

Anorexia & Bulimia Care Support Hub

Job Description



Job title: Support Hub Volunteer
Reports to: Support Hub Leader
Works with: Support Hub Leader, Support Hub Facilitator and other Volunteers
Commitment: Minimum of one Hub session per calendar month, by arrangement with Support Hub Leader

Purpose of the ABC Support Hub

The ABC Support Hub is a weekly drop-in support service for anyone affected by eating disorders.

This may include:

- Individuals experiencing difficulties with food, eating, or body image but who do not have a clinical eating disorder diagnosis. The Support Hub may be the first occasion they seek help and support.
- Students referred to the Support Hub by their school, college or university.
- Individuals with a clinical diagnosis of an eating disorder but who are waiting for a treatment programme to begin.
- Those who have completed treatment programmes and who are now continuing their own recovery outside of statutory care (eg, specialist eating disorder units, GPs etc).

Support is also given to those caring for a person with an eating disorder including:

- Parents and carers
- Family members such as siblings, grandparents etc

Professionals including teachers, medical health practitioners and other mental health professionals are also welcome to attend.

The Support Hub provides guidance, support and information; it does not provide clinical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Support Hub Volunteers

Volunteers are very important to our work; without them we would be unable to provide the services and support so many need. As a Hub volunteer, you will gain first-hand experience of supporting people with eating disorders, and their families, and play a vital role in helping us to create a welcoming and supportive environment. To help us plan appropriate staffing levels for the Hub, we ask for a minimum commitment of one Hub session per month from each volunteer. If you can offer additional time, this would be discussed and agreed with the Support Hub Leader during the application process.

Specifically, volunteers will:

- Assist the Support Hub Leader and Facilitator in welcoming visitors to the Hub.
- Ensure each first-time visitor receives a welcome pack explaining what the Hub does, the services it provides, and indicate the policies and procedures ABC follows at the Support Hub.

- During busy periods and where both the Support Hub Leader and Facilitator are in conversation with other visitors, ensure any new visitors are welcomed, offered tea/coffee and generally looked after while they wait for the Hub Leader or Facilitator to become available.
- After training and successful completion of a probationary period, engage in support-based conversation with Hub visitors.
- Work in partnership with other Hub staff and volunteers during Hub opening hours.
- To understand and implement relevant Support Hub and ABC policies and procedures with the guidance of the Support Hub Leader.
- Ensure Hub visitors are treated courteously, compassionately and with respect at all times.
- Take a proactive part in supervision sessions (currently offered fortnightly).
- Ensure any anecdotal feedback and comments received are communicated to the Support Hub Leader at the close of the Hub.

Experience and Skills Required

Naturally we are looking for a real people person and someone able to show understanding and empathy to all Hub visitors. A passion for helping people, particularly those with eating disorders, is of course paramount. Although not a definitive list, people with experience of counselling, teaching, nursing, coaching and youth related work have very transferable skills, but most important is your desire to help those experiencing the impact of eating disorders; everything else can be learnt.

Essential Skills, Experience and Personal Qualities:

- A non-judgmental approach, with a strong belief that every person deserves respect and compassion regardless of their circumstances.
- A personal interest in supporting the better prevention and treatment of eating disorders.
- Experienced in active listening and supporting skills, for example as a counsellor, nurse, mental health professional or experienced volunteer.
- A calm, welcoming and open approach that will help Hub visitors to share their worries and concerns.
- Resilience and strength of character to manage conversations that may be difficult or upsetting.
- Ability to sensitively and appropriately move a conversation on or bring it to a positive close when needed.
- Willing and able to undertake all ABC approved training deemed necessary for the role.
- Ability (with training and after successful completion of probationary period) to feel confident managing conversations or situations where onward referral may be required. For example, where there is evidence of self-harm or risk of suicide, or other serious mental health issue.
- Awareness of, and sensitivity towards, gender, age, cultural or religious differences, LGBTQ issues, and the impact this may have on someone's experience of an eating disorder and their treatment.
- Willing to work within the guidelines, policies and requirements laid down by ABC, with adherence to safeguarding, equality and diversity, complaints and confidentiality policies.
- Ability to remain sensitive towards Hub visitors who may demonstrate behaviours that are confusing or appear irrational, especially where the visitor's experience of an eating disorder varies greatly from your own.

- A willingness to commit to a minimum of one Hub session per calendar month, subject to arrangement with Support Hub Leader.

Desirable Skills and Experience:

- Experience working with children, teenagers and/or young adults.
- Mental Health First Aid and/or counselling qualifications would be an advantage.
- Previous experience in working in a support or small group environment.
- Personal or professional experience/knowledge of eating disorders.