



Parents Project Volunteer Advocate Task Description

Parents Project:

The Elfrida Society Parents Project works with parents with learning disabilities and learning difficulties. We deliver 'the parents peer support group'. This is part of the work we do to support parents with LD's to be the parents their children need.

The group runs every week on a Monday. School term time only from 11am till 1pm. We work using a preventative model, encouraging parents with LDs to face the day to day matters of being a parent with a child-centred approach.

Purpose of the volunteer role:

This Volunteer role will involve 2 hours of group facilitation time with 1 or 2 hours a week of one to one advocacy work.

The parents with learning disabilities want to improve their parenting skills as well as to learn about working with schools, how to recognise medical needs for their children and understand social worker concerns. The aim is to increase confidence in communicating their needs and their children's needs.

Peer support groups offer parents with LD's the opportunity to discuss ways to broaden their support networks and create opportunities to support theirs and their children's economic development.

The group is self-sustaining with a facilitator supporting their discussions. The facilitator will need to have parenting experience, encourage parents to lead on their own discussions, only stepping in to support their understanding or directing discussion to solve queries.

The volunteer advocate will help to facilitate the peer support group. As well as support parents with individual advocacy to resolve housing, benefit and financial dilemmas before these become major problems.

Areas of responsibility:

- To assist the facilitator or group lead to run peer support group sessions and will help set up the sessions.
- To support parents with LDs in getting the most out of their participation. Individuals may need different approaches for example, helping someone to remain focused, providing encouragement or demonstrating how to do something.

- To support an individual parent with LDs who may need more help than some of the others, as instructed by the project lead.
- To support service users to travel to and from appointments. New members might need to meet you at a bus stop/tube station and walk to the group session whilst they learn the route.
- To support with administrative tasks such as keeping a register or helping a new service user to complete a registration form.
- To help keep service users and staff safe by alerting the group lead and/or Managers to any health and safety or safeguarding issues which may affect service users or staff.
- To understand and act upon any safeguarding issues that arise during a session
- To help us to promote the group sessions and our services and raise awareness about the benefits of participating in our peer group or other activities.

Equal Opportunities:

All Elfrida staff and volunteers are expected to apply the Elfrida Equal Opportunities policy in their day to day work by developing practical strategies for encouraging all users of our services to feel welcomed, and that cultural and ethnic differences are valued. All staff and volunteers are expected to respect and value others.

Accountability:

- To support service users and staff as agreed with the Project Manager.
- To agree to and follow any regulations and policies set down by The Elfrida Society.
- To agree a time commitment and keep to it.
- To be punctual and inform us if you are unable to attend.
- To respect service users right to privacy and to keep information about the people who use our services confidential.
- To represent The Elfrida Society and maintain a professional approach at all times.

Person specification:

1. Experience of or an interest in working with people with learning disabilities.
2. Ability to relate to people with learning disabilities respectfully.

3. Aware of child safeguarding or be willing to take up child safeguarding training.
4. Have parenting experience or be interested to train in a parenting programme (e.g. SFSC programme).
5. Be friendly and approachable.
6. Good listening skills with an ear to hear the need in the discussions amongst the parents with LDs.
7. Ability to remain calm in stressful situations.
8. Be sensitive to individual needs.
9. Patience.
10. Be punctual and reliable.
11. Commitment to Elfrida's Equal Opportunities statement.

Terms and Conditions:

Hours: Able to volunteer for 2 - 4 hours a week school term time only.

At least a commitment of 3-6 months of volunteering with the Elfrida Society

All volunteer appointments are subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references and a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

All volunteers will receive an induction and regular supervisory support from the Project Manager.

All volunteers may claim travel and activity related costs expenses incurred while volunteering.