



Linked Minds

Befrienders role

Role Title: Volunteer Befriender

Hours: 1-2 hour per week

Responsible to: Susan, Linked Minds Befriending Coordinator

Role Purpose: Volunteer befrienders offer a unique service to their clients. They are often the only person in a client's life that is with them because they want to be, rather than because they are paid to be. Each of our volunteers is matched to only 1 client. We ask them to build a relationship with their client based on trust, honesty and hope. Befrienders are able to help their clients gain confidence in who they are and are able to help them explore what they would like to do, whether that is; getting a job, joining a club, or meeting other people. Our service is time limited to a year and we would hope that by the end of the year our clients feel better about themselves & are linked in to their community. We hope to have helped them feel valued, resilient, empowered and equipped for their journeys in recovery.

Key Responsibilities:

- Befrienders will meet up with clients for 1-2 hours each week for a year.
- Befrienders will provide companionship and build an open, trusting connection with clients.
- Befrienders will bring hope.
- Befrienders will offer emotional support.
- Befrienders will help clients gain a better understanding of their mental health, of their diagnosis and of how these affect their lives.
- Befrienders will work with clients to think about how they would like life to be and plan how to get there.

- Befrienders will work alongside clients to help them develop their social skills and confidence.
- Befrienders will work alongside clients to help them develop ideas of how to alleviate their loneliness.
- Befrienders will encourage people to pick up old interests and discover new ones by engaging with activities in their local and wider communities.
- Befrienders will help people to find and access things in their local and wider communities.
- Befrienders will empower clients to make positive choices about what they want to do.
- Befrienders will provide written feedback to the project coordinator monthly and raise any concerns or queries with project coordinator as soon as they occur.

... and to stand with clients on their journeys to recovery

Personal Qualities:

- To be passionate about supporting individuals affected by mental health problems to achieve life-changing goals.
- To be inspiring, creative and motivational in your support.
- To be non-judgemental, genuine and empathic.
- To see beyond the diagnosis to the person.
- To help clients feel valued and valid.
- To enable clients to have hope in the future.
- To be a good listener.

Prospective volunteers will need to:

- provide 2 character references
- Complete an enhanced DBS check (cost covered by Linked Minds)
- Attend a 5 1/2 hour induction training session, followed by a 3 hours mental health and wellbeing training session
- Attend 4 volunteer meeting annually (optional)
- Attend 6 monthly reviews with the coordinator

Additional criteria:

We welcome applications from people with lived experience, many of our volunteers will have this and helping others can be a great part of someone's own recovery journey, as well as giving them a unique insight & empathy with others.

If someone applying to be a befriender is still under the care of psychiatric services, we would ask them to disclose this at the application stage either on the application form or in person to one of the coordinators.

The coordinators would seek a reference from a professional who's been involved in the applicants care, asking about their suitability and readiness for the role of befriender. This would help us to ensure the safety and support of both the befriender and anyone they are matched with.

Additionally we would speak to applicants about how we could best support them in their befriending role, including identifying triggers and signs of their mental ill-health.

C.H.I.M.E.

The Linked Minds Befriending Service is a recovery based service and uses **CHIME** as proposed by the Scottish Recovery Network, as its model for intervention.

C = stands for Connections, the connection between the befriender and the befriended is key to the success of the match and sits at the centre of what we do. Each befriender is only matched with 1 befriended. Their aim is to build a relationship based on honesty, trust & mutuality, where the befriended feels, listened to, respected & valued.

H = stands for Hope, through their strong connection the befriender is able to help instil Hope. Hope and optimism are widely acknowledged as being key to recovery

I = stands for Identity. Many people feel they lose their identity following a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Befriending can help a person regain a positive sense of themselves and can help them to find an identity incorporating all of the elements that go to make them who they are.

M = stands for Meaning. We all find meaning and purpose in different things, some people find it in work or learning, others being active in the communities, and others in helping other people. Befrienders can help their befriendeds explore & find what is meaningful to them.

E = stands for Empowerment. In all we do we hope to empower befriendeds to take control of their own lives. Our matches last for a year and in that time we will work with befriendeds to identify their strengths and take personal responsibility for their choices.