

If you would like to discuss volunteering, or have any questions please contact the Simulated Patient Coordinator on the number below.

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## *Simulated Patient Programme Guide*

### **What is a Simulated Patient?**

A Simulated Patient is someone who has been trained to portray characteristics of a real patient in order to provide an opportunity for medical students to learn about doctor- patient interactions. The idea of using simulated patients is not a new idea. They have been used extensively in America for over 40 years and elsewhere in the UK for a number of years. In Edinburgh, we have been using simulated patients for the last 16 years.

### **Why do we need Simulated Patients?**

Medical Education has gone through many changes in the last few years with the development of a new curriculum. These changes have altered the format of the education that students receive to one based on the acquisition of skills, competencies, attributes and attitudes, which equip them to function effectively as a doctor. For this to happen medical students need to learn how to interact with patients from an early stage. To meet these needs we require volunteers of both sexes and all age groups who will pretend to be patients so that students can gain experience in dealing with patients in a relaxed and safe environment.

### **What will I be expected to do?**

This depends a lot on you. Medical students are taught various skills such as Communication and Examination skills. Simulated Patients will be used to allow students to develop these skills by allowing the student to take a history, explain procedures, treatments and diseases. Students will also be able to practice counselling and educating patients. They will also be practicing examination skills and we also require volunteers who would consent to being examined. Simulated patients may also be called on to participate in exam situations.

### **Will I have training?**

We will provide you with all the necessary training that will allow you to be a simulated patient.

### **How often will I be required?**

We envisage that you will be needed only for a few hours every month. This depends on the number of volunteers we have and the teaching that the students require. During exam times we may require you for a whole day or more.

### **Will I be paid?**

The short answer to that is no, however we will reimburse your travelling expenses and we will also provide you with tea or coffee and lunch if your spending the whole day with us. Please remember to keep your receipts as we can only pay expenses on acknowledgment of these.

### **What sort of role would I be asked to do?**

An example of a simulated patient role-play would be:

You are 54 years old and an office worker. For the last 2 months you have been getting a discomfort or ache in both calves and in your buttocks when you are walking. The pain comes on when you are walking approximately 100 yards but more quickly if you hurry or going up stairs. Your feet often feel cold and you feel it difficult to get a heat in them even when the weather is warm.

You smoke 20 cigarettes per day. You have high blood pressure. Your health is otherwise good. You do not have problems with breathlessness, chest pain, ankle swelling or palpitations. You have no family history of illness or heart disease. You have no problem with any of your joints.