

# Role Description

**Job Title: Benefits Volunteer**

**Reports to: Welfare Benefits Co-ordinator**

**Contract type: Volunteer**

**About Bath Mind**

Bath Mind is an independent charity, affiliated to National Mind and serving the people of Bath and North East Somerset. We offer support with mental health and wellbeing and provide 1:1 and group services across B&NES.

Bath Mind aims to ensure that the needs and interests of mental health service users and people from diverse ages, communities and backgrounds are reflected in all its activities. Volunteers are expected to contribute to this aim.

**Overall Responsibilities**

To work with Bath Mind’s Benefit Co-ordinator to support our service users in the preparation of benefits claims and to ensure the secure collation and retention of personal documents.

To build relationships with sometimes vulnerable service users and support them through stressful and difficult formal processes.

To act as an advocate where practicable if the service user has communication difficulties or issues around literacy and to support them with that.

**Communication Responsibilities**

* To be a proactive team member
* To be non-judgemental and empathetic
* To adhere to the policy of confidentiality and sharing of information
* To be non-discriminatory
* To promote positive perceptions of Bath Mind and the Welfare Benefit Service at all times
* To maintain positive working relationships with other employees and volunteers of Bath Mind
* To communicate and update information to the team regularly and effectively

**Specific Responsibilities**

* To assist service users with the benefits process from application to submission.
* To offer one-to-one support to service users in conjunction with support workers or family members.
* To assist service users with form completion of PIP and work capability forms.
* To collate evidential forms (i.e. doctor's letters, specialist appointments, counselling referrals) - to maintain copies of all evidence and scan and upload to Lamplight.
* To ensure service users have copies of all completed forms.
* To liaise with the Benefits Lead and other volunteers
* Liaise with service users, carers and relevant organisations to ensure high quality services are delivered consistently
* Build friendly and caring but also boundaried relationships with service users
* Work as a positive individual and part of a multidisciplinary team
* Maintain an honest and caring approach
* Establish good working relationships with staff and other volunteers
* Establish good working relationships with partner organisations
* Be actively involved in the promotion of the service
* Where appropriate, assist the development of systems for the smooth running of the service
* Access relevant training when offered and available on a regular basis
* Ensure availability when convenient for informal or formal supervision sessions with managers or supervising staff members
* Help ensure the implementation of all Bath Mind policies
* Take responsibility for own safety and strictly adhere to Bath Mind’s safety procedures at all times
* Undertake other voluntary duties as appropriate

**Knowledge**

* How disability benefits system works
* How to claim a benefit

**Skills**

* Empathy with our service users lived experience
* Good organisation
* IT skills (basic)
* Written and oral literacy (using the right words and correct language)
* Life experience
* Personal maturity

**Hours of Volunteering**

By mutual agreement

**Other Information**

Volunteering will be subject to successful references and a DBS check.