Gloucestershire Carers Hub

Carer Aware

PeoplePlus
skills for growth

Volunteer Handbook



Gloucestershire County Council

One Gloucestershire
Transforming Care, Transforming Communities

NHS Gloucestershire

Welcome

Dear Volunteer,

I am pleased to issue you with a volunteer handbook and extend a very warm welcome to you. I hope that you find volunteering with the Gloucestershire Carers Hub rewarding and enjoyable.

Volunteers play an important role within our organisation, working in a variety of posts. The purpose of this handbook is to give you guidance and answer some of the questions you may have about volunteering with us.

If you require any further information that is not included in this handbook, please always ask your Volunteer Coordinator.

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Gloucestershire Carers Hub, we hope you enjoy your time with us.

Yours sincerely,

Zoe Warner
Volunteer Coordinator



Gloucestershire Carers Hub (GCH) is a service commissioned by Gloucestershire County Council and NHS Gloucestershire. Gloucestershire Carers Hub help and support thousands of unpaid Carers from Gloucestershire every year, to improve their quality of life. Thank you for volunteering with Gloucestershire Carers Hub. We know that you will be making a huge difference to your local Carers community and want you to enjoy your time as a volunteer with us. This handbook is designed to give you some basic information about the organisation and volunteering.

We know that volunteering is good for people's wellbeing, to build links in the community, gain new skills and build confidence.

Gloucestershire Carers Hub appreciate your commitment of time and energy, which you are offering to benefit others.

Volunteer Application Form

As a new volunteer, you will need to complete an Application Form, references will be required and the reference check will be carried out by Experian. Experian also carry out DBS checks, which we require all of our volunteers to have. All enrolment information is confidential and will be used only for Gloucestershire Carers Hub.

Volunteer Induction

As part of your induction all volunteers will need to complete some training, this training gives you some of the knowledge you need to carry out your role effectively. Volunteers will then have bespoke training specific to their role to make sure they can carry it out effectively and safely. This can include online training, reading and shadowing a member of staff or a volunteer. Please let us know how you learn best and we will do our best to deliver as much training as possible in this way.



Our volunteers are a great asset and provide an invaluable service supporting unpaid Carers in Gloucestershire

Getting Started

What would you like to do?

There are a range of roles available at Gloucestershire Carers Hub, you may already have an idea about what you would like to do, there may also be something you would like to do that you haven't thought about.



Volunteering Opportunities

Reading Panel - Our reading panel give feedback on new and revised Carer information. They look at relevance and content to make sure all the information is correct, clear and concise. This can be individually or as a reading group. We welcome all feedback as this helps us provide a meaningful service and is an integral part of our quality process.

Content Writer - Would you like to write content? We are looking for a keen Content Writer to produce articles and /or input into our newsletter and blog.

IT Support - Are you a whizz on the laptop? Could you provide 1-2-1 support or maybe run a group to teach IT skills? Then this may be the volunteer role for you. We would like all our Carers to be competent in IT so they are able to send and receive emails, access online banking, access online medical appointments, be able to surf the web to find out information and stay connected with friends and family. In addition to IT support we are looking for volunteers who are able to be online social media moderators.

IT Champion - On the last Friday of each month a Technology forum is held, where Carers can bring along their technology problems or develop their technology skills. We are looking for someone with some IT knowledge and experience to support, offer advice and suggestions.

Chatbot - Do you have Carers questions you wished you could have accessed quick information or answers for? We would love volunteers to help develop our chatbot. To develop questions and answers and also check the information that the Bot is giving is current and correct.

Telephone Befriending - As a telephone befriender you will help to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. If you have good listening skills, are able to provide non-judgemental support, can maintain confidentiality, can build a rapport with people and have patience and empathy this could be the volunteering role for you. You will need to reliable and punctual and be able to keep a record of calls made.

Awareness Raiser - It takes an average of two years for people with unpaid caring roles to recognise themselves as Carers. (Carers UK). By volunteering to become an Awareness Raiser you can help us to help unpaid Carers in Gloucestershire recognise their role sooner. You can become an online Awareness Raiser by sharing information and updates on your social media. We also need Awareness Raisers to speak to professionals such as GP practices and other organisations about unpaid Carers and make them aware of Gloucestershire Carers Hub.

