

Peer Volunteer

Role Description

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| **Title of Opportunity:** | **Peer Telephone Support Volunteer** |
| **Location:** | **Crisis Safe Space (based at Bridgwater Town Hall)** |
| **Payment / Expenses:** | **Unpaid position, reasonable expenses (i.e. travel) will be paid** |

**About the role:**

As a Peer Telephone Support Volunteer, you will be working alongside a small team of Senior and Recovery Navigators within the Crisis Safe Space. The Crisis Safe Space was co-designed by local people with experience of mental health crisis who wanted more support available in the community rather than at hospital​. The service has been designed for people experiencing acute emotional distress who need immediate and short-term crisis prevention rather than intensive support from either an emergency or inpatient service​. As an alliance member of Open Mental Health, we work in close partnership with Mind, Somerset Foundation Trust and other OMH partners.

This role provides an authentic experience which enriches, supported listening plus a dynamic which is about moving forward within a recovery journey in a person-centred way. The role of the peer volunteer is to engage with service users to recognise the possibility of change and journeying for themselves, often using your own story as a positive example of change. Conversations with service users will be based on the premise that the service user is the expert in their own experience and are building their own recovery pathway.

You will be providing a specialised role within the Crisis Safe Space Team in Bridgwater. As part of the wider team, you will start to build a trusting relationship with individuals while they are accessing the Crisis Safe Space and your role will be to provide one to one telephone support to service users for up to 6 weeks. Telephone calls will involve providing emotional support and exploring activities that help promote wellbeing, self-confidence, and independence. You will be supporting people who are experiencing isolation as well as mental health issues and other support needs. Working alongside the Senior and Recovery Navigators, meaning you will have access to constant support and guidance.

**What will be involved?**

* Building a supportive, positive, person centred relationship with service users.
* Providing a safe sounding board, someone who will listen and not judge.
* Helping to improve wellbeing, self-confidence, and independence by exploring activities that promote these areas.
* Guiding service users through problem solving and supporting to identify solutions.
* Motivating and inspiring service users by using your own life experiences and by being a positive role model.
* Ensuring that professional boundaries are maintained to protect both yourself and the service user.
* Offering information, where necessary, to enable service users to make their own informed choices in their recovery journey.
* Maintaining appropriate documentation of the support given to service users.
* Role modelling and providing positive examples of hope and possibility.
* Debrief with the Senior Recovery Navigator after your shift to discuss any concerns or queries.
* Attending a free, 16-hour peer volunteer induction course over Zoom.

**Who should apply for this role?**

We are looking for volunteers who have:

* a passion for supporting others.
* an awareness of self-management resources and coping strategies.
* an ability to empathise with others and form trusting relationships.
* a non-judgemental approach and an ability to maintain appropriate boundaries.
* good listening and communication skills, reliability and good time keeping.
* an ability to take responsibility for your own self-care and willingness to utilise the support and supervision provided by the Senior Volunteer Coordinator.
* the desire and ability to share any personal experiences of mental health and recovery to support, empower and bring hope to others.

**Where and when will I volunteer?**

The Crisis Safe Space is an out of hours service open daily between the hours of 17:30pm and 23:30pm. We welcome applications to those who can commit to a minimum of 1 evening per week.

**What support will I get?**

You will be supported by the Senior Volunteer Coordinator who will provide regular check-ins and supervision sessions, as well as hold group supervision sessions with other volunteers. As well as ongoing support and guidance from the Crisis Safe Space team during your shift.

**Is a DBS check required for this role?**

Yes. You will be supported by the Senior Volunteer Coordinator to obtain a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check. Any disclosures will be discussed on a case-by-case basis and will not automatically stop you from being involved. Please note that DBS checks are free of charge.

**How do I apply and what happens next?**

For further information or to arrange an informal chat about Peer Volunteer opportunities, please contact Lydia Dorey on 07790 551133 or email Lydia.Dorey@second-step.co.uk

**Second Step is committed to Equal Opportunities and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community and from people who have personal experience of using mental health services.**