

Volunteer Counsellor

Role Description

Role title: Volunteer Counsellor

Accountable to: Lead Counsellor

Reports to: Lead Counsellor

Days/Hours: As agreed with Lead Counsellor

Location: Blythe House Hospice, Chapel-en-le-Frith

Purpose of the Role: To provide professional counselling to clients at Blythe House Hospice. This is a role that requires a high level of commitment and reliability to ensure continuity of the service and there is an expectation that the case load will build to three clients per week.

Responsibilities:

- Provide specialist counselling to clients, who have been assessed by a staff counsellor
 - Refer clients to other services, agencies or organisations where this is more appropriate
 - Identify risks to vulnerable clients and report concerns to the Lead Counsellor
 - Work within a time-limited framework with each client, normally not more than 8 sessions
 - Maintain accurate, detailed and up-to-date client records
 - Co-facilitate support groups in accordance with recognised skills and experience, as required and appropriate
 - Maintain a high standard of counselling practice and work within the legal, statutory and ethical rules of the BACP
 - Maintain confidentiality at all times with the exception of the limits to confidentiality detailed in the client contract.
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- Attend in-house training events essential to the volunteer counsellor role
 - Use reflective practice and counselling supervision to examine client case load, effective practice, therapeutic work and implications, and personal well-being in this setting
 - Participate in ongoing supervision in line with BACP requirements to include regular sessions with an external supervisor and attendance at in-house group supervision sessions*
 - Attend regular review meetings with the Lead Counsellor and team meetings*
 - Ensure that all personal professional development is in line with BACP recommendations and requirements
 - Wear an identification badge and clothing appropriate for the role
 - Be aware of, understand and comply with all relevant Blythe House Hospice policies and procedures

**Team meetings followed by either group supervision or training take place each month on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday evenings at Blythe House*

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Qualifications, Qualities, Skills and Knowledge required:

- Diploma in Counselling, or be working towards this
- Membership of the BACP or other recognised body
- Understanding and awareness of a range of therapeutic interventions and techniques
- The ability to work empathically and sensitively with a range of complex and painful issues
- The skills to cope with the demands of emotionally vulnerable clients
- An understanding of, and ability to work with, conflict and potentially angry clients
- A calm, sensitive and flexible approach when interacting with clients
- Ability to maintain confidential and ethical boundaries at all times
- Effective communication skills both verbally and in writing at all levels with the ability to communicate information, risk and treatment to clients, colleagues and other healthcare professionals
- The confidence to participate effectively in team meetings and discussions and with other team members and professionals on an individual basis
- Ability to work effectively with other volunteers and staff within the counselling team
- Willingness to use clinical supervision, training opportunities and other forms of professional development to further personal development and the volunteer counsellor role

Preferred Skills

- Specialist training in loss and bereavement or palliative care interventions and techniques
- Experience of working in a bereavement or palliative care setting

Training:

- Induction and in-house training is available, some of which is mandatory. It is recommended that Counsellors keep up to date with the in-house education programme.
- All Counsellors are required to follow the principles and best practice detailed in the *Guidelines for Volunteer Counsellors** at all times.

Expenses:

Blythe House can, in certain circumstances, offer a reimbursement of some expenses that may be incurred through undertaking a volunteer role. However, please note that this does not include payment for external supervision for volunteers. Please contact the Volunteer & Support Services Manager for further details.

**In development*