



# The Hospital Broadcasting Service

*Scottish Charity SC009138*

## Information for Prospective Members

**Find out about the organisation and what  
being a volunteer involves**

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Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre Drumchapel Hospital Gartnavel General  
Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital Glasgow Royal Infirmary Royal Alexandra Hospital

## ***History of the Service***

The Service which was established in 1969 initially broadcast a full twelve months of pilot programmes to Glasgow's Foresthall Hospital (which was run by the City Council) to prove to local NHS management that a dedicated hospital radio service would be appreciated by their patients too.



In autumn the following year, the NHS matrons finally agreed that they would allow programmes on their wards. On Christmas Day 1970 the network service began as HBS - The Glasgow and West Hospital Broadcasting Service - initially reaching 8 of the city's hospitals from central studios on the top floor of an office block in Argyle Street.

During 1970 the team providing St Mirren match commentaries to Paisley's RAI hospital asked if they could be included in the new music and entertainment radio service. It was decided that rather than extending the Glasgow network to the South-West of the city, a separate Paisley organisation would be created.

(Hospital) Radio Paisley also started broadcasting in 1970, though it subsequently closed in 1993 with provision of programmes to the then relatively new RAH (Royal Alexandra Hospital) being taken over by HBS.

Membership numbers rose throughout the seventies and eighties with at times, over a hundred active volunteers. Additional hospital sites were also added to the network and studio facilities developed providing the service with a Training Studio, two On-Air Studios and a general purpose Recording Studio. However from the late eighties the owners of the rented accommodation failed to carry out maintenance, causing the condition of the premises to deteriorate significantly.

In February 1993 it was decided to move to more compact and more importantly watertight facilities. The transfer to Baltic Chambers was achieved without any break in programming during August 1993.

Through the nineties the Service re-established itself having lost a large number of members because of the atrocious working conditions towards the end of the time at Argyle Street. Again membership levels rose to a peak of around one hundred despite the cramped working conditions of the restricted space available in Baltic Chambers.

Many of today's well know broadcasters first got behind a microphone at HBS.

Ken Bruce (Radio 2), George Bowie (Clyde 1), Charles Nove (BBC TV), Paul Coia (BBC London), John Darroch (Smooth Radio), Ross King (Good Morning Britain) and Linda Sinclair (Clyde 1) all took their first steps in broadcasting in our studios.





Baltic Chambers

Since relocating, the reach of the Service has been extended with the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Drumchapel Hospital, Glasgow Homoeopathic Hospital, The Beatson and Glasgow Royal Infirmary added to the network. A number of hospitals have also disconnected over the years either through closure or distribution equipment failure. In summer 2016 programmes are being extended to Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

It's now more than twenty years since the studios relocated to Baltic Chambers, a move that was originally anticipated to be a temporary one. In this time both studio and production room equipment has been upgraded a number of times with the most recent major overhaul being at the start of 2014 when the broadcast studios and production office were all upgraded to the latest digital technology.



Studio 1



Studio 2

Throughout its history the Service has made a major contribution to the development of Scottish broadcasting, and has received official recognition of this from Radio Clyde.

# Roles Performed by HBS Volunteers

## Request Collector

The primary aim of HBS is to entertain patients, many of whom don't realise that their radio lets them hear their own dedicated radio service.

Every day we broadcast, our goal is to have teams out on the wards, chatting with patients and collecting requests, including recording some patients asking for their own song.

Most new members spend some time collecting requests so they can understand who it is that the Service is broadcasting to.

Hospital visitors are usually our first point of contact with patients so are trained to present a professional image and to understand how best to approach patients.

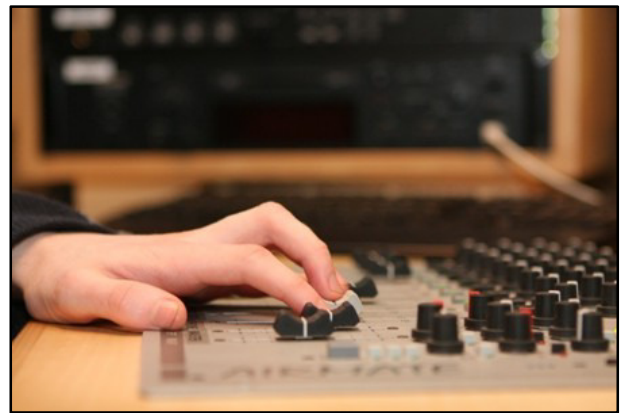


*Recording a patient introducing their own record request for the nightly 'Open Line' request show*

## Production Assistant

Help to keep the request programmes running smoothly, ensuring presenters are kept updated with information about requests that are either collected by our own ward visitors or have been sent in by patients or their friends/relatives.

