

Volunteering with Mind



Expand Your Horizons With Voluntary Work

Do you enjoy meeting people? Would you like a rewarding and varied voluntary role helping people in our local community? Would you like the challenge of assisting others in building confidence and fulfilling their dreams? If so Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Mind need you.

What types of voluntary work do you offer?

There is a wide variety of opportunities within the organisation. We need capable volunteers who can help us provide:

Weekly Drop-In Sessions where you will socialise and interact with service users and help them to build their confidence and self-esteem.

Weekly Activity Sessions where you will help individual service users to participate with the activity. You may even want to lead a session if you have a particular interest in the subject.

Weekly Out and About Sessions where volunteers support staff members when working with service users on activities within the community (eg bowling).

Self-management Groups where you will help the facilitator work with service users who are learning to cope with particular mental health difficulties.

The Mentoring Service: volunteers provide weekly one-to-one contact with a service user. Often you may visit a client in their own home and assist them in finding creative ways to achieve their goals.

Office Volunteers: working on reception, fundraising, IT, or other office duties.

Horticulture: working in the garden or allotment with small groups of service users.

The Caring for Mental Health Service provides support to carers of people with mental health problems.

The Counselling Service requires trainee volunteer counsellors (at a minimum of year two) or qualified counsellors to provide weekly sessions for clients.

The Board of Trustees is the group which has ultimate responsibility for the organisation. To become a trustee a volunteer must be elected or co-opted.

What skills or qualities do I need to become a volunteer?

DGS Mind welcomes volunteers from all walks of life and values the importance of diversity within the organisation. Mind seeks volunteers who will be non judgemental, have empathy and understanding. Training will be provided to develop these key skills.

What does Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley Mind expect of me?

Our greatest expectation of volunteers is consistency and reliability. Many of our services depend on volunteers in order to run effectively. If we do not have the support of reliable volunteers, we will ultimately be letting our service users down.

Volunteers are also expected to work within the policies and procedures set out by the organisation. Full training will be given on these in the Volunteer Training Course.

What can I expect of Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley Mind?

The organisation will provide volunteers with:

- Travel expenses and other expenses (such as telephone calls to clients) incurred within your work
- Regular support sessions with a designated member of staff
- Opportunities for training and personal development
- 'Time out' if needed away from your voluntary role
- Lunch allowance if volunteering for five or more hours in one day.

How can I become a volunteer?

- Fill in the form inside this leaflet and return to the office.
- An informal chat will then be arranged with you and two members of staff to make sure it is right to process the application.
- We will then take up references and arrange for you to attend the 2½ day training programme.
- After training we will make a decision to accept you as an official volunteer, and take up a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check for you.

What volunteers have said about working in DGS MIND

"Gives some structure and purpose in life that otherwise would be lacking, gives me a chance to learn new things as well as put the skills I already have or have learnt through volunteering to good use. I find some of the work challenging in a good way and get a buzz when I achieve the goal. Gives me a good chance to meet some interesting people."

"Volunteering for Mind has been an interesting and positive experience knowing we are helping to empower people to lead more positive lives."

Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Mind subscribes to the Investing in Volunteers Standard and its ten indicators:

- We have an expressed commitment to involving volunteers and recognise this is a two-way process.
- We commit sufficient resources to working with volunteers.
- We wish to recruit volunteers who reflect the diversity of the local community.
- We develop appropriate roles for volunteers.
- We are committed to protecting volunteers as far as is possible from any physical, financial and emotional harm arising from volunteering.
- We use fair, efficient and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers.
- Our system of taking up references and official checks is equitable for all volunteers and takes into account the nature of the work.
- We have a clear process to introduce new volunteers to the organisation and its work.
- Everyone in the organisation is aware of the need to give volunteers recognition.
- We take into account the varying support needs of volunteers.

In DGS Mind we are committed to continuously improve our services through quality review and services user feedback

DGS Mind follows the values of the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers as defined by the General Social Care Council.

Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley Mind

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