



Volunteer role: **Ward Befriender Volunteer**

Based at: Meadowfield Hospital Worthing

Days/times: To be negotiated

Volunteer Supervisor: James Peters and Louise Dunn

Main Purpose: To provide companionship to patients on the ward and help them to take part in appropriate social and/or recreational activities. The involvement aims to help people to feel less isolated and feel part of an enjoyable social relationship.

Background:

Meadowfield hospital has three wards;

- Larch ward - for older people with mental illnesses
- Rowan Ward - acute admissions ward
- Maple Ward – acute admissions ward

All of these wards admit people over eighteen to sixty five years in general. Patients are admitted to hospital for hospital care and/or treatment and it can either be voluntary or they are detained under the Mental Health Act.

Patients are admitted either for assessment and treatment (Section two) or for treatment (Section three). Mental illness include Schizophrenia, Bi Polar Affective Disorder, Depression, Schizoaffective, Personality disorder, adjustment disorder, generalised anxiety and dual diagnosis which is street illegal drug use linked with the onset of mental illness. There are many more different illnesses and disorders.

Meadowfield staff work alongside the patients in the recovery processes. We offer psychology, Occupational therapy, nursing care, medical care, groups and activities which are well noted for therapeutic engagement with the patients which really aids their recovery.

Volunteer Befrienders offer social contact to people with mental health conditions on the ward.

As the ward is a busy environment, it is essential that volunteers are able to take a proactive approach to the role, whilst always being guided by their supervisor and wishes of the patients.

Duties:

1. To check with your supervisor about priorities and any issues the volunteer should be briefed about.
2. To be able to encourage participation
3. To have good communicate skills and be able to encourage residents
4. To inform staff about activities undertaken with patients and any significant changes in mood or behaviour.
5. To report and share any concerns/feedback from patients about risks to themselves or others.
6. To undergo training and supervision as required.
7. Asking patients to give feedback on their experience of the ward by completing a hand-held survey device.

Person Specification

Ward Befriender Volunteer – Meadowfield Hospital

Essential

- Aged 18 or over
- Able to commit reliably to at least 1 hour a week for a minimum of six months
- A commitment to improve the patient's experience of their time in hospital
- Well presented, with a friendly and approachable manner and good verbal communication skills
- An ability to relate well to people on a one to one basis and be sympathetic to others' situations
- An ability to be patient and calm even in the face of difficult situations
- An ability to act on own initiative within the role description
- An ability to start conversations/activities without prompting
- A willingness to be flexible and to follow the guidance of a placement supervisor
- A commitment to the trust's equal opportunities and diversity policies
- A willingness to abide by the Sussex Partnership volunteer guidelines, including rules on confidentiality, health and safety, safeguarding adults and children and manual handling
- To be willing to receive training any areas as appropriate to the volunteer role