Many are also trained in other programme production aspects including audio editing which allows them to create inserts for some of the shows or even complete programmes.



## Music Librarian

As most content heard in programmes is now in the form of digital audio files, we have a team of people who are trained on how to prepare songs, jingles, programme trails etc. for playing in the studios. A number of our volunteers do this as a supplementary task to their normal role.





## **Presenter**

Many potential members just can't wait to get into the studio, get on air, be discovered and then go off to Clyde 1 within the month. Sadly for them it just doesn't happen that way.

Presenters all have to pass an audition after a wide-ranging training process.

Presenters may find themselves introducing a specialist music programme, one of our nightly request shows or pre-recording programmes to be played out later on.

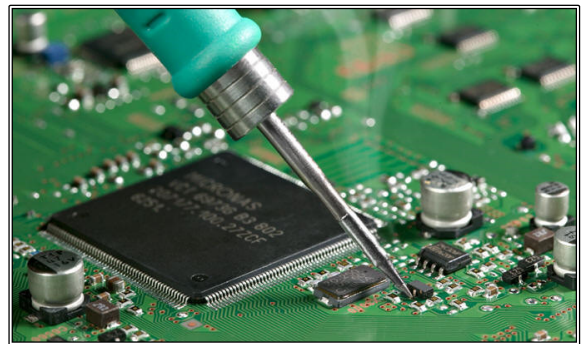


*Presenting a patient request show*

## **Audio Engineer**

The Service invests in specialist broadcasting equipment which typically last longer, but like everything it still needs maintenance and repair.

Due to the skilled nature of this work, we tend to look for those already experienced in this field.



## **Outside Broadcast Team**

An increasing number of outside live-links, Public Address tasks and live recording are being undertaken. As with every other aspect of the work that we do, we look for commitment from people who will find themselves in locations such as hospital wards, theatres, shopping centres and muddy fields!



## **Supervisor**

Each evening is under the control of a Supervisor who co-ordinates the team of volunteers.

The role they have is to ensure smooth running of the team, liaising with the Request Collectors, Production Assistants and Presenters. They work with new members to make sure they're trained to perform the duties we ask of them plus deal with a number of administrative tasks.



## **Fund Raiser**

The Service does not have any statutory income, so each year we have to raise every penny of running costs and any funds needed for investing in capital projects.

Although all active members have to assist with fund-raising in some way, this is often in the form of attending an organised event such as a bucket collection. The members of the Fund-Raising team are the ones who help to organise these events and look at other ways of generating the income needed every year.



## **Committee Member**

Most of the management team are recruited internally, ensuring that they have a good understanding of the work of the organisation.

However, there are times when specific skills and experience not available internally are needed, so we will occasionally invite people to directly join the management committee.



## **I.T. / WEB Support**

Keen to keep up with technology developments, we are looking to radically overhaul the way that we use IT and the internet. We want to make tasks easier for our members and also expand the options that patients and their relatives have for interacting with us.



## **Trainer**

As you can see from all the roles above, there is a lot of training needed to make sure that all our volunteers are able to carry out their duties.

If you've got the personality and skills to deliver training, we can teach you the processes that need to be consistently delivered, ensuring that the volunteer members have the right skills.



## Music Policy

If you choose to become a volunteer with The Hospital Broadcasting Service then you should be prepared for the type of music that our listeners want to hear. We aren't a chart station or even a station only playing to a specific musical taste.

HBS broadcasts the type of music its listeners want to hear and our request programmes reflect this with every sort of song and tune imaginable being asked for. The predominant style of music that we receive requests for is the sort that you might hear on BBC Radio Two. We have a strict music policy in place to make sure that the general programming reflects the music balance of requests received.

