

Volunteer Role Description

Role Title:	Connect Volunteer
Hours:	Roles to meet volunteer availability – minimum 4-6 hours a week
Reports to:	Wellbeing Lead

About Chapter

Chapter is a registered charity based in Cheshire and is dedicated to improving the lives of people experiencing a mental ill-health. Working closely with individuals, we take a tailored person-centred approach to help our clients regain their confidence, harness their strengths, access training, and employment and move towards fulfilling their life goals. Services available to beneficiaries of Chapter include group activities, a 6 week RESET course and an Aspire service for people with more complex mental health needs.

Our volunteers are vital to the work we do at Chapter and contribute their wide range of strengths and skills. We are currently expanding our services and strengthening the support we offer to people with mental health conditions. This will involve setting up a listening/befriending service led by a well-trained group of Chapter volunteers, in 2021.

Why do we need you?

People who have mental health conditions can often feel lonely or isolated and can find it difficult to find someone to talk to who isn't a medical professional or family member, to open up about the way they are feeling.

Our Listening Volunteers will have telephone conversations with people with mild to moderate mental health conditions who want to talk. The volunteer's role will be primarily to listen, but then if suitable, encourage goal-oriented action and signpost to other services.

Volunteers will be well supported by staff at Chapter and by a robust and in-depth training programme.

The role aims to:

- Reduce loneliness and isolation by showing someone cares
- Give someone a chance to talk about their hopes and needs
- Offer emotional support by listening, asking questions and showing encouragement and support
- Offer encouragement for goal-oriented action
- Signpost to other Chapter and partner services and activities in the community

This role will be home-based although the ability to attend our offices in Cheshire from time to time would be advantageous. This is a voluntary position, however, reasonable out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.

Key Responsibilities

- Holding telephone support sessions with clients, listening to their experiences, goals and needs.
- Explaining to people what Chapter services offer
- Active listening with people and encouraging goal orientated action
- Signposting people to services in their local area and within Chapter
- Supporting clients to build confidence and build on their strengths

What we are looking for?

- Good listener and clear communicator
- Good at putting people at ease and building rapport
- Ability to show empathy and kindness
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Able to work independently with guidance and support
- Experience of a role involving listening and/or coaching helpful but not essential
- Open to learning and accessing regular training and development sessions
- Basic IT and organisational skills e.g. be able to use the internet
- Team player and willing to work under own initiative
- Ability to be able to ask for support
- Able to respect the choices and differences of others

What you'll gain

- Join a team of committed friendly people who want to make a difference, just like you
- Opportunity to make a real and significant difference to a local mental health charity
- In depth training programme including an induction, safeguarding, listening skills
- Regular support from our Volunteer Support Officer and wider Chapter team
- Increased skills, confidence and employability, building on your CV
- New social networks as you will be part of the Chapter team and related partners
- Increase in your own wellbeing and mental health
- Access to ongoing and refresher training
- Support to work from home including DSE and wellbeing checks.