

SURREY DRUG & ALCOHOL CARE Ltd

Things to ask yourself when Volunteering for Surrey Drug & Alcohol Care

We are accountable to those who fund us, namely Surrey Public Health at Surrey County Council.

There is no cost to you to call to the Freephone Call Centre when you take on the line and leave the line. Cost of phone calls coming in on the Helpline are borne by the charity.

We need volunteers to have:

1. Good listening skills – people who phone us need to get what they have to say off their chest. Sometimes they need help and encouragement to do this. Often there are other problems besides substance misuse. Mental Health issues for example.
2. Why do you want to volunteer? Have you any contact or knowledge of substance misuse?
3. Rota – can you fit in? Do you have the use of a telephone in a quiet part of the house? Do you have young babies or children to fit around? What about noisy pets? Day shifts are usually for 5 hours, and night shifts for 9 hours, except for weekends and public holidays.
4. What are your hours of work at the moment?
5. Do you have the ability to work on your own but within the Surrey Drug & Alcohol Care framework?
6. Confidentiality – protection for you and the caller and all Surrey Drug & Alcohol Care volunteers. No names or numbers are given out.
7. Are you familiar with Policies practices and the law on equal opportunity, discrimination against people with disabilities or on religious, ethnic, ethnicity or sexual orientation? This applies to both volunteers and clients.
8. Any questions you would like to ask?
9. Can you attend volunteer meetings and further training?

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION (December 2015)

An initial Induction Training programme will be undertaken prior to the volunteer taking the helpline. This will be followed by a minimum of two shadow shifts where an experienced volunteer will support the volunteer in handling calls.

Once trained as a volunteer for SDAC, we hope you will be responsible for taking a minimum of one shift per fortnight on the rota for a minimum of 18 months.

At the beginning of each shift you will take the SDAC Helpline on a phone provided and paid for by yourself either landline or mobile. All calls to the helpline are free to the caller.

You will ensure that you are available to the whole shift, unless otherwise previously agreed.

You will have a quiet working area in which to take the calls without distraction or undue intrusive noise.

After each call, a simple monitoring form will be completed on-line at the Survey Monkey website. If it is not possible to do this arrangements can be made with the co-ordinator.

Calls resulting in a Referral can be submitted online or directly to the co-ordinator, via telephone or a completed referral form sent as an attachment via e-mail.

You will support callers, substance misusers, their friends and family offering advice, information and referrals into treatment as appropriate.

You must follow SDAC policies including data protection and confidentiality.

You must be aware of health and safety issues whilst working on the helpline.

You must be aware of safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults whilst working on the helpline, and understand the SDAC reporting processes.

For calls with queries re advertising, treatment agency appointments etc the co-ordinator must be contacted.

You will support fellow members of SDAC at the beginning and end of each of your allocated shifts during 'Handover'.

You will be able to access advice and supervision through the next volunteer on the line, the dedicated peers support volunteers, or line management as appropriate.

There is no physical contact with callers to the line.

There is no disclosure of personal details to callers on the line.

To participate if possible and appropriate, in fund raising events and events that raise public awareness of the downstream effects of substance misuse, with prior agreement of the committee.

To attend refresher events, meetings and satellite groups as required and if possible.

To retrain if you do not take a shift for 6 months.

PERSON SPECIFICATION – 24 Hour Help Line Volunteer

Personal Qualities:

- Ability to relate with empathy to callers, i.e. users and carers / significant others, on issues relating to drug and alcohol misuse
- Ability to work alone, from their own base
- Ability to handle complex calls robustly

Training:

- Commitment to complete SDAC's initial training programme (all held on Saturdays) and to attend additional training sessions and meetings, as required

Experience / Skills:

SDAC positively encourages volunteers from a diversity of backgrounds. We seek people who have:-

- Good listening skills
- Good communication skills
- Good time management, i.e. to consider shift commitment
- Good team player
- A calm, patient and professional manner
- Basic IT skills – able to send and receive email
- Understanding of the importance of confidentiality
- Understanding of the importance of maintaining personal and professional boundaries