NHS Volunteer Responders: communications information for referrers

1 May 2020

The NHS Volunteer Responder scheme has been commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement and is being delivered in partnership with the Royal Voluntary Service. The scheme is providing help to thousands of vulnerable people every day. We have 600,000 volunteers ready to help, and we are encouraging health and social care professionals to use the service so that we can provide even more support for people who need it. The scheme is now open for self-referrals.

This information is for health professionals, local authorities, charities and social care professionals that can refer into the programme.

Please share information on your websites and intranets, through your networks and newsletters and on social media.

This document contains:
- a short summary
- a long description which covers all the key parts of the programme
- some suggested social media content and images.

Short summary

Health and social care professionals in England can refer any vulnerable patients who are self-isolating to NHS Volunteer Responders for help with tasks such as collecting shopping and prescribed medicines, driving patients to medical appointments or transporting supplies between sites.

The scheme is already helping thousands of people every day and hundreds of thousands of volunteers are available to help. You can make referrals through the NHS Volunteer Responders referrers’ portal or by calling 0808 196 3382.

Now open for self-referrals

The scheme is now open for self-referrals for people who have been advised to shield and those most at risk who are isolating at home from coronavirus. These people can ask

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volunteers for short-term help by calling 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm. Please pass this number on to patients who could benefit from this support.

You can find more information about the programme at www.nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk

**Long description**

Health and social care professionals in England can refer any vulnerable patients who are self-isolating to NHS Volunteer Responders for help with tasks such as collecting shopping and prescribed medicines, driving patients to medical appointments or transporting supplies between sites.

The scheme is already helping thousands of people every day and hundreds of thousands of volunteers are available to help. Health and social care professionals, including GPs, pharmacists, midwives and social prescribing link workers can make referrals. Some voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations that work with people who are clinically high risk or vulnerable may also now make referrals. You can make referrals through the NHS Volunteer Responders referrers’ portal or by calling 0808 196 3382.

The scheme is now open for self-referrals for people who have been advised to shield and those most at risk who are isolating at home from coronavirus. These people can ask volunteers for short-term help by calling 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm. Please pass this number on to patients who could benefit from this support. You can also print this poster to display locally.

You can find more information about the programme at www.nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk.

You can make referrals directly if you have an nhs.net or gov.uk email address. We will approve requests from alternative addresses as quickly as we can within 72 hours, or they can make referrals through their local authority.

You can also use the portal to track when a patient receives support, or to remove someone from the scheme if they no longer need assistance.

The service, commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement, is being delivered by the Royal Voluntary Service. All approved volunteers have undergone appropriate ID checks, with an enhanced DBS check for those volunteering as patient transport drivers.

Please continue to make use of your local schemes where they exist and please talk to your patients if in doubt about whether they require support. Priority will be given to those identified as most at risk and asked to self-isolate at home for an extended period, and to those who health practitioners and local authorities consider to be especially vulnerable.
Volunteers can also support organisations by transporting supplies by car, such as equipment, medicines or personal protective equipment.

Social media content

Suggested tweets (images attached)

Tweet 1 – all referring audiences
It’s easy to refer patients in England to #NHSVolunteerResponders to collect shopping and medication, make calls and give lifts to medical appointments. Call or refer online: goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral

Tweet 2 - self referrers
If you or someone you care for in England needs to shield from coronavirus #NHSVolunteerResponders can collect shopping and medication and make friendly calls. Call the Helpline between 8am - 8pm Tel: 0808 196 3646

Tweet 3 – Ambulance Trust staff
#NHSVolunteerResponders referral portal has 600,000 volunteers across England ready to support vulnerable people self-isolating at home. Ambulance staff and paramedics can now make referrals: goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral FAQs & guidance https://bit.ly/3e5vOPI

Tweet 4 – Nursing staff
Nurses, midwives and care staff - you can refer vulnerable people who are self-isolating due to health conditions for support from #NHSVolunteerResponders for:

🛒 medicine and grocery deliveries
🚘 lifts to appointments
☎️ check in and chat telephone support

goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral

Tweet 5 – GP practice teams
GPs and GP practice teams can refer vulnerable patients who are self-isolating and need help with shopping, medication deliveries or check in and chat phone calls via the #NHSVolunteerResponders portal goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral

Tweet 6 – social prescribing link workers
#SocialPrescribing link workers – refer vulnerable patients who are self-isolating and need help with shopping, medication deliveries or check in and chat phone calls via the #NHSVolunteerResponders portal goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral