

Home from Hospital Volunteer Newcastle upon Tyne

Purpose of the Role:

As a Home from Hospital volunteer, you will provide social, emotional, and practical support to a patient being discharged from hospital.

You will support people to improve their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel less socially isolated, remain connected, feel valued and more confident at what can be a very difficult time for people.

Responsibilities:

As a Home from Hospital Volunteer, you will be responsible for:

- Meeting a patient before they are discharged from hospital to build rapport (if time permits).
- Supporting a patient to physically return home from hospital. This could include accompanying the patient on public transport, sharing a taxi, or driving using your car (optional).
- Staying with the patient for 1-2 hours immediately after discharge from hospital, ensuring they are settled in at home, have adequate heating, lighting, food, and drinks to last a few days.
- Supporting the patient with a small food shop for essential food items, topping up gas/electricity cards if on a pre-payment meter or going to the shop on the patient's behalf. The patient will pay for items themselves; this may include you handling cash and returning with change and a receipt.
- Accompanying the patient to an ATM on the way home from the hospital – if required. Please note, you will never be asked to go to an ATM alone on a patient's behalf with their bank card and PIN number.
- Supporting the patient to collect their pension and/or any prescriptions, as required.
- Supporting the patient to contact family or friends, as required.
- Completing a general check of the patient's home environment, e.g. – checking to see if the bins need emptying or if their out-of-date food in the fridge.
- Seeking further assistance if you spot any obvious fire or tip hazards in the patient's home environment.
- Completing a follow up wellbeing check (telephone call or face to face) on Day 2 and Day 5 following the patients discharge from hospital.
- Signposting the patient to other sources of support, including to the existing Chain Reaction service, local community activities such as a local lunch/coffee club and other recreational groups designed to improve general mental health and wellbeing.

You will **not** be asked to:

- Complete tasks which are carried out by a Home Care Assistant or Support Worker. This includes any sort of personal care or supporting with medication.
- Sign up for all of the tasks described in this role description. We appreciate you may feel more comfortable completing some tasks rather than others. We're flexible!
- Be "on call" for any patients, or carryout your volunteering activities at short notice.
- Cover the costs of any goods or services (e.g. shopping costs, public transport costs or taxi costs). You will be re-imbursed any volunteer expenses such as the cost of traveling on public transport with a patient or your car mileage. Patients will cover the cost of their own taxi, shopping etc.

As a Home from Hospital volunteer, you must have:

- Good timekeeping skills and a flexibility in being available at mutually agreed times.
- Be able to travel independently across Newcastle.
- Access to a telephone and be comfortable making telephone calls from the comfort of your own home.
- Good conversational and listening skills and the ability to know when its appropriate/not appropriate to talk.
- A professional attitude and ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Accurate record keeping skills, keeping a weekly log of the support you provide to your clients.

What you can expect from us:

- Induction and ongoing training and support.
- Regular volunteer/peer support network meetings.
- A chance to make a difference to the lives of people who may otherwise be isolated.

How much time do I need to give to this role?

As a Home from Hospital volunteer your level of commitment can be agreed based on your availability, but we do ask for a minimum of 3 to 4 hours per week.

How to apply:

To request an application form, please contact either Sandra Donkin (sandra.donkin@mentalhealthconcern.org or 07912 295873) or Michelle Ree (michelle.ree@mentalhealthconcern.org or 0785 1256936).

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS Disclosure, which we will cover the cost of.