

Peer Support Facilitator 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 does not stop once a group or counselling has finished, and women can remain isolated and vulnerable even when they are rebuilding their lives.

We believe in women supporting women, and that strong women can build more strong women. It is important to have a confidential and safe space with survivors who have faced similar experiences, to help motivate and showcase that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Our survivor-led and trauma-informed peer support groups include: a domestic abuse group, a sexual violence group, a 40+ group, an abuse in the family group, a mental health group and an all women group - but we are still expanding, and more groups will be starting throughout the year. We are currently reaching out for peer support facilitators for our peer support groups to help facilitate the groups with our Peer Support Worker.

In the groups, 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 group in question: i.e.: a domestic abuse survivor group is only open to women who identify as survivors. All groups are confidential and supportive safe spaces. Peers will have choice and control over their involvement and the support in the group and create their own group agreements.

The role

- To facilitate 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 group agreement for the group will be discussed and approved by peers in a democratic manner.
- The peer facilitator plays a slightly more active role within the group but recognises that all women are equal and the group is non-hierarchical.
- The peer facilitator promotes the development of human connections and 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.
- Fortnightly 1:1s with the Peer Support Worker are provided to ensure wellbeing and growth of the peer facilitator and the group.
- Monthly check-in meetings will be arranged with the Peer Support Worker and the Volunteering Coordinator and volunteers are expected to attend.

The person

- Peer support facilitators are survivors and will wish to share and support other women going through similar experiences.
- You have a general understanding of VAWDASV and working with survivors of trauma (training will be provided).
- You are compassionate, empathetic, and patient, with excellent listening skills and able to stay calm when taking disclosures of trauma or abuse.
- You are non-judgmental.
- You understand the importance of signposting and communicating to other members of the group where they can receive other appropriate information and advice.
- You know how to use video conferencing tools such as Zoom (training will be provided) and use basic technology (emails, calendar etc.) for the organisation's purposes.
- All volunteers 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