



Bristol Mind Remote Helpline Service

Volunteer Information Pack

August 2020

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Bristol Mind!

This information pack will give you a more detailed overview of the role in our Information Service, and whether it's right for you. Please read through it carefully, and sign up to an information session if you'd like to apply - details of the sessions and application process are included in this pack.



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Application Process & Key Dates

As a well-known local charity, we often get more applicants for volunteer roles than we have vacancies for. It's important that the role is right for the volunteer, and that the volunteers meet the required specifications to carry it out effectively. For those reasons, we like to carry out an informal application and interview process.

Please note that all sessions and training will be conducted via video call. Please see the "Essential Requirements" section for more information on this.

You'll find the schedule on the next page:

Date	Time	Approximate Length of Session	Session	Details
Wednesday 02/09/2020	3pm	45 minutes	Information Session	Please attend one of the two information sessions if you'd like to know more
Thursday 03/09/2020	11am	45 minutes	Information Session	Please attend one of the two information sessions if you'd like to know more
Once you have attended an information session, we will send you an online application form. You will then need to complete this by 9am on 08/09/2020. We will assess all applications and will invite those who are successful to an informal interview, as detailed below.				
09/09/2020, 10/09/2020 & 11/09/2020	TBC	30 minutes	Informal Interviews	We will contact you to arrange an exact date and time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15/09/2020 • 16/09/2020 • 22/09/2020 • 23/09/2020 • 29/09/2020 • 30/09/2020 	10:30am	2.5 hours each	Training	All training dates should be attended in order to start volunteering.
<i>We aim for volunteers to start working from around October 5th 2020, depending on their designated shift</i>				

Information Sessions

You'll need to attend at least one of the two information sessions in order to apply for the role. Once you've read this information pack, please email info@bristolmind.org.uk, tell us which session you'd like to attend, and we'll get back to you with the details.

The information sessions are a chance for us to give you an idea of what working in the role is like, and for you to ask any questions before you decide whether to apply.

Application Form

We'll email an online application form out to everyone who attended an information session that day. If you'd like to apply, you'll need to complete it by 9am on 08/09/2020. We'll assess each application form, and then contact everyone to let them know whether or not they have been selected. If selected, we'll invite you to an informal interview.

Application Process & Key Dates Continued

Informal interview

Your interview will be carried out by one or two staff members who coordinate and work on the helpline. This is an informal chat (no need to wear formal attire!) where we'll ask you a few questions, and you'll have the opportunity to do the same.

We'll be in touch by 7pm on 11/09/2020 to let you know whether or not your application has been successful.

Training

Training for the role will consist of 6 sessions in the second half of September, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10:30am until around 1pm. The complete schedule will be sent to you prior to starting.

Training sessions will be introduced by the same two members of the helpline team each week, so we'll be there to check in with you. The training itself will be carried out by a variety of staff members, each with their own area of expertise.

Starting as a Volunteer

During your training with us, we will arrange a shift pattern that will be suitable for your schedule. We'd like to aim for new volunteers to start on the line on the week commencing 05/10/2020.

Service Overview

Bristol Mind's remote helpline service is often the first port of call for people who are struggling with their mental health, or concerned about the wellbeing of another person.

Between 9:30am and 3:30pm every weekday, we take calls and email enquiries from members of the public. People call us about all kinds of things: some people are looking for information about a mental health issue, some want to find out what help is out there, and some just want a friendly, listening ear.

Our call handlers are non-judgemental, and they don't tell people what to do - but they make sure that people feel listened to and reassured, and point them in the right direction to find the resources or services that they need.

The service also maintains an online database of services in the local area, making sure that people can find up-to-date information on helplines, counselling, and other forms of support simply by visiting our website.

Essential Requirements

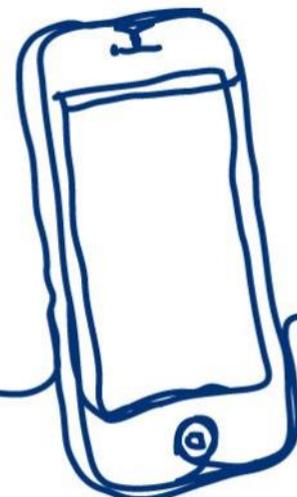
Person Specification

- A passion for contributing to mental wellbeing in the Bristol area
- Good communication and listening skills
- A commitment to diversity and equality
- The ability to stay calm
- A few hours a week to spare between 9:30am - 3:30pm, Monday to Friday, preferably at a regular time each week
- Basic computer skills (email, basic internet searches)
- We ask that where possible, each volunteer commits to a minimum of six months volunteering

Technical Requirements

- Your own smartphone - this is required due to the phone system we are using whilst working remotely. You will be required to download a free app which, whilst you are logged in for your shift only, will forward incoming calls from the public to your phone over Wi-Fi.
- Your own computer (laptop or desktop) with reliable internet access.
- Access to video calling for training purposes - this won't be used in the day-to-day role, but is required so that you can participate in the interviews, training, and any meetings going forward. Video calling requires one of the following:
 - * A smartphone with a camera
 - * A laptop with built-in webcam
 - * An external webcam set-up on a PC

We'll provide more information to everyone nearer the time on how to access video calls with us. We understand that this may not be something that everyone feels 100% confident with, or has experience of, so we'll do our best to help!



Role Description

As a volunteer on the Information Helpline, you will be expected to:

- Take calls, emails, and voicemails from members of the public, and respond to these in a supportive, accepting, and non-directive manner - enabling the person to make their own informed choices.
- Develop an understanding of the services offered by Bristol Mind, and accurately pass on referrals and messages to these services when requested.
- Maintain the confidentiality of callers and service users, and work in line with Bristol Mind's policies at all times.
- Keep up to date with information about mental health services across Bristol, and contribute to maintaining Bristol Mind's database of these services.
- Maintain regular contact with the Information team, informing them of any issues arising during your shift, and attending six-weekly supervision meetings.

Volunteering During the Pandemic

The current service is continuing to evolve as a result of the developing situation around the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, we ran the service entirely from the Bristol Mind office on Old Market Street, Bristol. Currently, all Bristol Mind staff and volunteers are working remotely from their own homes, and there is no intention for this to change in the near future. As a result, we have needed to adapt our services within a short amount of time. Going forwards, we will keep all volunteers updated with any developments and changes around the service.

In the future, there may be the option for volunteers to work from the office as before, but this will only be possible once we can be certain that it is safe to do so. It's likely that when this does happen, we will also give volunteers the option to continue working from home as they are currently doing.

Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information pack. We hope that it's been helpful and that you'd like to continue with your application for the role. If this is the case, please email info@bristolmind.org.uk and inform us which Information Session you'd like to attend. Please also ensure that you will be available for at least one of the interview dates, as well as all training sessions.

If you have a friend or family member who you think might also enjoy this role, please spread the word!

We look forward to meeting you!

Bristol Mind Information Service Team