Barth Syndrome UK Volunteer Policy

Last Reviewed: **September 2026**

1. Introduction

Barth Syndrome UK (BS UK) places great value on the involvement of volunteers in its work in various ways ranging from office and clerical tasks to decision and policy making in Committees. Volunteers help enhance the range and quality of services provided by BS UK by putting their time, skills, knowledge or experience at its disposal. They help keep the work of BS UK relevant to the community by bringing a range of personalities, backgrounds and experience into the organisation.

This policy is intended to ensure good practice in the involvement of volunteers in Barth Syndrome UK's work and promote understanding of the respective roles of staff and volunteers in the organisation.

2. Role of Volunteers and Task Specification

Before recruiting volunteers, the Chief Executive Officer and Board will have considered the appropriateness of the role envisaged bearing in mind the following points.

2.1 The roles of volunteers and those of staff in BS UK should be distinct. Staff should not be involved in working for BS UK in both a voluntary and a salaried capacity. However, where a staff member is also engaged in a voluntary role, this must be clearly defined and agreed and be distinct from their paid duties.

2.2 Work carried out by volunteers should not be such that might jeopardise paid posts.

2.3 The voluntary role must allow for job satisfaction on the part of the volunteer, as well as meeting a need.

2.4 When a role for volunteers is identified and approved, a role description outlining the general tasks, required skills or qualities, and conditions of service (i.e., expenses, insurance) should be available in writing.

3. Recruitment and Selection

3.1 Nominated members of staff with the appropriate skills will be responsible for the selection of volunteers who would be working under their supervision.

3.2 Volunteers will be recruited from the widest possible base and selected according to their own individual ability to perform the required tasks.

3.3 A clear description (verbally and in writing) of the volunteer's role will be given.

3.4 A volunteer will be invited to commence working for a trial period prior to either side agreeing to a longer-term arrangement.

3.5 If unable to involve a particular volunteer, the staff responsible for the selection must make the reasons clear in a sensitive manner.

4. Support

4.1 An individual member of staff or board member should be nominated to provide support to individual volunteers. Clear lines of communication should be identified.

4.2 Staff and/or board members need to devote time to support volunteers, and if necessary be provided with training in relevant skills.

4.3 Where appropriate, additional methods of support will be used e.g., volunteer meetings, newsletters, or other tokens of appreciation.

4.4 Note should be taken of individual volunteers' needs for support.

5. Induction and Training

5.1 All volunteers will be given an induction to BS UK and its work.

5.2 Any training required to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles will be arranged and paid for by BS UK.

5.3 Volunteers should be encouraged to take additional training that will enhance their role within BS UK, to be paid for by BS UK.

5.4 Volunteers will be requested to read and indicate their understanding of the BS UK Safeguarding policy.

6. Role in Decision Making

6.1 Volunteers will be consulted on any major policy or operational changes in BS UK that will affect them.

6.2 Volunteers will be encouraged to express their opinions on the work of BS UK and to develop their role within BS UK.

6.3 Volunteers may be invited to attend and to speak at committee or board meetings.

7. Conditions

7.1 Volunteers will not be asked to work in conditions considered unsuitable for paid staff and will have the same provisions made regarding Health and Safety.

7.2 Insurance arrangements will be made for volunteers to cover them whilst undertaking duties on behalf of BS UK.

7.3 Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed including travel to and from the project, and the cost of childminding or other care arrangements up to an agreed amount. Guidelines on acceptable expenses and rates will be available from the Chief Executive Officer.

7.4 Where work is carried out over a mealtime, a subsistence allowance may be paid, or a meal provided. Refreshments etc. will be freely available to volunteers as for paid staff.

7.5 If a grievance arises for a volunteer which cannot satisfactorily be resolved by their supervisor, it should be brought to the Chief Executive Officer. If it cannot be resolved, it will be referred to the Trustee Board.

7.6 All volunteers should be made aware of the above rights and conditions without having to ask. Details of current rates for expenses, how to claim, and the nature and extent of insurance cover must be readily available.

7.7 Conditions such as rates for expenses, allowances, etc. will be reviewed periodically.

8. Equal Opportunities

8.1 BS UK relies on volunteer involvement to keep it relevant to the community it serves and so encourages involvement from all sections of the community.

8.2 BS UK operates a Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy. It should ensure that it does not unfairly exclude or discourage the involvement of potential volunteers because of: -

* class
* race, colour, nationality or ethnic background

* disability
* sex
* gender
* marital status
* age
* sexual orientation
* unrelated criminal record.

8.3 Each volunteer job specification should make clear the requirement that volunteers adhere to BS UK Diversity & Equal Opportunities Policy.

8.4 If a volunteer has a special need or disability that makes their involvement difficult, every effort will be made to involve them. An explanation will be given if this is not possible.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policy: -

- Diversity and Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding