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|  | Befriender  Role Description |
| Responsible To | Volunteer and Training Coordinator |
| Purpose of Post | Carers of East Lothian are looking to recruit volunteers to maintain regular contact with unpaid carers who are socially isolated and/or who may find it difficult to reach out for support when they are feeling overwhelmed by their caring situation.  Befrienders will help befriendees to feel connected to others and the organisation, enhancing carer wellbeing and extending networks of support. |
| Responsibilities and Activities | * To contact carers by telephone on an agreed basis to build a relationship of trust and friendship (there may also be the option for face-to-face meetings as the service evolves) * To offer a listening ear, companionship, conversation and, where appropriate, information about the organisation’s activities (e.g. carer workshops or engagement opportunities) * To enter a brief note of every contact with a carer using agreed upon recording system * To raise any concerns about a carer’s wellbeing with nominated staff member immediately * To participate in regular supervision with nominated staff member * To uphold organisation’s name and core values and adhere to code of conduct set out in the Volunteer Agreement. |
| Skills and Experience Required | * Personal experience of caring for a family member (adult or child), friend or neighbour with a long-term illness, disability or neurological difference * Good communication skills * Basic computer skills (for entering notes in online system) |
| Person Specification | * Genuine interest in improving support for unpaid carers * Non-judgemental, warm and friendly attitude towards others * Ability to listen * Ability to maintain boundaries * Self-awareness to ask for help when needed * Minimum commitment of 4 hours per month for a period of 6 months (and preferably 12 months) * Volunteers must be adults (aged 18 and over) |
| What We Can Offer | * Opportunity to use knowledge and skills gained through personal experiences of caring to support others * Training and personal development opportunities * References for future employment (if relevant) * Travel and other relevant expenses * Regular social events for volunteers   Carers of East Lothian is a disability confident organisation and carer positive employer. We welcome applications from volunteers with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to enable you to fulfil your volunteering role. Please talk to us about how we can support you. |
| Additional Information | Carers of East Lothian asks all volunteers for two character references.  We will also ask you to complete a self-disclosure form detailing any unspent convictions you may have and a basic disclosure check. We will treat any information you give us as strictly confidential. Disclosing a conviction will not automatically exclude you from volunteering with us. Rather, it will help us to explore with you if the specific role you have applied for is appropriate for you, and if it is not, to discuss alternative roles.  In certain situations, we may also require you to become a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme member, for example, if we are considering matching you with a person who belongs to the category of Protected Adults. |
| Contact | Hilary Smyth (Volunteer and Training Coordinator)  **hilarys@coel.org.uk** / [**centre@coel.org.uk**](mailto:centre@coel.org.uk) |