



# Befriending Volunteer Role Description

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## Why we need you

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a condition which affects over 130,000 people across the UK. MS is unpredictable and different for everyone, and can cause problems with how we walk, move, see, think, and feel. Issues with mobility, losing employment, stigma around disability, and a lack of understanding from loved ones can all contribute to social isolation. Our research shows that three in five people with MS feel lonely because of their condition.

As an MS Befriending Volunteer, you will support people affected by MS who are experiencing loneliness and social isolation with weekly friendly phone calls.

In this role, you will build a relationship with a person affected by MS, helping to improve their emotional wellbeing and to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Most importantly, you will help to make sure no one has to face MS alone.

## What the role involves

Activities may vary depending on the project, but will most likely include:

- Offering **support** in a non-judgemental and non-directive way to people affected by MS.
- Providing **one to one weekly phone call(s)** to a person affected by MS and creating an enjoyable and **supportive relationship**.
- **Signpost** to the MS Society Helpline and equivalent services in the nations for information provision and practical support.
- **Data recording** of call sessions on our database in line with our data protection policy.
- Attending regular video-conference **volunteer support groups** as debrief and catch up sessions with fellow volunteers.
- Developing an awareness of social and medical issues that may affect people with MS.
- Keeping up to date with MS news and our work across the UK.

We will support you to develop the skills you need for this role; this will include an induction into all the areas outlined. You will have a chance to discuss your role and any additional needs you may have with us.

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**Together, we are strong enough to stop MS.**

Multiple Sclerosis Society. Registered charity numbers 1139257/SC041990. Registered as a limited company in England and Wales 07451571.

## What you need for this role

- **Empathy** – able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes
- Excellent **listening**, communication, and interpersonal skills
- Patience and a **non-judgemental** attitude
- Able to speak sensitively to individuals and maintain **confidentiality**
- Able to volunteer independently but also stay within the role **boundaries** – recognising when to seek advice and report any concerns
- Good IT skills, including internet and email
- Use **Outlook email** to communicate internally and externally
- To give reasonable **notice of non-availability**, where possible
- Able to keep personal data safe at home
- Able to reflect on own volunteering and willing to develop skills and experience
- Follow our policies, procedures, and guidelines
- Able to apply disability, equality and inclusion practices
- Committed to our values

## To volunteer in this role, you will need to:

- Complete mandatory training
- Read through your welcome and induction checklist
- Have your own PC and mobile/landline phone and internet access
- For applicants based in Scotland the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) check will be required

## Additional information about our volunteering programme

When you volunteer with us, you join our powerful community of people living with MS, scientists, campaigners, listeners, organisers, ambassadors and fundraisers.

Our Volunteering Programme holds the prestigious Investing in Volunteers (iV) accreditation. This award recognises our dedication to ensuring all volunteers have an excellent experience – from when we recruit you, through supporting you to develop skills and experience, to recognising your achievements.

Our shared commitments help keep our Volunteering Programme enjoyable, meaningful, and safe for everyone.

Download [Our Commitments](#) here.

Date created: June 2020

Date to be reviewed: June 2021

We regularly review our role descriptions to make sure they are up to date.