## What We Ask of Our Volunteers

Members of the Service are expected to participate on a regular basis in the day-to-day activities of the Service. Normally we ask for their involvement one evening per week. Initially this is likely to be with one of our Hospital Visiting Teams. We expect reliability and responsibility in the activities which volunteers undertake on our behalf.

In addition to this commitment, **members are required to participate in fund-raising activities or in other acceptable ways, contribute to the generation of income required to provide the Service with financial stability.** This commitment does not infer or incur any personal financial liability for our volunteers.

## Fund-Raising

The Hospital Broadcasting Service is a charity that receives no statutory income. To survive we depend entirely upon donations from the general public and regular appeals. This in turn crucially relies on our members taking part in fund-raising activities. The basic cost of running HBS is about £1,100 per month. This is largely fixed as most of this is needed for rent, electricity, phone bills, insurance etc.

Many different fund-raising activities are organised and members are encouraged to take part in these.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Is there a minimum age?**

*Yes, you need to be at least 16 to become a member*

## **How much time will I be expected to give to volunteering?**

*Normally we'd expect volunteers to be involved one day a week and for this to last around three hours. For people who have a specialist skill the days and times they would be involved could be more flexible.*

## **Will I need to have a Disclosure Check?**

*These will be introduced shortly. For now we require a minimum of two references from independent referees.*

## **How long till I get my own show?**

*Before going on-air with your own programme, you'll need to be trained in all aspects of presentation. This course which can take up to 3 months to complete isn't something you will go straight on to. You will be expected to show commitment to the Service in other areas beforehand.*

## **Does everyone pass the presenter training course?**

*No, sadly we can't guarantee this. People may find it difficult to use the equipment or don't have a suitable voice, but we will try and find your strengths and work on them.*

## **I've already presented shows elsewhere, so I don't need trained, correct?**

*You'll still need to prove you are familiar with the operation of the studio equipment and pass an audition.*

## **Is there a probation period?**

*Yes, for the first month you'll get a chance to see how the Service operates and have time to reach a decision on whether you want to become a volunteer member.*

## **What happens at the end of the probation period?**

*You need to make a decision on whether to sign-up as a volunteer member and agree to abide by the Constitution and Membership Agreement, or cease your involvement. The management team also have to decide if you should be offered the option of becoming a full member.*

## **Is there a cost to being a member?**

*Yes, we do charge a membership fee. Currently this is £5 per year*



**Why do I have to pay to volunteer?**

*The membership charge covers the administration costs of having someone as a volunteer. It also affirms your commitment to the organisation and allows us to clearly identify who is covered by our insurance policy. In the past the fee has been equivalent to £20, but was reduced in line with a falling need for postage and printing costs to communicate with members.*

**Why do I get for my membership fee?**

*You will be issued with a photo Identity badge with an expiry date equal to your annual membership renewal date. During your initial probation period a badge valid for one month is issued without a need to pay any membership fee. You are also covered by the insurance policy the Service holds and you will receive newsletters and other communication to keep you aware of the activities of the organisation.*

**Will I get travel expenses?**

*No, unfortunately not. The Service has never been in a financial position to pay these costs.*

**Do I have to help with Fund-Raising?**

*Since the late 1990s, the members have voted each year on whether all active members have to support the fund-raising effort. Every year since the decision has been that active members have to take part.*

**I feel uncomfortable visiting hospital wards – must I do this?**

*The vast majority of our volunteers will visit the wards to perform one or more aspects of their role, but we do understand that for some people this can be unsettling. If you have any concerns please discuss this when you first come in and we will see if we have any roles that you are skilled for which would have limited need to visit hospital wards.*

## **Do you still want to become a volunteer?**

If you think that you can help with the day to day running of Scotland's largest hospital radio service then do the following

- Visit the volunteering page on our website  
[www.hbs.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.hbs.org.uk/volunteer)
- Download a copy of 'Volunteer Enquiry Form' to your computer THEN update it with your details and email it to [studio@hbs.org.uk](mailto:studio@hbs.org.uk). *Note this form is an editable pdf document so you'll need to have access to Adobe Acrobat*

Often positions are only available on certain days so the more flexible your availability the sooner that you will be able to become involved.

Unfortunately it isn't always possible to take on everyone who approaches us as a prospective volunteer, although we try to accommodate as many people as possible