Peer Lead Role Description (for Peer Support Groups)

Cardiff Women's Aid is the lead agency locally in delivering an end-to-end, crisis to recovery, change that lasts service to women who are survivors of domestic abuse and violence. Volunteers play a crucial role in the support we provide to these women and to the wider community, helping us to break down barriers and stigma and facilitating activities that build confidence, skills, and awareness.

We are committed to extending our offering of aftercare services to our survivors, as we recognise that healing and recovery doesn't stop once a group or counselling has finished, and women can remain isolated and vulnerable even when they are rebuilding their lives. Therefore, we are starting peer support groups, which are for women who have similar lived experiences, shared characteristics, or interests to come together to support each other and not have to explain their pasts to. The peers play an active role in supporting each other. The groups are free to be created, led, and focused on whatever is needed by the group. Having an experience or characteristic in common is the base for each peer support group. The groups are for any and all women who identify with the peer group in question: i.e.: an LGBTQ+ group is only open to women who identify as LGBTQ+; a domestic abuse survivor group is only open to women who are survivors of domestic abuse. All groups will be confidential and supportive safe spaces. Peers will have choice and control over their involvement and the support in the group.

The role

- To lead peer support groups that the volunteer has specific knowledge / lived experience of and to communicate with the Peer Support Worker any issues, queries or suggestions that may arise.
- To maintain confidentiality of client details and any disclosures, while reporting any incidents or disclosures in which a group attendee (or a child) is at risk, with the support of Peer Support Worker / Volunteering Coordinator.
- To endeavour to work in a trauma-informed way, and to take advantage of support and training provided.
- The groups will all be hosted by peers for peers and things such as ground rules for the group will be discussed and approved by peers in a democratic manner.
- The peer lead would be not in charge of the group as the groups are equal and non-hierarchical but would play a slightly more active role within the group.
- Developing human connections and promoting the freedom to be ourselves. We want to come together in peer support groups to unlock our potential, create a safe space to support each other, build on our own individual skills and support our mental health as women.
- It is an opportunity to deepen your knowledge of domestic abuse and violence against women, gain meaningful experience of working within a charitable organisation and develop listening and administration skills.

The person

- Peer leads are survivors and will wish to share and support other women going through similar experiences.
- They will have a general understanding of VAWDASV and working with survivors of trauma (training will be provided).
- They will be compassionate, empathetic, and patient, with excellent listening skills and able to stay calm when taking disclosures of trauma or abuse.
- They will be non-judgmental.
- They will understand the importance of signposting and communicating to other members of the group where they can receive other appropriate information and advice.
- They will know how to use video conferencing tools such as Zoom (training will be provided) and use basic technology (emails, calendar etc.) for the organisation of the groups.
- All peer leads are subject to a DBS check.
- This position is open to women only under the Equality Act 2010 pursuant to Schedule 9, Part 1.

General training will be provided on our services, domestic abuse awareness and responding sensitively to disclosures. Feedback and support will also be provided.

For more information, please contact our Volunteering Coordinator at volunteers@cardiffwomensaid.org.uk