

Helpforce Companion – role description

Purpose:

Many people who visit GPs require some extra help and support. This isn't always available through the GP and so this is where you come in. Are you ready to be a Helpforce Companion?

Helpforce Companions work together as a group to provide wrap-around support to patients at a local GP surgery. You will be working closely with GP staff and local Link Workers. Link Workers work with GP practices to better connect patients with services that are available in the community

You will be supported by a Helpforce Companions' coordinator employed by Urban Partnership Group (UPG) and your fellow group members to support local patients in a variety of ways. Perhaps the patient is lonely and needs directing to some local community groups. Perhaps they have lost confidence to attend appointments by themselves and need support reintegrating in the community. Maybe they just need a phone call to remind them of their next appointment.

This role is ideal for those who want variety and for those who want flexibility. You can give as much or as little time as you have.

We will cover any expenses you incur carrying out volunteering tasks.

This role should not affect your state benefits if you are claiming them. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the Supervisor (details below).

Duties (what you will be doing):

As a Helpforce Companion you can support patients in a wide variety of ways. All activities will be risk assessed and compliant with current COVID 19 restrictions. Activities might include:

- Going with those individuals to local clubs or voluntary groups – to give them confidence and moral support
- Attending GP or hospital appointments with them – to ensure they get there on time and to give them the confidence to attend
- Regaining confidence on public transport and reintegrating back to community
- Calling people to remind them of their appointments
- Taking the bus or train with them to ensure they make it to their appointments
- Doing some shopping with them to ensure that they have enough food in the house
- Visiting them at home to play games or have a chat over a cup of tea
- Working in cooperation with the other Helpforce Companions to ensure that the support you provide is coordinated and puts the patients first
- Reporting to the Helpforce Coordinator, including any concerns or issues

Boundaries (what you won't be doing):

- No clinical care of patients, including:
- No patient feeding
- No personal care (e.g. toileting or getting patients changed)
- No cleaning
- No lifting of heavy equipment

- No handling of money
- No exchanging your personal contact details with the person you are helping. If they do need to get in contact about this volunteering scheme, please ask them to contact the Supervisor.

Time commitment:

This role is very flexible and depends on your availability. We do ask for a commitment of around at least 4 hours per month for at least six months. This may be taken up with one visit to the hospital or several phone calls depending on your involvement.

Location: TBC

For face-to-face support this may vary according to the task required but will be local to you.

Requirements of the role:

Age: You must be 18 years or older to volunteer in this role.

As a volunteer you will embody the following values:

- Putting patients first
- Responsive to, and supportive of, patients and staff
- Open, welcoming, and honest
- Unfailingly kind, treating everyone with respect, compassion and dignity
- Determined to develop your skills and continuously improve the quality of care

Skills and other requirements:

- You must be self-motivated; with an ability to think on your feet and work independently
- You must be punctual and dependable
- You must have a professional and friendly demeanour
- You must be flexible and eager to learn
- Knowledge of another language is valued but not essential

Pre-placement checks and training:

- You must have an enhanced criminal record check (DBS) for this role. If you do not have one already, we will organise and pay for one.
- This role requires that you have certain immunisations, and you will need to complete a health declaration form – we will discuss this with you when you apply.
- You will need to comply with UPG's data protection policies
- You will receive a core volunteering induction on key policies, including: Covid-19 safety guidelines, safeguarding, data protection.
- You will be able to access relevant training and workshops, such as dementia awareness and Mental Health First Aid.
- Initial training will also cover an overview of key local voluntary and community organisations to help with signposting, when needed.

Supervisor:

The Helpforce Coordinator will be responsible and available to support you in your day-to-day volunteering. You can schedule your shifts with them, discuss any issues, and let them know if you are unable to attend on a particular shift.

Contact details:

Barbara Shelton

Addison Community Champions - Project Manager



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Personal development:

You will gain experience of primary healthcare settings and a variety of social and community services. You will also develop strong team working and communication skills as you work with a close-knit group to support a diverse range of patients.

There will be other advantages to volunteering as a HelpForce Companion such as:

- Reference letter
- Support to enhance your CV with the skills required for similar paid posts related to this volunteering opportunity
- Support to access free relevant accredited training and/or workshops.