

# Mindline Training Information Pack

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# Mindline Training Information Pack

## Dear Prospective Applicant,

**Thank you for expressing an interest in volunteering for Bristol Mindline**

The next volunteering has been scheduled to take place from September to October 2022, with introductory information sessions being held in July 2022.

Please take the time to read the information in this pack carefully. Included within are the following items:

- A description of the Mindline volunteer role and the commitment expected of volunteers
- Information sheets and training programme displaying dates, structure, and content
- Practicalities and details about volunteering with us

We hope this will provide you with enough detail to help you decide whether you are interested in volunteering with us.

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## What next?

In advance of the training we are holding a number of information sessions, to provide potential trainees with an opportunity to find out more about the service and to help you make up your mind as to whether you wish to apply. Information on how to book a place on an information session is included within this pack.

**You must attend one of these information sessions in order to apply for the training. It is essential to book a place on one of the three information sessions – please email [mindline@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:mindline@bristolmind.org.uk)**

Places on the training are limited, so if after attending an information session you decide that you would like to apply, you will be invited to attend an interview. You should bring a completed application form with you; you will be informed how to arrange this at the information session.

**Please be aware that we ask trainees to attend all of the training sessions\* in the programme below.** It is therefore important that you do not book to attend an information session unless you will be able to subsequently attend every session of the full training.

\*You only need to attend one of the information sessions.

Kind regards,

Liz, Finn and Jake

*Mindline Coordinators & Assistant Coordinators*

Date	Start	End	What?
<b>Information Session Dates (Prospective volunteers only need to attend one session)</b>			
Tue 19 <sup>th</sup> July	6:30pm	8:00pm	Introductory Information Session (20 Spaces)
Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> July	12:30pm	2:00pm	Introductory Information Session (20 Spaces)
<del>Thu 4<sup>th</sup> Aug</del> <b>cancelled</b>	<del>6:30pm</del>	<del>8:00pm</del>	<del>Introductory Information Session (20 Spaces)</del>
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	12:30pm	2:00pm	Introductory Information Session (20 Spaces)
<b>Training Dates (Prospective volunteers must attend ALL sessions below)</b>			
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup> Sept	6:45pm	9:00pm	The Essentials
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9:30am	5:00pm	Counselling Skills 1
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> Sept <b>(online)</b>	6:45pm	9:00pm	Mental Health Awareness
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9:30am	5:00pm	Counselling Skills 2
W/C 19 <sup>th</sup> Sept <b>(online)</b>	TBC		Midway reviews – time TBC
Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> Sept <b>(online)</b>	6:45pm	9:00pm	Psychiatric Medication & Personality Disorder
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sept	9:30am	5:00pm	Abuse
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Sept <b>(online)</b>	6:45pm	9:00pm	Self-Injury and Self-Harm
Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9:30am	5:00pm	Diversity
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct <b>(online)</b>	6:45pm	9:00pm	Trans Awareness
Fri 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	9:30am	5:00pm	Policies
W/C 10 <sup>th</sup> Oct <b>(online)</b>	TBC		Final reviews – time TBC
Tue 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	6:45pm	9:00pm	Induction session at Bristol Mind office.
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup> , Thu 13 <sup>th</sup> , Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> , or Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	6:30pm	8:30pm	Shadow Shift. Each trainee will complete one shadow shift before going onto the line.

## Training Venues

Most of the training will take place at Hamilton House on Stokes Croft in central Bristol.

Some of the evening sessions will take place online using Zoom.

The induction session and shadow shifts will be at Bristol Mind’s new offices just off Park Street in central Bristol.

## Booking a place on an introductory information session

It is **essential to book a place** and attend an information session if you wish to apply for the training. Places must be booked in advance as spaces are limited. It is advisable to book early to secure a place.

Email [mindline@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:mindline@bristolmind.org.uk) with the date and time of the session you wish to attend, and your contact details (name, email address, and telephone number).

## Mindline Volunteering Role

### Volunteers will be asked to:

- Attend all initial and ongoing training (see training programme above).
- Staff the helpline once a fortnight for four hours for a minimum of one year after training.
- We offer hybrid working, and as such volunteers are asked to do a mixture of shifts from home, and from the new Bristol Mind offices just off Park Street in central Bristol.
- Take calls and offer support (and information when appropriate).
- Record information in line with the service's procedures.
- Participate in the monitoring of the service.
- Support fellow volunteers on the line.
- Take responsibility for arranging shift cover if unable to work your planned shift.
- Attend six-weekly volunteer team meetings.
- Receive one-to-one supervision over the phone from staff within a few days of each shift.
- Work in accordance with all of Bristol Mind's principles and policies.
- Share in covering occasional Bank Holiday shifts, including Christmas and New Year.
- Cover weekends – one shift in every three must include a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday evening.

