

The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Speech Therapy Volunteers



The Hillingdon Hospitals Foundation Trust Volunteers are a really important part of the team at the Trust, working across our sites, helping us do more.

At Hillingdon and Mount Vernon, giving your time helps make a big difference to our patients' lives. Having volunteers enables us to do more, whether that is time to spend with patients, or helping give our teams extra capacity.

Volunteers are vital in helping the Trust deliver the highest quality healthcare possible to our many patients.

Volunteering is also an excellent opportunity for people to give back to their local hospital and to help make a real difference.

Why we want you

The role of speech and language therapists (SLTs) are trained to work with individuals with communication and swallowing impairments. Following a brain injury it can be common to have difficulties with swallowing, communication, or both. SLTs play a key role within the multidisciplinary team (MDT), joint with the medical team, physiotherapists and occupational therapists in assessing, diagnosing and treating patients. They work closely with MDT members to work on impairments, increase function, and plan for future care.

SLTs often work with patients with the following communication difficulties:

Expressive language is the "output" of language: the ability to express wants and needs through verbal or nonverbal communication. It is the ability to put thoughts into words and sentences in a way that makes sense and is grammatically correct.

Receptive language is the "input" of language: the ability to understand and comprehend language that is heard or read.

Cognition is a term referring to the mental processes involved in gaining knowledge and comprehension e.g. memory, attention and executive functioning.

Dysarthria is the term referring to slurred speech.

What you will be doing

- Carrying out simple therapy tasks under the guidance of SLTs
- Conversing with patients with aphasia (expressive and receptive language difficulties) to encourage the use of communication strategies already advised by SLT
- Assisting patients with dysarthria (slurred speech) to use and implement clear speech strategies within conversation
- Assisting patients to use high and low tech Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC), including the use of iPads with communication therapy tasks, and the use of basic need picture charts
- To assist with feeding at mealtimes for patients who may have difficulty feeding themselves
- This would not apply for patients with dysphagia (swallowing difficulties)

The skills you need

- To have excellent communication skills, be empathetic and non-judgemental
- Willing to treat all people with politeness, dignity and respect
- Have patience and the ability to relate and respond well to people
- Can maintain sensitivity of emotional needs of adults with communication difficulties
- Understanding the importance of confidentiality and following procedures
- Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team
- Reliable and punctual
- Available to volunteer for a minimum of 3 hours a week
- Able to follow instructions
- Calm and composed
- Able to liaise with professional staff at all levels
- May be interested in pursuing a career in healthcare

What we will not ask you to do:

1. You will not be expected to carry out assessments or diagnose communication or swallowing impairments
2. You will not need to decide on the most effective treatment method or provide feedback to families
3. Assist with feeding for patients with swallowing difficulties

What's in it for you

- Satisfaction of assisting others and providing an invaluable service to the Trust and community
- An opportunity to develop personal skills and experience
- An opportunity to share your own skills and experiences
- Insight into the workings of a hospital
- SLT volunteers will receive induction and training from a speech and language therapist prior to working with any patients
- Tasks delegated to volunteers will be explained at the start of the shift and a debrief will be given at the end

Other information

Minimum age 18

Hospital based, Pield Heath Road, Uxbridge, UB8 3NN

How to apply

An H4ALL application form MUST be completed. We require two references.

To obtain an application form:

- Visit www.h4all.org.uk and download or print an application form
- Email volunteerhub@h4all.org.uk to request an application form to be sent to you by email or post
- Send your fully completed application form by:
- Email to volunteerhub@h4all.org.uk
- Post to H4ALL, Volunteer Development Team, Key House, Yiewsley, UB7 9BQ

! You will go through a further Hillingdon Hospital process in application for this role.

Disclaimer

COVID-19 Guidance. All roles should be risk assessed and mitigation put in place to minimise risks. The latest Government advice should be taken into account particularly for groups of people considered clinically vulnerable. Check Gov website. Volunteers advised to shield or who are self-isolating should be supported to stay at home and can volunteer remotely if appropriate/possible. All volunteers must be made aware of the need to stop volunteering should they feel unwell and to follow the latest government and NHS advice for the public especially regarding COVID-19 symptoms. Training, guidance and induction to be provided via e-learning or virtual technology where possible. To reduce risk of transmission, Response Volunteers shouldn't enter wards or clinical areas where at all possible– if running items to and from wards (e.g. pharmacy running), bring items to ward entrance for ward staff/volunteers to collect. If direct patient contact is included, such as escorting patients where social distancing cannot be adhered to, then volunteers must be provided with the required levels of PPE in line with staff provision and following PHE guidance. If PPE required, volunteers must be trained in the usage, donning, doffing, and disposal of PPE in line with PHE guidance.

