalism (e.g. time keeping, confidentiality, dress, communication) of the Volunteer that cannot be resolved, termination of programme will be undertaken.

• Terminate with adequate notice if changes in organisational structure, workloads or other factors result in the supervisor no longer being able to provide a safe environment, adequate supervision or guarantee benefit to the service user.

• Waive a notice period should the Volunteer secure paid employment elsewhere and be unable to honour this.

• Provide a document on completion of assignment that outlines the Volunteer’s roles and duties over the period of their placement (Appendix 6).

• On completion of a Volunteering assignment, conduct a feedback meeting with the Volunteer.

Induction for the Occupational Therapist Volunteer in an Occupational Therapy Service

The Occupational Therapist as a qualified professional holds a clinical autonomy that a student or support worker does not, but still requires a high level of supervision. As a Volunteer they do not take responsibility for assessments and clinical decision making. The types of tasks assigned to the OT Volunteer will take into account the best interest of service users, particularly with regards to continuity of care and clinical governance. It is however, our intention, that the Occupational Therapist will experience both direct and indirect clinical duties as well as performing administrative tasks required for delivery of effective clinical services.
In actively participating as a Volunteer Occupational Therapist in an OT Service, the OT should:

- Behave in a professional manner at all times by adhering to the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. This includes respecting the rights of individuals and issues relating to confidentiality.
- Comply with all Health & Safety regulations as applicable to the setting.
- Actively participate in supervision accepting that as a qualified professional one holds a clinical autonomy that a student or support worker does not but still requires a high level of supervision to practice within the defined scope of a volunteer.
- Respond to feedback constructively.
- Take active responsibility for own learning and for communicating learning needs.
- Ensure that the service is informed in a timely manner of inability to fulfill the commitments of the volunteering assignment and need to terminate their participation.
- Participate in a quality review process at the end of the assignment. Examples include meeting with manager and/or feedback questionnaire from a service user, the Volunteer OT or the OT in post.
- Ensure they can manage the Occupational Therapy Process for a manageable case load that is under the direct responsibility of the Occupational Therapist with whom they work. They may write in the Case Files of the people with whom they work, but the Occupational Therapist must countersign each entry.
- The Organisation will continue to be responsible for all aspects of service user care delegated through this programme, the primary aim of which is to ensure that service users benefit by its operation.
- Applicants should take note that taking on a role as a Volunteer Occupational Therapist is entirely at their own expense and that no salary, subsistence, accommodation, travel expenses or other funding will be made available through the Organisation providing the placement.
- Out of pocket expenses may be reimbursed in keeping with the organisation’s policy.

It is anticipated that direct and indirect clinical activity may involve the following:

- Provision of individual and/or group therapy to service users.
- Appropriate record keeping. Feedback and liaison will be required with regards to same.
- Participation in assessments and contribution to writing of reports resulting from same.
- Provision of assistance with Occupational Therapy sessions. For example observations and note taking, video and audio recording during sessions, set up and tidy after sessions.
- Assisting the Occupational Therapist in post with organisation, development and provision of training programmes/treatment implementation.
- Attendance at team meetings/case discussions as appropriate.

Administrative duties will vary as mentioned above, but may include the following:

- Compiling treatment programmes in consultation with service users and resource materials/resources required.
- Developing resource materials.
• Organising department/clinic resources.
• Assistance with research/audit activities in the department.
• Assistance in preparation for courses run in the department.
• Completing of appropriate records / reports with regards to service users seen.

2.2.4 Accountability and Governance of Clinical Duties

On-going Monitoring & Review role of Manager
• The manager will continue to monitor and review the Occupational Therapist Volunteers participation beyond the trial period through a supervision mechanism.
• The organisation will continue to be responsible for aspects of service user care delegated through this programme to ensure that service user’s benefit by its operation.
• The programme must also be run without placing undue strain on staffing resources, and in the knowledge that volunteers are qualified Therapists. To balance the above responsibilities and demands, supervision of the Occupational Therapists will be key to the programme’s effective and efficient operation.

