



VOLUNTEER COUNSELLOR PLACEMENT INFORMATION

Background information

We are Buckinghamshire Mind, the mental health charity. Our vision is that everyone with a mental health problem gets support and respect. We deliver services in our local communities, in Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire. We promote wellbeing and recovery; we prevent mental ill health; we offer talking therapies and we provide support in times of crisis.

We are an independent charity that is proud to be affiliated with national Mind and to adhere to its quality standards of governance and service delivery. Buckinghamshire Mind is part of a network of over 100 Local Minds, which provide trusted mental health services to our communities. Together we are Mind. Open, caring, experienced, unstoppable, together.

We stand up for mental health. Our services change lives. For support. For respect. For you.

Our Counselling Service

We offer high quality one-to-one counselling for young people with a variety of mental health needs. Based in High Wycombe, this is a self-referral service which is free for Young People in High Wycombe, Chesham and Aylesbury and is available for those aged between the ages of 13 and 21. We offer an initial assessment and up to 10 ongoing weekly sessions. If you are required to see long term clients, this may not be a suitable placement for you.

Training requirements

Counsellors seeking a voluntary placement must be at an advanced stage of training e.g., as a minimum you must have completed a foundation/certificate level counselling course (or equivalent) and be in the second year of a counselling diploma or equivalent with 50+ supervised clinical placement hours. We do not consider applicants on a distance learning course. An interest in Young People counselling is advantageous.

Application and selection process

Application forms can be found on our website www.bucksmind.org.uk Applications received will go onto our waiting list and you will be contacted if/when a placement becomes available. If we have not been able to offer a placement within 18 months, we will confidentially shred your application information. Please be aware that placements do not become available on a regular basis, so it is important that you also look elsewhere. If you are contacted about a possible placement, you will be invited to attend an interview which will also consist of a case study scenario which you will be required to discuss. All offers of a placement are subject to references and enhanced DBS check.

Personal Therapy

We place considerable emphasis on counsellors having experienced longer-term therapy.

Supervision

In house supervision is provided for all Volunteer Counsellors working on the YP Counselling Service. You will be allocated a place in a group of 4. The group will be run by a supervisor who is qualified and has experience of working with Young People. You will also need to have an external supervisor (at your own cost) who you can take Bucks Mind clients to also if the need arises. Your Team Lead will be your Managerial Supervisor.



Insurance

Public liability and professional indemnity insurance are provided.

Ethics

Buckinghamshire Mind is organisational members of the BACP, and all counsellors are expected to adhere to the BACP ethical framework for the counselling professions.

Expenses

Buckinghamshire Mind does not have the financial resources to reimburse travel or parking expenses.

Commitment

Counsellors are expected to commit to a minimum of 1 year on placement and will be required to see a minimum of 3 clients on a weekly basis. Extended leave is discouraged as this is detrimental to the wellbeing of clients and the service.

Administration responsibilities

- Arriving in good time to prepare for seeing clients.
- Booking ongoing appointments with clients and keeping clients and the office informed of any leave.
- Keeping the room booking diary up to date and booking the room as far in advance as is possible if seeing your client in person. Putting planned absence in the diary.
- Having a safe and confidential space with a stable network connection to conduct sessions if working online.
- Completing all relevant paperwork on time e.g., updating our CRM after each session, closing forms, evaluation forms etc.
- Whenever possible and using the office phone, counsellors are responsible for contacting clients who don't turn up so the counsellor and office know if they will be attending the following week.
- Familiarising yourself with the cancellation policy and adhering to this unless there are extenuating circumstances. The team lead can provide guidance.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the team lead or another member of the safeguarding team.
- Ensure rooms are left clean and tidy and furniture is returned to its original position.
- Reading appropriate policies and procedures.

While working Remotely:

- Make sure you have a Teams set up on your Laptop (Laptop provided by Bucks Mind)
- Make sure you have Buck Mind Email set up on your laptop.
- Be able to send reminder to clients 24 hours before their session (Reminder for the session)
- Have a safe and confidential space to carry out client sessions.
- Update session Notes online within 24 hours of the session.

We really value the time given by our volunteers and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for our counsellors. The team lead works 3 days a week and is available to talk through any concerns or issues that might arise during your time with us.