

The MS Support Volunteer training is a four day course covering the things you need to know and do in your role.

Each day you'll have the opportunity to share ideas with and learn from other volunteers. The course is designed to be relaxed, interesting and interactive.

Day 1 – Choice and Control

“The last thing you should ever lose is your right to make a decision”

We will cover:

- How the MS Society works in the UK
- Choice and control
- Barriers
- Skills and qualities
- Working safely
- Introduction to safeguarding
- Working as a team

The day aims to:

- Provide an overview of the MS Society
- Raise awareness of barriers people affected by MS may face
- Highlight the importance of giving people seeking support choice and control
- Explore good practice in supporting people as a team
- Identify skills and qualities essential to the role
- Identify key sources of support and information available to carry out the role
- Raise awareness of the local community and the reach and relevance of our work

By the end of the day you will be able to:

- Explain what the MS Society does
- Describe barriers people affected by MS may face
- Explain why giving choice and control to people seeking support is crucial to the role
- Describe good practice in supporting people as a team
- Describe the skills and qualities essential to the role
- Access key sources of support and information available to carry out the role
- Think about ways to reach out to the local community to meet the support needs of all people affected by MS

Day 2 – Emotional Support

“Ever just wanted to get something off your chest?”

We will cover:

- Who is affected by MS
- Active listening
- Asking the right questions
- Best practice around telephone support
- Dealing with difficult calls

The day aims to:

- Define the boundaries and principles of offering emotional support to people affected by MS
- Promote understanding of the common emotional responses to MS and common questions people may have
- Raise awareness of the impact a diagnosis can have upon a wide circle of people
- Explain and give the opportunity to practice core skills needed to actively listen

By the end of the day you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of maintaining boundaries with people affected by MS seeking emotional support
- Recognise common emotional responses to MS and common questions
- Recognise the impact a diagnosis can have upon a wide circle of people
- Demonstrate the core skills needed to actively listen

Day 3 – Information Matters

“Ever googled MS?”

We will cover:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding
- Email support
- The Information Team
- What information to give out when
- Local information

This day aims to:

- Define the support volunteer role in relation to safeguarding
- Highlight the importance of maintaining confidentiality when supporting people affected by MS
- Define the importance of empowering people by providing appropriate and quality information and signposting
- Promote the information resources available from the MS Society
- Explore signposting to information and services available both locally and nationally
- Identify the skills needed to meet people’s information needs

By the end of the day you will be able to:

- Explain the support volunteer role in relation to safeguarding
- Explain the importance of maintaining confidentiality when supporting people affected by MS
- Explain the importance of empowering people affected by MS by providing appropriate and quality information and signposting
- Access the information resources available from the MS Society
- Appropriately signpost people with MS to sources of support and information available both locally and nationally
- Demonstrate the skills needed to meet people’s information needs

Day 4 – Money Matters

“Money can’t buy happiness, but it can certainly help!”

We will cover:

- Employment and benefits
- Best practice around giving grants
- The Grants Team
- The application form
- Consolidation

The day aims to:

- Raise awareness of the financial issues people affected by MS may face
- Highlight information and services available in supporting people who have concerns around money, work and benefits
- Explore good practice around awarding grants
- Explain the grant application form
- Highlight the role of the Grants Team in supporting volunteers giving grants

By the end of the day you will be able to:

- Describe some of the financial issues people affected by MS may face
- Identify information and services to signpost people to who are seeking support around money, work and benefits
- Describe good practice around awarding grants
- Support people seeking grants from the MS Society to fill out the application form
- Describe the role of the Grants Team in supporting volunteers giving grants