## Mindline Volunteering Commitment

### Volunteers will be asked to:

- Respond to callers in a supportive, accepting, and non-directive way.
- Ask for the support they need from co-workers on the line.
- Offer information over the line in a way that enables the caller to make their own informed choices.
- Keep up to date with services etc. through Bristol Mind's information system.
- Distance themselves from their own experiences and issues while working with callers.
- Have an awareness of the impact of the calls on themselves and work through these issues in supervision.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the reasons behind the policies employed by Bristol Mind.
- Respect the confidentiality rights of the caller. For reference, the Confidentiality Policy is included within this pack.
- Show a commitment to challenging all forms of oppression experienced during your involvement with Bristol Mind.

## **How and why a helpline?**

The helpline was set up by Bristol Mind in 1995 in response to research which showed that people using local mental health services wanted more “out of hours” crisis support. In December 2000, the helpline launched its freephone number and became Bristol Mindline.

## **Aims and ethos of the service**

The aim of the service is to offer a space to anyone who may need to talk. Volunteers undertake a rigorous training programme in which they learn to listen to callers in a non-judgemental way and respond non-defensively. This kind of listening can be difficult to come by, especially if someone is in crisis, or if friends/family or other helpers feel pressured to find solutions or ‘rescue’ the person. Sometimes people are isolated or have nobody close to talk to. The helpline has access to a database which has information on local groups, services, etc., and can provide information on aspects of mental health (e.g. rights, etc.) which can support callers in making their own informed choices.

The helpline operates in line with the overall aims and principles of Bristol Mind to campaign for a socially just society, which promotes and sustains good mental health for all.

## **Who calls the line?**

The helpline receives calls both from people who want a one-off session, and callers who may ring back over a period of time to support themselves. Callers ring in with a variety of issues, ranging from isolation, anxiety, and depression to suicidal feelings. Sometimes callers want information about a diagnosis they, or someone they care for, has been given; or they may have relationship difficulties or need to talk about a bereavement. Volunteers receive training to respond to all calls.



## Who volunteers for the helpline?

Our team of volunteers come from the diverse communities of Bristol – people who may, or may not, have experience of mental health issues. We have volunteers who have been out of work for various reasons; Mindline training provides skills and a work experience which can help people in their recovery or just help people feel connected to the wider community.

Other people want to develop new skills or may be thinking about changing direction and want experience of different kinds of work. Volunteers range in age, life experience, and beliefs, which makes for a lively team. At the moment we are under-represented in volunteers from ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ communities, and so very much encourage people from these groups to apply.

We welcome applications from anyone who can work within the Bristol Mind framework, can make the commitment that we ask, and lives locally.

## Training

All volunteers go through the **Bristol Mindline Telephone Counselling Skills Training**, which takes place over five weeks. This initial course trains you in listening skills and helps you build up your knowledge and understanding of mental health and current issues.

The training and experience that you gain on the line can further your career or be valuable experience for a course. For many volunteers, the work is rewarding in its own right.

## Support and Supervision

Every volunteer receives supervision after each shift they work. A staff worker contacts the volunteer to arrange a mutually convenient time for the supervision to take place over the telephone. The supervision session can typically take 30 minutes, and is an opportunity to reflect on the work, get support, and develop skills.

Volunteers are also supported through six-weekly volunteer meetings, newsletters, and further training. On each shift you will always work with at least one other volunteer.



## **Fun**

You will be training and working with a large group of people. Although the work itself is of a serious nature, there are still plenty of opportunities for socialising, getting to know each other, and generally having some laughs.

## **What will the training be like?**

The training is designed to be an ongoing process, to provide a brief overview of the topics covered, and to enable volunteers to examine their own attitudes towards and experience of the issues covered.

Volunteers are assessed throughout the training against set criteria. There is a one-to-one review meeting halfway through the training programme to discuss how it is going and to address any difficulties. A final decision is taken at the end of the training as to whether a place on the line will be offered.

The training is seen to be a two-way process, so that volunteers can assess whether or not this work feels suitable for them at this time.

- Information sessions, all-day training days, and the induction session will take place in person in a group of approximately 15 trainees at Hamilton House on Stokes Croft near Bristol city centre.
- Evening training sessions will take place online on Zoom.
- The Mindline Service is open from 7pm – 11pm, Wednesday to Sunday.
- For your first few shifts, we will ask all new volunteers to work from the Bristol Mind office.
- There will then be a mix of working some shifts in the office, and some shifts from home. An app is used to redirect calls to the volunteer's mobile or landline – callers do not see the volunteer's telephone number.
- A coordinator is on call to support volunteers during all shifts, whether working in the office or at home.

**End of Information Pack**