

Volunteer Role Description

Role Title: Connect Volunteer

Hours: Flexible to suit volunteer availability – minimum 1-2 hours per week

Reports to: Volunteer Lead, Wellbeing Lead

About Chapter

Chapter is a registered charity based in Cheshire and is dedicated to improving the lives of people experiencing 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 various group activities, a six-week RESET course, Connect telephone support 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.

Why we need you

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

Our Connect listening-ear volunteers will have telephone conversations with people experiencing mild to moderate mental health conditions, who want to talk. The volunteer's role will be primarily to listen, but also to encourage goal-orientated action and/or signposting to other services.

Volunteers will be well supported by Chapter staff and complete a series of in-depth online training sessions to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed. The Connect volunteer role is home-based and 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 open questions and showing encouragement and support
- Offer encouragement for goal-orientated action
- Signpost to other Chapter and partner services and activities in the community

Key responsibilities

- Conducting telephone support sessions with clients, listening to their experiences, goals and needs
- Explaining to people what Chapter services can offer them
- Active listening with people and encouraging goal-orientated action
- Signposting people to services in their local area and within Chapter
- Supporting clients to building 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
- Ability to work independently with guidance and support
- Experience of a role involving listening and/or coaching (this would be helpful, but not essential)
- Open to learning and accessing regular training and development sessions
- Basic IT and organisational skills (must 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 will 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 Lead and the 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