

Volunteer role description: Peer support facilitator

May 2020



Background

Our mission is to improve the quality of life of people affected by neurological problems by providing expert information, support and education. We also believe that people can use their own shared experiences to give and get support from each other. Our peer support services are led by people who have direct experience of living with neurological problems, and who are volunteers for the charity.

About the role

Peer support facilitators are responsible for managing our online “Neuro Social” groups. Neuro Social offers a safe and secure place for people to share experiences and support one another. The role of the facilitator is to support participants to get the most from the group. Expectations of the role include:

- Organise and set up sessions for the group, acting as Host for the events.
- Support participants to agree on ground rules, and to abide by these as well as general standards of acceptable behaviour.
- Ensure that everyone in the group has the opportunity to participate, without undue pressure to do so.
- Help to steer discussion and maintain a positive atmosphere, inviting a supportive response when difficult topics are introduced.
- Protect the safety of participants, escalating any concerns to staff at BSF where there is a safeguarding concern, or where there is an issue that cannot be managed within the group.
- Participate in a network of peer facilitators to share tips, experiences and support when needed.
- Support with the promotion of Neuro Social groups through social media or other networks as appropriate.
- To act as an Ambassador for the Brain and Spine Foundation and our mission.

As a volunteer for our charity, we will offer you an induction and handbook to support you in the facilitator role. You will work with a named member of our staff who will be responsible for ensuring that your volunteer experience is a positive one. And we will invite you to attend relevant training and update events that we will organise to enable you to carry out the role effectively.

You will need to abide by those Brain and Spine Foundation policies and procedures that cover volunteers as well as staff, including:

- Safeguarding
- Data Protection and Privacy

Time commitment

We would want Neuro Social groups to take place at least monthly, if not more regularly. Preparation for a meeting should not take more than a few hours.

Skills and experiences needed

The most important qualities you can bring to the role are a lived experience of neurological problems, a positive attitude, and a desire to support others by creating opportunities for sharing and social connections.

Otherwise, it's important that you are familiar with (or are willing to educate yourself about) videoconferencing tools like Zoom. An interest in learning and developing new skills would be a benefit.

This role involves working directly with people with neurological problems, and is subject to a criminal background check for safeguarding purposes.

Equal opportunities

The Brain & Spine Foundation has an equal opportunities policy that extends to volunteers. We recognise the positive benefits a diverse volunteer pool can bring to our charity and are committed to ensuring our recruitment and selection procedure reflects this. In engaging volunteers, the Foundation recognises the rights of volunteers to be free from discrimination and expect volunteers not to discriminate against other volunteers, staff, users and others associated with the Foundation.