

Volunteer Befriender

Role Description and Person Specification

Role description

The volunteer Project aims to support disabled and elderly people and prevent their isolation. The support is flexible and sometimes goes beyond a befriending relationship, following agreed boundaries. Examples of support might include: assisting with going out or shopping, gardening (specifically for Volunteer Gardeners), reading, helping to pay bills, recycling, filing, computers etc. The support doesn't include personal care, advocacy, mentoring or any service covered by a person's care package. A volunteer usually supports one person and meets him/her weekly or fortnightly. We always match volunteers with clients according to mutual preferences. Responsibilities within the role include:

- Attending induction training and individual/group supervision and support sessions
- Building a good relationship with the person with whom we've matched you (the service user), while maintaining boundaries in line with Choice in Hackney's Boundaries Policy
- Meeting with the service user as agreed on a regular basis, at least 3 times each month for 2-4 hours unless agreed differently
- Taking part in agreed activities with the service user
- Relating to the service user in a respectful way and adhering to the Choice in Hackney's equal opportunities policy
- Keeping in touch with the Volunteer Coordinator and informing of any issues/changes
- Maintaining confidentiality within Choice in Hackney's guidelines

Person specification (Qualities, knowledge and skills needed)

This is a list of the qualities, skills and knowledge we are looking for in a Volunteer Befriender. Please don't be put off by this list of requirements – some of the skills and knowledge needed for the role can be developed during the induction period.

- Good communication skills: listening, talking, writing
- Available to commit to the project for a minimum of 6 months (after induction)
- Reliability: able to keep commitments and appointments and where necessary, to communicate changes to plans with as much notice as possible

Person specification cont:

- Some knowledge of the barriers faced by disabled people
- Empathy and an interest in understanding the needs of the disabled person
- Ability to recognise own limitations and ask for help when needed

- Ability to understand and follow relevant policies and procedures e.g. confidentiality, health and safety, boundaries
- Open mindedness and willing to learn from the befriending relationship
- Ability to act on own initiative with the Project's guidelines
- A reasonable level of spoken English – enough to complete induction training and receive support from the Volunteer Co-ordinator

Volunteer benefits

- Satisfaction from providing practical help to someone who needs it
- Gaining awareness and better understanding of disability issues and the voluntary sector
- Improving communication, 'people' skills and other skills transferable to the workplace
- Joining a friendly and supportive volunteer community
- Flexible commitment (time, geographical area etc.)
- Regular support from the Volunteer Coordinator (by phone, in person and by email)
- References for future employers etc. where appropriate
- Out-of-pocket expenses reimbursed

Application

To apply:

Send your completed application form and monitoring form to:
volunteering@choiceinhackney.org or by post to the address at the top of this page.

Please feel free to call the Volunteer Coordinator on 020 7613 8134 if you have any questions or need help with completing the form.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check:

For all one-to-one roles, we carry out an enhanced DBS check. This is a legal requirement and helps us to protect the vulnerable adults to whom we have a duty of care. A criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent you from volunteering with Choice in Hackney so if you have any concerns about the disclosure, please feel free to discuss them in confidence with the Volunteer Coordinator.