



HELPLINE VOLUNTEER

Recruitment Information

Cruse Scotland is seeking to recruit enthusiastic and compassionate volunteers to answer telephone calls to our National Helpline.

Applicants should have excellent listening skills and the ability to put people at ease on the telephone. They should be able to keep a level head when dealing with distressing, angry or difficult calls.

Training

Full training is given for this role, through our 5-day helpline training course. No previous counselling qualifications are required to undertake this training, however applicants who have such previous training will be able to put their skills to good use. **We require all applicants to attend all 5 training days.** There will also be a half day's induction for those who successfully complete the online training.

The training & induction will be delivered via Zoom therefore you must have access to a PC/laptop/tablet for all of the training days. The format of the course is a mix of trainer led delivery, skills practice and eLearning. You should be prepared to engage in role play as part of this learning.

Ongoing Training

As with all roles in Cruse Scotland, we are committed to the ongoing learning and development of all our volunteers. You can expect to receive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities throughout the year. The CPD training varies from learning about what other organisations provide (to help with signposting as part of the helpline role), about self-care and topics covering different aspects of the role and clients you support.

Support and Supervision

Our Helpline Manager oversees the day to day running of the helpline supported by our helpline co-ordinators. One of the staff team will be available when you are on shift. You will also have a check in and out with the other members of the helpline volunteer team at the beginning and end of each shift. You will have access to group supervision every month which is optional and regular volunteer meetings where you can meet other members of the helpline team.

Opening Hours

Our helpline is open weekdays from 9am – 8pm and weekends from 10am – 2pm. We operate a shift system of 3-hour helpline shifts at a time. Some volunteers cover one shift per week; others cover 2 or 3 shifts per week depending on their availability.

Location

Our helpline team are home based and therefore you need to consider if this is a fit for your lifestyle. We need helpline volunteers to be able to guarantee a private space at home where they will not be interrupted throughout their 3-hour shift.

Practical Considerations

There are some practical considerations for you to be aware of before committing to undertaking the training and the helpline shifts:

- Access to a phone and a PC/laptop/tablet during your shift
- A good internet connection
- A private space at home where you can take calls with no interruptions
- A commitment to providing a minimum of one 3-hour shift per week
- To cover the same Helpline shift each week
- Have time to engage in peer supervision and CPD on an ongoing basis

About the role

Our helpline volunteers listen to anyone who calls us who may be going through a difficult time, looking for information or who may be struggling to cope. Some callers phone to refer themselves to our counselling services and therefore you will be required to take their details and ask questions about who has died, this as you can imagine requires a great deal of sensitivity. Other callers are phoning to receive support in the moment. They are seeking someone to listen to how they are feeling and to be heard. Our volunteers often describe what a privilege this is to be the one on the end of the helpline who a client has shared their story with.

The clients who have sought our support repeatedly tell us how much they appreciate the helpline service, and the time helpline volunteers have given them is invaluable.

About you

The skills and attributes we need from our helpline volunteers are:

- A clear telephone voice.
- Basic level of PC skills, including accurate data input.
- Confidence in sourcing online information.
- Good communication and writing skills.
- Understanding of the importance of data protection, confidentiality and protecting people's personal details.
- To be supportive and friendly.
- To be patient and allow clients space.
- Ability to be open-minded and understanding of someone else's opinion even if different to yours.
- Empathetic to people's feelings.
- Non-judgemental of the person's life, views, choices, and family.
- Ability to remain calm in tense situations.
- Willingness to engage in the wider Cruse Scotland community.

Training

There are 5 training days plus 1 induction day – all of which must be attended.

Each training day will last from 10am - 4pm. Induction Day is approx. 10am - 2pm.

Time will be built in each day offline for lunch and comfort breaks.