Particulars of Role of the Occupational Therapists as a Volunteer in Occupational Therapy Services:
• Volunteer Occupational Therapists may be placed within any of the service areas. Preferences for location and clinical specialism may be asked for on application, however placement in preferred area may not be guaranteed.
• Under supervision, the Occupational Therapist Volunteer will perform a range of clearly identified clinical and administrative duties over the course of their engagement. Duties will vary depending on needs of the service.
• The Occupational Therapist as a Volunteer will assume a role as a qualified professional and holds a clinical autonomy that a student or support worker does not, but still requires a high level of supervision and as such does not take responsibility for assessments and clinical decision making.
• The types of tasks assigned to the Occupational Therapist will take into account the best interest of service users, particularly with regards to continuity of care and clinical governance. It is however, the intention, that they will experience both direct and indirect clinical duties as well as performing administrative tasks required for delivery of effective clinical services.

Through Clinical Supervision the Occupational Therapist taking on a Volunteer role in an Occupational Therapy Service will be provided with the opportunity to:
• Reflect on the content and process of practice.
• Monitor and ensure the quality of work.
• Review and plan work.
• Consider any particular responsibilities and roles of the supervisee.
• Develop understanding of core competencies and clinical skills.
• Seek and receive information, support and feedback.
• Voice and examine concerns.
• Explore and express issues brought up by the work.
• Consider the impact of the work on the volunteer.
• Be proactive.
• Be challenged constructively.
• Identify skills and strengths.
• Identify learning objectives and areas requiring further development.
• Reflect critically on learning experiences and document reflective practice.

As their personal commitments allow, the Occupational Therapist Volunteer may, for the duration of their assignment and on agreement with the OT Manager avail of:
• Access to library resources, databases, journal papers of interest, textbooks, and reference works such as dissertations.
• Access to in-service training and team meetings, which will provide an insight into operational issues, and give an opportunity to participate in staff learning and development.
• Observation of other services where appropriate and facility is available.

2.3 Quality Review Stage

Review and use of having an Occupational Therapy Volunteer in Occupational Therapy Services
• The operation of the volunteer programme should be continually qualitatively reviewed via service user, therapist and the OT on the programme, and feedback and changes to the programme or its suspension / termination may follow.
• The operation of the Volunteer OT programme should be reviewed six monthly or nine monthly or more frequently if necessary to ensure any changes to organisational structure and/or staffing skill mix are reflected.
• As a quality initiative, the learning gained from the process of both running and participating in a Volunteer OT scheme in an OT Service should be shared with the wider Professional Community.

2.4 Termination of Programme

• The programme will be terminated with immediate effect in the instance of concerns arising with regards to the performance, competence or professionalism (e.g. time keeping, confidentiality, dress, communication) of the Occupational Therapist Volunteer that cannot be resolved.
• The programme may also be terminated, after a two week( or a suitable agreed time frame) notice period to the OT Volunteer, if changes in organisational structure, workloads or other factors result in the supervisor no longer being able to provide a safe environment, adequate supervision or guarantee benefit to the service user.
• The organisation will waive the two week notice period should the OT Volunteer secure paid employment elsewhere and be unable to honour this.
Section 3

References

- AOTI Guidelines for Professional Supervision (2010)
- Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (2013/14)
- Enable Ireland Speech & Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist Graduate Volunteer Programme Pack
- Sensational Kids Therapy Graduate Volunteer Programme.
- For Speech & Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists Health & Safety at Work Act 2006
- Volunteering Ireland – charter for effective volunteering.
- Volunteer Document Pack, Blanchardstown Hospital, Dublin 15

Appendices

Appendix 1  Project Process
Appendix 2  HSE Guidance Circular on Professional Volunteers
Appendix 3  Occupational Therapist working as a Volunteer Role Description Example
Appendix 4  Sample Terms of Agreement
Appendix 5  Professional Supervision Contract
Appendix 6  Confirmation of Participation in Volunteer Programme
Appendix 1: Project Process

In March 2012, a working group representing managers and senior grade Occupational Therapists was established as part of the annual action plan for the National Occupational Therapy Managers Advisory Group (NOTMAG). The overall aim of the working group was to produce a document that would outline guidelines for Occupational Therapists in taking on qualified Occupational Therapists as Volunteers in Occupational Therapy Services in Ireland and which would provide the profession with guidelines for good practice.

