

# VOLUNTEER HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



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## Introduction and background

It is the policy of The Brain Tumour Charity to do all that is reasonable and practicable to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment, prevent personal injury, and obtain the co-operation of management, employees, volunteers and contractors in carrying out this policy.

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to make themselves aware of our Health and Safety Policy. All volunteers have a duty of care in respect of the health and safety of not only themselves, but of other employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers and members of the public.

On application, we ask all volunteers to let us know of any specific health or medical conditions that are relevant to the role they will be undertaking, in order that we can take necessary precautions or put steps in place to ensure a healthy and safe working environment. Where appropriate, we will complete a health and safety checklist during a volunteer's induction or during their first day at the Charity.

We ask that all volunteers adhere to the following general health and safety rules and procedures.

## Policy Details

### Alcohol, Drugs & Other Substances

Alcohol for personal consumption is not allowed on Charity premises, and you must not consume alcohol during volunteering hours or whilst carrying out your duties on behalf of the charity, this includes during lunch breaks and working at evening events. Under no circumstances should you present yourself for volunteering if incapacitated due to alcohol, intoxicants, drugs or other substances.

Smoking in public places is unlawful and The Brain Tumour Charity operates a no-smoking policy inside its buildings and anywhere on the property including the entrances, car park and nearby pavements.

### Fire

Instructions as to what to do if there is a fire in the Farnborough office are displayed in our on fire action notices next to the fire exit doors. Please ensure you are familiar yourself with fire exit procedures and evacuation points. If you are volunteering at an external venue please familiarise yourself with their fire exit procedure and evacuation points before undertaking any voluntary activity at the venue.

The Charity has designated fire marshals who play an important role in preventing fires as well as evacuating the building and containing and tackling small blazes in the event that a fire does occur.

### First Aid

The Farnborough office has an appropriate number of first aiders to meet with health and safety regulations. The names of the first aiders are listed on the Health and safety poster located next to the first aid kits. First aid kits are located in the kitchen area on every floor of the building. If you require first aid at any time please talk to a first aider or your Volunteer Coordinator. You must report any

accident immediately to a first aider or your Volunteer Coordinator. All accidents are recorded in the Charity accident book and reported to health and safety authorities when necessary.

Fire and first aid procedures will be covered as part of the induction for all volunteers based in the Farnborough office.

### **Working with Personal Computers (PCs) / Laptops**

Volunteers should be aware of the health and safety issues surrounding the use of personal computers and laptops when volunteering:

- Forearms should be approximately horizontal and the user's eyes should be the same height as the top of the computer screen.
- Make sure there is enough work space to accommodate all documents or other equipment. A document holder may help avoid awkward neck and eye movements.
- Arrange the desk and screen to avoid glare or bright reflections. This is often easiest if the screen is not directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent intrusive light.
- Make sure there is space under the desk to move legs.
- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of seats on the backs of legs and knees. A footrest may be helpful.
- A space in front of the keyboard can help you rest your hands and wrists when not typing.
- Try to keep wrists straight when typing on the keyboard.
- Good keyboard technique is important – you can do this by keeping a soft touch on the keys and not overstretching the fingers.
- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with a straight wrist.
- Sit upright and close to the desk to reduce working with the mouse arm stretched.
- Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support the forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.
- Make sure individual characters on the screen are sharp, in focus and don't flicker or move. If they do, the DSE may need servicing or adjustment.
- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.
- When setting up software, choose text that is large enough to read easily on screen when sitting in a normal comfortable working position.
- Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice versa).

### **Changes in activity**

Breaking up long spells of work at a screen helps prevent fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache. The following may help users:

- Stretch and change position regularly.
- Look into the distance from time to time, and blink often.
- Change activity before users get tired, rather than to recover.
- Short, frequent breaks are better than longer, infrequent ones.
- Timing and length of changes in activity or breaks for DSE use is not set down in law and arrangements will vary depending on a particular situation.
- Portable computers
- The following may also help reduce manual handling, fatigue and postural problems when using portable computers:
  - Consider potential risks from manual handling if users have to carry heavy equipment and papers.
  - Whenever possible, users should be encouraged to use a docking station or firm surface and a full-sized keyboard and mouse.

- The height and position of the portable's screen should be angled so that the user is sitting comfortably and reflection is minimised (raiser blocks are commonly used to help with screen height).
- More changes in activity may be needed if the user cannot minimise the risks of prolonged use and awkward postures to suitable levels.

### **Protective Clothing or Equipment**

Where protective clothing or equipment is issued to you, this is done for your protection and must therefore be worn or used at the appropriate times. Failure to wear protective clothing or use safety equipment will lead to implementation of the Good Conduct Policy. You have a personal responsibility for your own health and safety and that of others and you should ensure that you exercise this responsibility carefully both through your actions and in the maintenance and care of such clothing or equipment.