

INTERNAL ONLY
ISLHD PROCEDURE
COVER SHEET

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EXECUTIVE SPONSOR or EXECUTIVE CLINICAL SPONSOR	Executive Director Strategic Improvement Programs
AUTHOR	Workforce Development Consultant, ISLHD Workforce Development Unit
KEY TERMS	Volunteer management; mandatory training; screening; occupational screening
FUNCTIONAL GROUP OR HUB	District Wide
NSQHS STANDARD	Standard 1
SUMMARY	ISLHD is committed to ensuring there is consistent and appropriate management of all ISLHD volunteers that covers all aspects of their employment including recruitment, work health and safety, training and occupational screening

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY

Feedback about this document can be sent to ISLHD-CorporateGovernance@health.nsw.gov.au

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Volunteering within NSW Health maximises the health care experiences for patients and clients, and is rewarding for volunteers and the service involving the volunteer.

As per NSW Health Policy Directive PD2011_033 *Volunteers – Engaging, Supporting and Managing Volunteers*, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) is committed to ensuring that volunteers within ISLHD are appropriately engaged and then effectively managed and supported whilst providing support to our patients, clients and services.

2. BACKGROUND

Volunteers contribute in a large part to the success of ISLHD and their contributions must be balanced with ISLHD's requirements as an organisation to ensure that they, and our patients, are kept safe.

NSW Health has a range of policies and guidelines that apply to volunteers as well as paid staff. Managing volunteers within the health system requires compliance with a wide range of law and policy.

2.1 Definitions

Volunteers

Volunteers perform a variety of activities that contribute to hospital and other health services in ISLHD. This procedure applies to those volunteers who:

- Have direct contact with patients/carers; and/or
- Are physically present on an ISLHD site while performing their volunteering duties.

Recruitment/Selection

Consistent process by which volunteers are engaged.

Pre-volunteering Checks

Pre-selection screening, including national police checks, working with children checks (where applicable) and reference checks to ensure that the volunteer does not pose a risk to ISLHD and ISLHD's patients/carers.

Orientation

Is the process in which a new volunteer is integrated into their volunteer role with ISLHD and ensuring they are aware of: their rights, responsibilities and boundaries, specifically the NSW Health Code of Conduct and Work Health Safety (WHS); their role as a volunteer; the site/location in which they operate.

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Immunisation/Vaccination

As defined and required by NSW Health Policy Directive PD2020_017 *Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination against Specific Infectious Diseases*.

StaffLink

The NSW Health human resource information system (HRIS) holding all employee and contingent worker information.

Mandatory Training

Mandatory training is prescribed training that all volunteers *must* complete to enable them to carry out their work tasks. Compliance with mandatory training is a requirement for all staff of NSW Health, including volunteers, as per paragraph 4.3.8 of the NSW Health Code of Conduct.

Hand Hygiene

Any action of hand cleansing including using the 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene when providing patient care and preparing food.

Bare Below the Elbows

Hands and forearms are free of jewellery and sleeves are above the elbow with nails short, natural and unvarnished.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Volunteers will:

- Adhere to all relevant NSW Health and ISLHD policies and procedures
- Participate in occupational screening and vaccination requirements
- Be punctual and reliable
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy
- Carry out the duties listed in their volunteer role description/duty statement
- Be accountable for their actions and behaviours
- Give notice if their availability changes
- Advise if they are resigning from their volunteering role with ISLHD and return any identification and property of the health district.
- Report any injuries received or hazards that they notice in the workplace
- Report any complaints in the appropriate manner
- Undertake training as mandated

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- Carry out the work of their volunteer role responsibly and ethically

3.2 Site/Service Managers will:

- Ensure that occupational screening and vaccinations are undertaken
- Ensure all volunteers at their site/service comply with all relevant NSW Health and ISLHD policies and procedures
- Ensure that volunteers are appropriately engaged and orientated to their role and site/service
- Ensure that volunteers complete all required paperwork and submit them for action/processing
- Ensure that volunteers have a safe work environment
- Ensure that volunteers understand what, if any, PPE is required, and how to use and dispose of safely.
- Ensure that volunteers undertake all required mandatory training
- Ensure that records of volunteers stored in StaffLink, or any other record management system used, are kept up to date.
- Ensure that records of volunteer mandatory training completed are kept.
- Be responsible for the overall management accountability for volunteers within their site/service

3.3 Workforce Support Teams and Volunteer Coordinators (where in place) will:

- Undertake pre-volunteering checks for all new volunteers
- Undertake any required risk assessments;
- Ensure volunteer records held in StaffLink, or any other records management system used, are up to date.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Recruitment/Selection

The selection of volunteers for service within ISLHD facilities and services should be based on the merit principles ensuring they are an appropriate person to be providing support to our patients and clients.

