

## What is a Carer?

A Carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. Carers often experience stress, loneliness and isolation, they can find it difficult to go out because they cannot leave the person they look after on their own.

## What we do

We support unpaid Carers in East Sussex to continue in their caring role by providing free, high quality, volunteer-led services that encourage independence and reduce isolation.

## Our services include

**Regular Respite Breaks:** Giving Carers the opportunity to have some time to them self, building a long-term befriending relationship with the cared for person.

**Respite for Healthcare:** Enabling Carers to attend their own healthcare appointments by sitting with the cared for person while they go.

**Telephone Support:** Providing Carers with a listening ear and the opportunity to discuss their caring role in confidence.

**Computer Help at Home:** Teaching Carers to use their computer in ways that will help them to have more time to themselves and reduce their isolation.

**Young Carers Befriending:** Giving Young Carers the opportunity to take a break from their caring role.

## What does a Volunteer Ambassador do?

Do you love networking? Are you persuasive and able to sell a good cause, getting others enthusiastic about supporting it? Our volunteer ambassadors:

- Promote the Association of Carers across East Sussex, raising the profile of Carers and encouraging people to support the charity' s aims, by telling people about its services, volunteering or supporting its fundraising activities
- Attend networking meetings, such as Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfasts, representing the Association and building relationships with local businesses
- Elicit fundraising support from local businesses e.g. encouraging them to make the Association of Carers their charity of the year, take part in sponsored events, bag packs etc.
- Attend cheque presentation events, receiving cheque, thanking the donor and explaining how the monies donated will benefit the organisation and its Carers
- Identify, plans and delivers engaging and motivating talks to local groups and organisations, ensuring more people know about the Association of Carers services encouraging people to volunteer with and fundraise for the charity

- Ensure all donations and expressions of interest in fundraising and volunteering are passed to the relevant staff member

## Skills/Qualifications needed

- Confident with great networking skills and the ability to talk to a variety of different people
- An understanding of what it means to be an unpaid Carer and of the Association of Carers, mission, aims and values
- Good organisational skills and the ability to work on own initiative
- Able to deliver engaging and motivating talks and respond with confidence to questions
- Willing to have their photo taken and used for publicity purposes (e.g. in the Association' s quarterly newsletter, online such as Facebook/Twitter and in the local newspaper)
- Willing and able to volunteer outside of normal office hours (e.g. evenings and weekends)

## Where does the volunteering role usually take place?

In a variety of locations throughout East Sussex, often outside of normal office hours

## What is the induction process for volunteers?

We ask our volunteers to complete an application form, provide two references and meet us for an informal chat. Following this, volunteers attend a one day induction, which helps them to:

- Understand more about the Association and the support it provides to Carers
- Understand what it means to be a Carer and the impact caring has on people' s lives
- Feel confident when talking to others about the Association e.g. tips on how to promote our services including basic networking, fundraising and publicity skills

## What training are volunteers provided with?

We run an extensive training programme throughout the year, for example;

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Dementia/Stroke and Parkinson' s Awareness
- Basic listening and counselling and bereavement skills

## What support do we offer our volunteers?

- We encourage our volunteers to call us or pop in to one of our offices if they need a chat, advice, or have any concerns
- If volunteers are unable to drive we find them a volunteer driver or arrange a taxi
- We reimburse expenses incurred while volunteering, for example, travel