

Volunteering with the Family Health Champions project

Project Summary

The Family Health Champions Project will support families whose children have been diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

It will use a volunteer led approach to offer families practical and emotional support, particularly at times of transition that can cause additional stress and anxiety – such as going through the process of getting a diagnosis or changing/starting school.

The project will support the whole family:

- Helping parents develop confidence and capacity to manage their child's condition and support their healthy development
- Addressing the needs of siblings who may be taking on a 'young carer' role
- Supporting the child who has been diagnosed with ASD/ADHD with practical and emotional support
- Supporting the whole family to access local activities that will help improve and maintain emotional and mental wellbeing – this could be family days out, physical exercise classes, volunteering opportunities or finding education or training classes.

How are volunteers involved?

The Project Co-ordinator and family members will identify their support needs and goals and will identify meaningful activities they might want to attend to help address these.

Volunteer Family Health Champions will then be matched with families to offer short-term (6-10 session) befriending support, practical and emotional help, benefits/financial advice, information and advocacy.

Champions will accompany individuals attending any activity as needed – as new things, particularly at a time of stress, can be a real challenge. Under the Supervision of the Co-ordinators, our volunteers will help to support the Service Users to access the activities and follow through on goals they have set; this could be offering practical and emotional support to help with their confidence, for example helping them to find the right bus route or making the journey with them

first time if they are nervous about attending. The Volunteer role within the Social Prescribing Service is varied and dynamic.

As Volunteer, what would you need to do?

1. Undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance check
2. Attend the Family Health Champion training: 1 day a week for 6 weeks
3. Attend regular 1:1 Supervision with a Project Coordinator as agreed
4. Support Service Users to address identified needs through supporting them to access local services and offering short term befriending, practical and emotional support or signposting as agreed by the project Coordinator
5. Keep records of work undertaken with service users in line with the Data Protection guidelines.
6. Attend occasional additional training as identified by the Co-ordinators
7. Participate with the independent evaluation of the service
8. Want to make a real difference for others and achieve your own potential!

What Skills are required for the role?

- Experience of ASD/ADHD
- Ability to communicate effectively, using verbal, written, and telephone communication methods
- Excellent listening skills helping to empower patients.
- Awareness of the need for professional boundaries when working with vulnerable people.
- Awareness of the issues affecting people with mental health issues and effects on day –to-day functioning.
- Awareness of the needs of people who are socially isolated, depressed, bereaved, and who may regard accessing new groups as intimidating.
- Daytime availability for at least 2 hours per week
- Commitment to diversity and equal opportunities at work.
- Able to work flexibly to meet the needs of patients and the organisation.
- A level of organisation that will ensure dependability in punctuality, record keeping, and regular feedback

If you are interested in volunteering with the service, please complete the application form and return it to a Project Coordinator, either by email or send it to:

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