It is required that the following steps are undertaken when selecting a volunteer:

- Where there is a local process for advertising available volunteering positions are available, this should be followed.
- Potential volunteers are required to complete the Volunteer Application Form as well as the following:

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- National Police Check Consent Form and Identification Checklist for Consent
- Pre-Volunteering Health Declaration Form
- Volunteer Declaration Form
- Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination Forms
PD2020_017 Appendix 6 & 7
- Interview/Meeting – this discussion should be used to determine if the potential volunteer will be appropriate and has the required knowledge, skills and temperament to be a volunteer. At this time you will also need to confirm identify using the Identification Checklist for Consent to Undertake a National Policy Check. (NPC)
- Reference Checks – using the Volunteer Reference Check Form, two referees must be contacted to provide reference checks for the potential volunteer.

4.1.1 Checks

All volunteers must undertake checks appropriate for the role they are undertaking prior to commencement. All volunteers must agree for the following checks to be conducted:

- **National Police Check (NPC)** – all volunteers must agree for a NPC to be conducted.
- **Aged Care** – Under the *Aged Care Act 1997* where volunteers work unsupervised in Federal Government funded aged care facilities, they must complete an Aged Care Police Check every 3 years
- **Working With Children Checks (WWCC)** – WWCC need to be conducted every 5 years for volunteers who work unattended with children. The volunteer is responsible for obtaining their own WWCC through Service NSW, this is at no cost to volunteers.

4.1.2 Occupational Screening

Section 2.5 of NSW Health Policy Directive *PD2020_017 Occupational Assessment, Screening and Vaccination Against Specified Infectious Diseases* outlines the requirements for volunteers to provide evidence of their vaccination and immunisation status.

No volunteer categorised as Category A, or Category A, High Risk, can commence duties until such time as their immunisation status is confirmed by *Staff Health/Respiratory Medicine*.

Where a volunteer position is categorised as Category A, or Category A High Risk, they must provide evidence of protection against the infectious diseases specified in the PD and comply with the requirements of the PD prior to commencement.

The supervisor/service manager/volunteer coordinator will ensure vaccination records and

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any other associated documentation is captured in StaffLink or other record keeping systems used.

Volunteers who do not consent to participate in assessment, screening and vaccination must not commence duties in a NSW Health facility.

4.2 Offer

Once all reference checks have been conducted and the potential volunteer has been cleared by Respiratory Medicine, an offer to undertake volunteer duties can be made.

Each volunteer is to receive a letter of confirmation that includes the:

- start date,
- location,
- description of their volunteering role;
- description of their responsibilities under relevant NSW Health policy and more specifically the Code of Conduct; and
- any pre-commencement requirements.

4.3 On boarding & Orientation

4.3.1 Pre-Commencement

There are a number of volunteering roles that require volunteers to undertake a training program prior to commencing. Where there is this requirement, local programs must be followed and attended.

4.3.2 First Day of Duty

Prior to commencing their volunteering duties the local supervisor must undertake the volunteer site induction orientating the new volunteer to their role, responsibilities and the site they will be volunteering. The Volunteer Site Induction Checklist (ISLHD CORP F 136) can be used for this activity. A copy of the completed checklist should be kept in the records management system in use, a second copy should be provided to the volunteer.

4.4 Attendance

Where practical volunteering shifts should be entered into a roster and this roster should be posted to provide volunteers of sufficient notice of the start of the roster.

When a volunteer is unable to attend their shift they must contact the appropriate person on site to advise they will not be attending the site.

So that the organisation has records of who is/was on site at any time, volunteers are required to sign in and sign off in an attendance book/register when they start and finish each shift.

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Volunteers must wear appropriate clothing and footwear whilst on site. Volunteers are also required to wear name tags and hospital identification as provided by the local health district.

Volunteers who have contact with the patient care environment, or engage in food preparation, must perform hand hygiene as appropriate, be bare below the elbows and make use of personal protective equipment, where required, in line with the relevant procedures. (See references)

4.5 Initial and Ongoing Training

To ensure volunteers are fully supported and developed to complete their volunteering duties they are required to undertake initial and ongoing training.

ISLHD’s Volunteer Mandatory Training Modules are to be completed on the volunteer’s commencement with the organisation. This training is to be completed once only, but the volunteer’s supervisor/service manager/volunteer coordinator may choose to have volunteers repeat the modules based on individual learning needs.

Access to the Districts Volunteer Mandatory Training modules will be provided by ISLHD’s Workforce Development Unit in the most efficient and cost effective method, and may include the use of online learning.

The table below outlines the topics that will be covered:

Topics Covered
Infection Control
NSW Health Code of Conduct & Core Values
Privacy
Fire Safety
Work Health and Safety
Security
Child Protection & Wellbeing

Further role or site specific training that enables volunteers to undertake their individual role safely and effectively is to be arranged by the volunteer’s supervisor/service manager/volunteer coordinator.

4.6 Records Management

All documentation relating to the volunteer appointment and ongoing placement must be maintained as per the State Records Act.

Where possible it should be uploaded into the ISLHD records management system (TRIM).

All volunteer personal information will be held in StaffLink, or in any other established record keeping system used. Other data to be retained includes volunteer immunisation data and

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records showing volunteer mandatory training compliance.

