Potentially relevant studies identified for retrieval and titles screened (n = 9,342)

Studies excluded (n = 9,224)
  - Duplicates (n = 3,203)
  - Unrelated (n = 6,021)

Abstracts screened for more detailed evaluation (n = 118)

Studies excluded (n = 78)
  - No data on volunteers (n = 36)
  - Volunteer activity not specific to a mental health population (n = 19)
  - Volunteering was not in accordance with inclusion criteria (n = 5)
  - Definition of ‘volunteer’ not in accordance with inclusion criteria (n = 18)

Full texts screened for more detailed evaluation (n = 40)

Studies excluded (n = 29)
  - Inextricable literature (n = 5)
  - Volunteer activity not specific to a mental health population (n = 11)
  - Volunteering was not in accordance with inclusion criteria (n = 9)
  - The views of those apart from volunteers were sought (n = 4)

Additional papers included after references screened (n = 3)

Papers included in review (n = 14)