Barking, Havering and Redbridge NHS University Hospitals

# Pastoral Visitor

## Volunteer role description

We are always looking for the right people, those who are friendly, passionate, empathetic and respectful. They are people who celebrate the richness and uniqueness of our diverse community, staff and volunteers. We are committed to ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged or excluded from playing an active part in our organisation because of their ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, sexuality, religion, age, class or geographical location. They are people who have a natural positive disposition, reliable and committed. They wear our volunteer uniform with PRIDE (passion, responsibility, innovation, drive and empowerment) beaming with compassion and enthusiasm.

The role of a volunteer is a unique one, activities complement the care and support given by staff, and they do not replace staff or mitigate staff shortages. Whilst volunteers are not staff, they are part of the BHRUT family. Volunteers will not assist with anything of a medical nursing nature, read patients' medical files or share this information, assist with cleaning or repair any item of equipment. As a volunteer you are in a position of trust this should never be abused or used to advantage yourself or disadvantage a patient.

### "HEARING THE CRY OF THE HUMAN HEART AND RESPONDING SENSITIVELY"

Pastoral Visitors support patients in a holistic, spiritual or religious way whilst they are in hospital. This may be to lead prayer with a patient at their request, or to provide religious rituals. Your role is to support the departments' objective in discovering what is important to people and how through these things they find meaning and hope during a difficult time.

Support the patient's right to follow faith practises in a sensitive and dignified way whilst in our hospitals. Our volunteers do not prophesise or convert patients, but rather, allow the patient to be, respecting those who may not want to talk by walking by. Paying attention to body language and being aware of people's discomfort. A good volunteer provides spiritual and emotional support and facilitates religious care. Pastoral Visitors offer friendship, companionship and a listening ear. You can chat with patients who are worried, whilst allowing the patient to share what they are comfortable with.

**Would suit:**
Pastoral visitors can be anyone over the age of 18 years connected to a church or recognised faith group.

**Commitment:**
Usually one morning, afternoon or evening per week.