From within NOTMAG, a number of members had practical experience of taking on Occupational Therapists as Volunteers in the Occupational Therapy Service within which they worked and therefore, could advise on the processes involved.

From within the working group, one member had a practical knowledge of having Occupational Therapists take on the role of Volunteers in the Occupational Therapy service which they worked in, and therefore, took the lead in writing the main body of the text, and the role of coordinator.

The remaining group members fulfilled the important role of guiding the development of the document and of bringing differing perspectives from their various work contexts.

A briefing presentation was delivered to NOTMAG national meeting in June 2012 as to the content of the Draft Guidelines and to gather views of what OT Managers required to have included in the guideline document.

Consultation

A further draft was circulated to all of the members of National Manager’s Group as part of the feedback process in summer/ early autumn 2012. Managers were asked to pass on the draft document to their staff to ensure that feedback from all grades was represented.

Feedback was positive in that respondents found the document easy to read and agreed that it fulfilled its stated objectives.

It was highlighted that there was a need for clarification on the different programmes in place – i.e.
1. Volunteering (an OT graduate-led initiative) and
2. The National Job Bridge Scheme (Dept of Social Protection led Scheme)

Useful comments were added in relation to the need for more practical information on how best to incorporate the role of Occupational Therapist as a Volunteer in Occupational Therapy Services.

The document was reviewed again in February 2014 by NOTMAG representatives prior to submission to Council in Autumn 2015.

This document was reviewed by the AOTI Governance Committee in November 2015.
Appendix 2: HSE Guidance on Professional Volunteer Circular
SC45 512092009230

5.2.5 Professional Volunteers
This section deals with individuals undertaking voluntary work in the HSE related to their professional qualifications. These volunteers would have a level of expertise and/or experience in the area they shall be working in, for example a recently qualified social worker volunteering in the HSE on an unpaid basis in their chosen field.

Does State Indemnity apply?
The State Claims Agency (SCA) confirms that the Health Service Executive (HSE), its servants and/or agents, will be indemnified by the State in respect of any claims for personal injury and third party property damage, arising from the negligence of the HSE, its servants and/or agents in respect of professional volunteers working with the HSE. This indemnity extends to cover only the negligence of the HSE, its servants and/or agents, and does not extend to indemnify any third party, its servants and/or agents concerning any negligent act or omission by the latter by reference to Statute or at Common Law.

In relation to their volunteer capacity, they will be treated effectively as an employee for the purposes of employer’s liability cover.

A professional volunteer will be covered in respect of clinical negligence under the Clinical Indemnity Scheme, managed by the SCA, provided that they are supervised in respect of their clinical duties.

HSE Risk Management Responsibilities
- All professional volunteers and activities/programmes they are involved in should be formally approved by local HSE management.
- Professional volunteers should be engaged on the basis of an agreed HSE protocol formally signed by both parties. This should include:
  - Terms and conditions of the engagement, for example working hours, duties, reporting structure etc.
  - Garda Clearance / vetting, references and proof of qualifications - professional volunteers must undergo Garda clearance / vetting, and provide valid references and qualifications.
  - Risk Assessment - as with any activity a risk assessment must be completed prior to engagement of the professional volunteer and identified control measures implemented. Risk control measures for the engagement of professional volunteers should be directly related to the individual’s level of competence and activities they shall undertake.