Events support - Can you help us with events?

We need volunteers to help with events in various roles.

Could you help staff set up?

Maybe you are excellent at making hot drinks.

Are you able to support people who don't feel confident about coming along by making them feel welcome.

Could you run an event such as a coffee morning?

We are looking for volunteers to help with all aspects of our events.

Outdoor Events - We are looking for volunteers who enjoy the outdoors, we run events like the Carers picnic. Could you facilitate a picnic or walk, if so this could be the role for you.

Maybe you love walking and could lead a walk for a group.

Do you have other skills that you could volunteer to make into an outdoors event for Carers?

Carer Cafés - These are held monthly (some cafes meet more frequently) in various locations around Gloucestershire. The cafes are usually run for an hour providing a space where Carers can meet other Carers and gain peer-to-peer support.

We are looking for volunteers who can meet and greet Carers and stay in contact with the team at Gloucestershire Carers Hub.

Carer Champions at work - We are looking for Carers champions in all organisations around Gloucestershire. We are looking volunteers who could coordinate activities with Carers in their work place, such as a coffee break together and other activities.

As well as champion Carers at work we would love to hear ways you could do this.

Share a Hobby - We love making sure our unpaid Carers are able to learn fun new skills and take part in activities. These could be online or face to face, 1-2-1 or in groups. Maybe you are an expert in a hobby or craft that you would like to share and teach others to do.

Teaching and Learning - Do you have a professional skill you could volunteer to teach, such as a Financial Advisor, could you volunteer to come and speak to a group of Carers about managing their money, maybe you are a Health and Wellbeing Practitioner and could come and share your knowledge with unpaid Carers to help them improve their health and wellbeing. If you have a professional qualification you would like to share as a Volunteer please speak to us.

Peer to Peer Support - Could you volunteer to provide phone cover for a short amount of time out of hours? We are looking for volunteers who could take calls from Carers who need someone to talk to out of hours this would be for 2-3 hours on a Saturday and Sunday and a couple of hours each evening even if you can cover one or part of the shifts. This role is fully remote. As with all our roles full training will be given.

If you have an idea for a volunteer role that has not been included please let us know, we are always open to new ideas and opportunities that will help unpaid Carers feel visible, valued and supported.

Our Commitment to you

We want everyone at Gloucestershire Carers Hub to gain satisfaction from their role in an environment that is supportive, friendly and inclusive. The following sets out the principles of what you can expect from volunteering with Gloucestershire Carers Hub and what Gloucestershire Carers Hub expects from you.

Responsibilities

Gloucestershire Carers Hub will:

- Provide an introduction to Gloucestershire Carers Hub and your role.
- Ensure you have a clear understanding and feel confident to deliver what you are volunteering to do.
- Give you continuing guidance and support in your role.
- Educate you so you have a wider understanding of the needs of Carers
- Reimburse your travel and out of pocket expenses.
- Ensure you receive regular support sessions and feedback to help you deliver your role.
- Recognise effort, loyalty and dedication.
- Always treat you with respect.
- Listen to your feedback and promote two way communication.
- Ensure you know where to turn to if you have a complaint.
- Promote your safety, health and wellbeing.
- Implement policies and procedures that protect you e.g. safeguarding, equal opportunities.

Expectations

Volunteers will:

- Be respectful.
- Be a good representative of Gloucestershire Carers Hub.
- Be friendly to all people: familiar faces, newcomers and other volunteers and staff.
- Act in accordance with company policies and procedures.
- Promote our organisation values.
- Work with us to find a volunteer opportunity that fits your interest and skills.
- Be punctual to anything you are volunteering for.
- Let us know in advance if you are unable to turn up to a volunteer opportunity you have committed to. (We know and understand emergencies happen, the more notice we have for other life that may stop you turning up the more opportunity we have to fill the gap.) We have a duty of care if you don't turn up and haven't let us know we will use the emergency number to check you are well.
- Ask if you don't understand .
- Feedback information to the staff at Gloucestershire carers Hub.
- Keep confidential and sensitive information from both Carers and the organisation safe in compliance with GPDR.
- Enjoy yourself, this is very important to us we want you to enjoy yourself if you aren't please speak to the Volunteer Coordinator.