Volunteer personal information will be held to the same level of confidence as all ISLHD staff.

4.7 Performance Appraisal

To ensure that volunteers are undertaking their volunteer roles and duties appropriately it is important to undertake regular one on one meetings to provide support and empower the volunteer to be self-reflective and to identify opportunities for personal and professional development. If required these conversations may be documented and saved in the appropriate record management system.

Where there are concerns regarding the volunteer's performance of duties or conduct, these must be addressed immediately by the relevant manager / supervisor. (See section 4.9)

4.8 Grievance Resolution

All ISLHD staff, including volunteers, have a responsibility to contribute to a harmonious workplace.

Staff and volunteer grievances can usually be resolved between the staff and volunteers who are directly involved. A Manager can provide assistance if required. More serious/complex issues should be referred to a Senior Manager.

The NSW Health policy directive PD2016_046 Resolving Workplace Grievances can be followed where grievances are raised. Further information can be found on the ISLHD Intranet site, Managing Grievances page.

4.9 Managing Performance and Conduct

Where a volunteers performance, and or, conduct falls short of NSW Health and ISLHD policies, procedures, guidelines or professional standards it should be addressed immediately.

When specific issues that relate to performance or conduct arise the volunteer's supervisor/service manager/volunteer coordinator should:

- Notify the volunteer of the issue and arrange a meeting.
- Ask the volunteer if they would like a support person to be present (A record should also be kept that this offer was made, particularly if declined)

At the meeting:

- Clearly outline the relevant performance or conduct issue
- Give the volunteer an opportunity to respond to the issues raised
- Clearly and specifically outline why the current performance level or conduct is not acceptable and how the performance or conduct needs to improve

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- If appropriate discuss any reasonable support to be provided to help the volunteer improve.
- Advise the volunteer of the consequences should the performance level or conduct not improve within the specified timeframe.
- Seek the volunteer's agreement to improve performance or conduct
- Keep written notes of both the performance and conduct issue and of the meeting itself should be kept.

Following the meeting, consideration should be given to the volunteer's response/s to the issues raised and the need for continued monitoring of the volunteers performance and conduct. In some cases it may be preferable or appropriate to end the volunteering relationship immediately. (See section 4.10 Cessation)

4.10 Volunteer Cessation

Cessation Initiated by ISLHD:

There may be a number of reasons as to why ISLHD would seek to end a relationship with one of its volunteers. Ideally volunteers should be made aware of various reasons their volunteer relationship may be ended by the Health District early in their engagement/recruitment. Reasons may include:

- There is no longer a need for the volunteer's services
- The volunteer's performance is unsatisfactory
- The volunteer's conduct is not satisfactory, or has not improved following a review, or there has been serious misconduct
- *The volunteer's presence may be detrimental to the health and safety of themselves or others in the organisation

**If keeping a volunteer in the organisation is a risk to the health and safety of others (including members of the public), ending the relationship may be necessary so that the District is acting in accordance with the standard of care required by law.*

Where a decision is made to end the relationship the volunteer's manager / supervisor / coordinator should confirm this in writing and keep a record of the documentation provided to the volunteer. There is no requirement for the organisation to give a period of notice.

Cessation Initiated by the volunteer:

A volunteer may decide at any time to end their voluntary relationship with the

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organisation. This can be done verbally, or if they choose in writing. Legally, there is no obligation for the volunteer to provide any period of notice, or reasons for ceasing the relationship.

The supervisor / service manager / volunteer coordinator is then responsible for:

- Ensuring any ISLHD property and/or identification is returned,
- Updating records held in StaffLink, or in any other record keeping system used, to show the volunteer as inactive.

(For legal purposes volunteer records should be retained on file for up to 7 years.)

5. DOCUMENTATION

- ISLHD CORP F 132 - Volunteer Application Form (including all attachments)
- ISLHD CORP F 133 - Volunteer Declaration Form
- ISLHD CORP F 134 - Volunteer Reference Check Form
- ISLHD CORP F 135 - Volunteer Letter of Confirmation
- ISLHD CORP F 136 - Volunteer Site Induction Checklist

6. AUDIT

Not Required

7. REFERENCES

- [PD2011_033 Volunteers – Engaging, Supporting and Managing Volunteers](#)
- [National Volunteer Guide Parts 1-6, 2020, Justice Connect](#)
- [ISLHD CLIN PD 45, Bare Below the Elbows](#)
- [ISLHD CLIN PROC 270, Hand Hygiene and Hand Care](#)
- [ISLHD OPS PD 51 Food Safety on Wards](#)

8. REVISION & APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Revision No.	Author and Approval
	0	Senior Manager Workforce Development
April 2018	1	Senior Manager Workforce Development
July 2021	2	Author: Workforce Development Consultant, ISLHD Workforce Development Approval/Date: Corporate Policy Recommendation committee / July 2021 Approval/Date: Executive Director Strategic Improvement Programs / July 2021