Rev 00
22/09/2011
VOLUNTEER OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ROLE

Following on from your recent meeting/discussions with __________________ regarding your role within the Ward I have outlined below the agreements reached.

- Description of Project/Purpose of Assignment:

- Outline of Volunteer’s Role:

- Work schedule/breaks:

- Training/Support plan:

- Reporting:

- Time Commitment:

- Trial Period/Starting/Finishing Dates:

- Place of Work:

- Name of Supervisor/Head of Department:
• Has attention been drawn to service guidelines? (Most Relevant To Role)

• Has Induction been given? (Give Brief Outline)

Signed (Volunteer) ________________________________
Date: ______________________________________________

Signed (Head of Dept.) ______________________________
Date: ______________________________________________
Appendix 4

Sample Terms of Agreement

Service Providers Details
Contact Details

Occupational Therapy Volunteer Terms of Agreement

Name ________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
Qualification ________________________________________________

Statutory Declaration Completed and returned Yes _____ No _____
Garda Clearance application completed and returned Yes _____ No _____
Name of Two Referees supplied Yes _____ No _____
I agree to be bound by the ethical guidelines of AOTI. Yes _____ No _____

Initial Volunteering timeframe until (6 week period):
From ___________ until___________

Accountability to: XXXX
Initial agreed assignment will be to:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

I __________________________ understand and accept the arrangements and conditions for this Occupational Therapy placement through the Graduate Volunteer Scheme as offered by the Occupational Therapy Department of the XXXXX

Signed __________________________
Witnessed __________________________
Date __________________________
Appendix 5: Professional Supervision Contract

To implement the Professional Supervision Policy and Procedures of the __________________________ Department, in __________________________

the following details have been agreed:

Location of meetings __________________________

Frequency of supervision __________________________

Duration of meetings __________________________

Review arrangements and date(s) __________________________

• The following aspects of the Supervision Policy were clarified:
  • Definition, purpose and functions of supervision
  • Our distinct responsibilities in supervision
  • Boundaries / confidentiality
  • Recording of supervision
  • Agenda
  • Circumstances that allow for the postponement of a supervision meeting
  • Procedure to follow in case of difficulties arising between us which we cannot resolve

Any other specific requirements/needs

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Signed: ___________________________ Supervisee Date: ___________________________

Signed: ___________________________ Supervisee Date: ___________________________

(Source taken from ‘Professional Supervision Pack’, Occupational Therapy Service, St. James Hospital. Dublin 8)
Appendix 6: Sample Letter of Confirmation of Participation in Volunteer Programme

Date  
Address  

Re: Confirmation of Volunteer Placement – Service/ Hospital

Dear Sir/Madam,

Volunteers are an important and valued part of Service/ Hospital. We hope that you enjoy volunteering with us and feel part of our team. This letter of confirmation tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope to gain from you. We aim to be flexible, so please let us know if you would like to make any changes and we will do our best to facilitate.

SERVICE / HOSPITAL COMMITMENT

We, Service / Hospital will endeavour to:

• Offer an Induction Programme and to provide any assistance and training you need. Core initial training requirements are as follows:
  - Infection Control
  - Fire Safety
  - Health and Safety (Health and Safety at Work Act)
  - Patient Care & Confidentiality
  - Security
• Orientation and induction specific to the area the volunteer will work is decided by the Dept Head/Ward Manager:
• Additional Induction/Training as notified by the Head of Department:
  a)  
  b)  
  c)  
• Ensure satisfactory supervisory support from your supervisor so that you can tell us if you are happy with how your work is organised and get feedback from us.

Your Supervisors name is  

Your name
- Respect your skills, dignity and individual needs and to do our best to meet them.
- Consult with and keep you informed of possible changes to your required role and or schedule and to be receptive to any comments regarding ways in which we might better accomplish our respective tasks.
- Provide a safe workplace.

**VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT**

I ________________________________ (volunteer) will endeavor to:

- Work reliably to the best of my ability, and to give as much warning as possible whenever I cannot work when expected.
- Follow Service/Hospital’s Polices and Guidelines, particularly in relation to Health and Safety Infection Control and Confidentiality
- Carry out the duties outlined to the best of my capability.

Note: This letter of confirmation is in honor only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment.

We look forward to seeing you on the ________________________________

Kind regards

_________________________________________

Supervisor
Appendix 7:

Volunteer Work & Social Welfare Payments
Voluntary work is a good way to keep active, learn new skills and get involved in your local community. You may do some unpaid work as a volunteer and keep your social welfare payment. However, you must continue to meet all the conditions attached to your payment. Your Social Welfare Local Office or the section paying your social welfare payment will usually decide whether you can keep your social welfare payment and work as a volunteer.

Social Welfare

Volunteering and Social Welfare Payments
Claiming benefit should not prevent you from volunteering, if you so wish. The following are the guidelines issued by the Department of Social Welfare regarding claiming benefits and volunteering.

If you are aged 18 or over and unemployed, you may be paid either Jobseeker’s Allowance (JA) or Jobseeker’s Benefit (JB). Both payments are paid by the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA). Jobseeker’s Allowance was called Unemployment Assistance; the name of the payment changed in October 2006. For further information see: http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Voluntary-Work-Option_holder.aspx

The Department of Social and Family Affairs provide a range of payments for people who are ill or have a disability. These range from the insurance based Illness Benefit and Invalidity Pension to the means-tested Disability Allowance to the Occupational Injury Scheme for those who suffer an accident at work. For further information see: http://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/Voluntary-Work-Option_holder.aspx

According to the Department of Social and Family Affairs you may volunteer if you are receiving the following payments. Please read the paragraphs carefully as certain conditions may apply.

Job-seeker Allowance / Job-seeker Benefit
A jobseeker who engages in voluntary work within the State may continue to be entitled to a jobseekers payment provided that, in engaging in the voluntary work, they continue to satisfy the statutory conditions of being available for and genuinely seeking work.

Examples of voluntary work in which jobseekers may engage include:
• helping the sick, elderly or persons with a disability
• assisting youth clubs, church groups, sports groups, cultural organisations, local resident associations

The groups involved may be nationally organised groups or local voluntary or community groups.

Aims of the Voluntary Work Option
The aim of the Voluntary Work Option is twofold, namely – to encourage voluntary organisations to involve jobseekers to the greatest extent possible in their existing activities by creating new opportunities for voluntary work and to inform jobseekers of their freedom to involve themselves in voluntary work and to encourage them to do so.
**Applying for the Voluntary Work Option**
The jobseeker or the voluntary organisation/group involved should request an application form VW1 from their Local Office or downloaded here. The completed application form should be sent to the Local Office and a Deciding Officer will determine whether the jobseeker may take up the work in question without affecting entitlement to their jobseekers payment.

**Decisions in relation to Voluntary Work**
In considering an application, the Deciding Officer will determine whether the work concerned is voluntary within the meaning of the scheme and whether the jobseeker would continue to satisfy the statutory conditions for getting the jobseekers payment. The Deciding Officer will need to be satisfied that the jobseeker is available to take up employment, if offered it, and that they are making genuine efforts to find work. This applies whether the voluntary work is full or part-time.

While it is not possible to lay down hard and fast rules as to what constitutes voluntary work the position should be clear in most cases. Factors to be taken into account will include:

- the type of work involved
- the aims and standing of the voluntary body
- the weekly hours worked
- the amount of any payment received by way of out-of-pocket expenses

The voluntary work would normally involve only a few hours a day or a few days a week but full-time involvement in voluntary activities would not necessarily be ruled out. However, there should be no implication of job replacement or cheap labour.

Any payment for the voluntary work should generally be limited to out-of-pocket expenses such as travelling expenses or meal allowances.”
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