

VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role Title	Walk and Talk Volunteer- Hospice Bereavement Support
Location	Dymchurch & Deal Community Walks
Time Commitment	3 hours minimum per week
Responsible To	Bereavement Co-ordinator

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

Pilgrims Hospices in East Kent provides care and support for patients and their families who are living with a life limiting illness. This care and support is provided in our hospices and in the community by a multi-professional team and supported by volunteers

Multiple studies have found a positive association between physical activity and wellbeing; Walking and talking come together very naturally and walking in a group can make us feel more connected to each other, reducing loneliness and isolation. In addition, being in nature or in green spaces is shown to have a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing, reducing stress levels and enhancing social interactions

As a walking group volunteer you will be part of a team of trained volunteers who lead walking groups for Hospice carers or bereaved people

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Checking a route and familiarising yourself with it before leading the walk, including toilet and café facilities
- Ensuring the risk assessments for each walk are in place
- Be aware of potential hazards, including changeable ones, ie. weather related
- Welcoming walkers to the walks, particularly new walkers
- Giving a brief talk before the walk to make sure everyone is prepared
- Making sure all relevant paperwork is completed prior to the walk
- Leading and managing walks – includes ‘back marking’ or ‘middle marking’ as well as leading at the front
- Making sure walks are welcoming, friendly, enjoyable and safe: adhering to Pilgrims policies and procedures at all times
- Trouble-shooting and dealing with problems on walks,
- Understanding what to do in an emergency/ first aid requirements
- An understanding of the bereavement process and how to signpost accordingly OR
- An understanding of how to signpost Hospice carers as required
- Full awareness of the importance of confidentiality
- Comply with all training and attend any structured support meetings
- To operate within the boundaries of the role
- To bring a fully charged mobile phone on every walk
- To use high viz jacket provided and wear identity badge at all times

KEY EXPERIENCE, SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

- Committed to the ethos of the charity and the responsibilities of the role
- Able to maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Enjoy working as a member of a team.
- Clearly demonstrated enthusiasm for walking and its benefits!
- A suitable level of personal fitness to complete walks easily and maintain control of the walking group
- Friendly, welcoming and empowering with good communication and interpersonal skills
- Observant and sensitive to the needs of others
- An understanding of walking related to health and wellbeing
- Reliable, punctual, and well-organised with a non-judgemental attitude
- Able to work independently but with guidance and support
- Confident at speaking in front of small groups
- Personal resilience

ESSENTIAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Overarching organisational training
- Lone working
- Communications
- Confidentiality
- Sage and Thyme Communications training
- Understanding bereavement needs OR
- Understanding carers needs including relevant signposting
- Practicalities of being a walk leader/ walk supporter, including what to do in an emergency
- Any other statutory and mandatory training considered relevant to the role
- Competencies training and shadowing

WHAT WE OFFER

- An opportunity to make a difference in your local community, supporting others
- An opportunity to be more physically active
- To use your skills in a different setting
- Provision of relevant training and ongoing support
- To contribute to the ongoing evaluation and development of the service

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOU

- To provide effective induction and training
- To provide you with all required equipment/ resources for the role
- To provide you with regular support
- To have access to a staff member to help resolve any difficulties that occur during the walks
- To actively listen and respond to any concerns and worries regarding the role
- To communicate regularly and effectively with you
- To value your enthusiasm, willingness and expertise
- Pilgrims Hospices will want to ensure that applicants have had the time and space to grieve if they have experienced a recent bereavement and, if relevant, this will be discussed a part of the recruitment process

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO US

- To engage positively with the training and support provided
- To act within the scope of your volunteering role at all times
- To maintain confidentiality at all times
- To seek help and support when needed from the team
- To share comments or concerns in a timely way; that promotes early resolution and avoids misunderstandings
- To contribute to any evaluation and/ or audit required to review and improve the service
- To inform the Hub/ team of unavailability for scheduled duties-with ideally 24hours notice.
- The role requires an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Check.

The walking group volunteer role is very important and plays a key part in our provision of holistic services to carers and bereaved people. Volunteers will benefit from bespoke training and robust support, we would therefore reasonably expect a volunteer to stay in the role for a minimum of six months after the completion of their training. By donating your valuable time and skills to the role for at least this time, it will ensure that both the volunteer and our service users fully benefit from the experience.