The Essentials

When volunteering with us you will need to be aware of our policies and procedures which are in place to make sure that everyone is protected, treated fairly and in line with legislation. You will be given the policy and procedures to read through. Please keep them in a safe place to refer back to. If you have any questions about the policies and procedures then please get in touch



Your Expenses

Gloucestershire Carers Hub believes you should never be out of pocket through volunteering. We will reimburse all reasonable expenses supported by receipts and agreed in advance with the Volunteer Coordinator. Expenses should be submitted to your Volunteer Coordinator within a month of you paying out.

Your Commitment

Gloucestershire Carers Hub roles are designed to be as flexible as possible to fit in with both the Carers and the volunteers who often have other commitments. Please let us know if your role isn't fitting in with your other commitments and if we can adapt to meet your needs then we will. Please try to give as much notice as possible if you will not be able to attend something you have committed to do. We understand things happen and sometimes notice is not able to happen. We will check on you to make sure you are OK if we don't hear from you.

Confidentiality

You may have access to confidential information relating to Carers, it may be their personal details or something they share with you. We expect you to keep this information confidential and to share only with the immediate staff team. There are sometimes reasons the team may need to break confidentiality if there is a safeguarding issue, your Volunteer Coordinator will oversee this for you supported by their line manager.

Your Privacy

We will keep all your information safe inline with GPDR legislation. Gloucestershire Carers Hub sometimes take photographs which we may use in public domains for example recruitment of volunteers. If you would prefer we don't use your image there will be a section on the permission slip to express this. Please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you have any questions about this.

Your Achievements

We like to recognise our volunteers' achievements and shout out about the great work done. We also would like feedback from you and from time to time we will send out questionnaires to collect feedback please be honest. We want to hear the good and the bad, so that we use the information to grow and develop. If you think there is something we can be doing better please let us know as soon as you would like to, you don't need to wait until a questionnaire comes out.

Leaving

We understand life changes as does a volunteer's ability to volunteer. Please speak to us if you would like to try a new role or time commitment. If you do decide to leave or put your volunteering on hold just let us know. You are under no obligation to serve a notice although this is helpful if you can. We will be sad you are leaving but thankful for the time you volunteered and the positive impact you would have made.

Resolving Concerns

If you ever have a problem or concern about any aspect of your volunteering role please speak to your Volunteer Coordinator. If you would prefer not to speak to the Volunteer Coordinator you can always speak to their line manager. We take the concerns of our volunteers very seriously and will do all we can to resolve them.



In the Media

Media comes in all shapes and forms from newspapers to online platforms. We would never expect a volunteer to be our spokesperson. No comments should ever be given to media as a Gloucestershire Carers Hub representative unless you have been asked to by the Volunteer Coordinator. If you do receive any requests by the media please tell them you are not able to comment and give them the contact email of the Volunteer Coordinator.

Health & Safety

Gloucestershire Carers Hub have all the right insurances in place to cover you while you are volunteering. We are committed to making sure your wellbeing and safety are looked after while you are volunteering with us. We expect all our volunteers to take reasonable steps to ensure that health and safety policies are implemented to keep everyone else safe. Health and safety is everyone's responsibility.

Your role shouldn't involve any moving and lifting but if it does please make sure you have received relevant training, speak to your Volunteer Coordinator to arrange this.

Representing Us

While you are volunteering for us you are also representing us. You are responsible for representing a positive image for us and sharing our values. If you are ever unsure what this means please have a discussion with your Volunteer Coordinator. If you have been given an official name badge please make sure you wear it where it is visible at any events where there are Carers and/or other members of the public. If someone asks you something and you don't know-tell them you don't know, you can always get back to them with the required information once you have found out. We don't tell anyone what to wear but suitable smart casual is a good guide, adapted for events for example clothing, sturdy footwear for a walk and often in the UK a coat.

Thank you, the time and energy you give volunteering at Gloucestershire Carers Hub means a lot to us. If you have any questions, feedback or anything else relating to your volunteering role please speak to your Volunteer Coordinator.



If you have any feedback about this handbook please email:

Gloscarershubvolunteering@peopleplus.co.uk