

Volunteer Bereavement Support (BSL) Role Description

Title:	Bereavement Support Volunteer (for individuals who are deaf or severely hard of hearing)
Accountable to:	Wellbeing Team Lead
Role Days/Hours	3-4 hours per week, depending on volunteer availability, volunteers should be available, as a minimum for supporting at least one client, plus supervision and training commitments
Role Location:	Selly Constituencies of the Yardley Neighbourhood Network Scheme
Closing Date:	10 December 2023

Birmingham Hospice – Our Mission, Vision & Values

Birmingham St Mary's and John Taylor Hospices merged in 2021. Now unified under one name, Birmingham Hospice, we care for more people than ever before. Our patients are at the heart of everything we do and have been throughout our combined 157-year history. From caring for those in our Inpatient Units, to providing vital day services in our Living Well Centres, and supporting families with personalised bereavement counselling, we take care of our community when they need us most.

We believe in the importance of dying in dignity, in comfort and in a place of your choice.

We want everyone, no matter their age, gender, sexuality, religion or medical condition to be able to access the care of their choice at the end of their life.

We are the primary provider of hospice care in Birmingham.

Our values are at the heart of everything we do as we continue in our mission to enable more people from all communities to access the care of their choice at the end of life.

Our values are:

- Kindness

- Togetherness
- Positivity
- Openness
- Respect
- Innovation

How you can make a difference

By providing support to grieving people who are living with profound deafness or who are severely hard of hearing.

Working Brief

Introduction

Supporting individuals who managing grief can be both demanding and rewarding. The following is intended to clarify matters of policy and practice to ensure that we work safely, ethically and professionally whilst achieving maximum job satisfaction. This working brief outlines your responsibilities as a Well-Being volunteer, one of which is that you are expected to read and abide by these guidelines.

The service is provided within a professional relationship. This means working within a set of professional boundaries, some of which are outlined here. The list is not exhaustive and there may be circumstances in which it is appropriate to be more flexible. Volunteers are expected to bring matters of concern to their supervisor or other member of the Well-Being Team for discussion and agreement and support.

Policy

It is Hospice Policy to treat patients and their relatives as individuals respecting their wishes, beliefs, and right to make individual informed choices. We aim to empower patients and their relatives supporting them to achieve the highest quality of life possible.

This philosophy translates through to Bereavement Care by ensuring that we respect the variety of ways in which people grieve and that we work at all times with regard for the client's personal autonomy. Our aim is to support and facilitate people with respect for their individual background, culture and belief system.

As a volunteer with Birmingham Hospice you are expected to adhere to our policies and procedures, including Health and Safety, Fire evacuation, Child Protection. All policies and procedures are available via the intranet or hard copies are available from the Workforce & Organisational Life team.

Mandatory Training

All volunteers are expected to complete mandatory training which has to be updated on an annual basis. Assistance can be provided if needed. This is provided by the hospice to for the safety and well-being of volunteers, patients and clients.

Confidentiality

All volunteers undertake training in data protection. In the context of the support given to patients and clients, information is only shared for the purpose of receiving supervision and support with our casework. Unless there are 'exceptional circumstances' information should only be shared within the Well-Being Team and fellow volunteers.

Supervision

You are required to attend monthly group supervision (expected attendance 80% per year). Attendance at supervision will be monitored by your supervisor. If you are unable to make a supervision session you are expected to advise your supervisor and to discuss your need for individual face-to-face or telephone supervision. Unsatisfactory attendance will be discussed with the Well-Being volunteer and may result in them not being allowed to continue in their role.

The purpose of supervision is threefold. Firstly, it offers the opportunity for volunteers to give and receive support around this challenging area of work. Secondly it serves as an educational function in which skills can be developed, ideas shared etc. Finally, it ensures accountability for all the work undertaken on behalf of the Hospice.

Training

You are required to commit to ongoing training. An on-going training programme of skills practice, theory development and topics of interest will be devised annually for continuing personal development. In addition consideration will be given to supporting volunteers in the attendance of relevant external training courses. Volunteers may also be able to access grants for ongoing training. Volunteers will be encouraged to share their particular knowledge and experience to deliver or contribute to team training.

Contracting (for structured bereavement support)

The way in which bereavement support is offered and delivered should reflect its professional and ethical basis and inspire client confidence. You are therefore expected to:

- Ensure the client understands about the limits of confidentiality and about client notes.
- Explain what bereavement support can offer.
- Explain that the session will be for around an hour and that you will let the client know when the time is nearing an end (the counselling room may be booked out after your session) No session or home visit should last longer than 90 minutes.
- Agree how often you will meet, and when you will review the support with the client.
- Ensure that the client understands that the bereavement support will end at an appropriate point agreed by both of you.

What are the main duties of the role?

1. To offer structured individual support to those individuals who are deaf or severely hard of hearing, who wish to access bereavement support.
2. To attend individual supervision meetings as requested by the supervisor or volunteer.
3. To attend monthly group supervision (expected minimum attendance 80% per year).
4. To maintain appropriate records and statistics ensuring the confidentiality of clients at all times.
5. To commit to ongoing professional development by reading, participating in supervision meetings and ongoing training sessions.
6. To share with those responsible for the service any personal circumstances or pressures, which may require a reduction in the hours or level of commitment, or an agreed break from the role.
7. To read and abide by the Birmingham Hospice Handbook.
8. To adhere to Birmingham Hospice policies and procedures.
9. To complete mandatory training sessions as required by Birmingham Hospice.

What skills or experience do I need?

- Able to communicate proficiently in BSL.
- Reliability
- Good listening skills
- Able to travel (either using own transport or public transport). If using own transport, have a clean driving licence.
- Have access to a laptop and have basic IT literacy skills
- Be able to demonstrate empathy and compassion
- Be able to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of professional boundaries
- An ability to demonstrate an awareness of the importance self-care

The boundaries of your role will be explained during your induction. You are not expected to undertake any additional tasks without your prior agreement.