



## **Meeting Centre Volunteer Role Description & General Guidelines**

The volunteers role is to support the smooth running of sessions at DMiP's Meeting Centre's.

Volunteers help the sessions to be enjoyable and accessible to a wide range of Meeting Centre members.

Here are some ways that you can help us:

- Support the joint planning of a program that is highly influenced by the interests and experiences of all Meeting Centre members
- Help prepare and pack away a space that is welcoming safe and accessible to all of the Meeting Centre members
- Greet and connect with everyone in a warm and friendly manner
- Help to ensure that everyone is included and part of all aspects of the Meeting Centres activities
- Work alongside all staff and other volunteers as valued members of the DMiP team
- Support sessional workers in carrying out their sessions eg. poetry, movement or music sessional workers
- Sign into register so that hours are logged
- Adhere to relevant policies and procedures
- Undertake mandatory and other training relevant to this post and attend weekly brief catch up sessions with staff whenever possible
- Help at sessions in other community spaces
- Help with appetising food preparation, including members in this whenever possible
- Check that all members attending have their names are logged in the visitors book

### **General Guidelines**

We want you to get the most out of your volunteering experience with us. To help you do this we have come up with these simple guidelines that we are all expected to stick to at each of our Meeting Centres. It is very important to work to these guidelines as they help to create a positive atmosphere for everyone involved and most importantly, they can really support people who are living with dementia make the most of their time with us.

**Doing with, not for** - At DMiP we believe in empowering people to stay active and involved for as long as possible. Think about everything that you do while you are with us and try to increase everyone's ability to participate in what is being done. This can be in food preparation, making drinks and planning future sessions. Everything is more enjoyable if members can involve themselves in everything that goes on.

**Be a part of the circle** - It is so important for the positive feel of the group that as many people as possible are involved in circle time. There are times when people might have to be in the kitchen or busy with other tasks but there needs to be times in the day when we are all engaged with each other. Circle time is a great time for this. Its where we can ALL connect as human beings.

**No us and them... just we** - We are all about equality and inclusion. Dementia does not discriminate and can affect anyone. There is no separateness in our Meeting Centres. We are all in this together.

**Support DMiP staff** - We would love to hear your ideas about how we can improve what we are doing and encourage you to share these thoughts with us. Be selective about when this is passed on to staff and do not do anything that will interrupt the flow of an already planned session.

**Only pack away after the session has ended** - We want members to have our full attention right up until the end of the session. There is time to pack away when the session has ended. Some members enjoy helping us to pack up but we always wait till after 3.00pm.

**Be careful when asking questions** - think about how you are communicating with members at all times. People living with dementia can find lots of questions difficult as they may not be able to find the answer. Think about making conversation in a way that does not need an answer to a question. This can be hard at first but soon becomes second nature. Saying something that opens a conversation like 'I love your scarf' feels less pressured and more inviting to join in.

**Stay for the planning session for the following week** - Although Meeting Centres are a lot of fun, they also take a great deal of planning and care. We hold a planning session for the following week after the end of every session. We would really appreciate it if you could stay for these brief sessions. They really help us to keep everything running smoothly.

**Come at 10.30am for our volunteer check in and information sessions** - we want you to get the most out of your time with us. Understanding dementia and supporting people to live well with dementia takes a degree of skill and sensitivity. We know that many volunteers don't have the time to do long training or support sessions so we are keen to build them in regularly at the start of each session.

## **How We Will Support You**

Your contribution to our Meeting Centre development work is invaluable and we want you to be a valued member of our team. To this end, DMiP makes the following commitment to you:

### *DBS Checks*

If you do not already have a current DBS check, we will pay for a check to be carried out.

### *Travel Expenses*

To pay travel expenses. Forms are available at the Meeting Centre or can be sent to you via email.

### *Training and Support*

As a minimum, we will arrange for you to participate on:

Adapting to Change training, which is the main support philosophy of all Meeting Centres

Safeguarding Training, which is a mandatory requirement

On an ongoing basis, there will also be opportunities to attend further training around dementia if this is of interest and helpful to you.

### *Raising Issues or Concerns*

You should never feel like you are alone with any issue or concern you might have in relation to your role at the Meeting Centre. In the first instance, if you are concerned about anything you see or hear at the Meeting Centre, or if you are unsure about any aspect of your role, please raise it with a member of DMiP staff at the centre. If for some reason you cannot do this on the day, please contact a member of staff as soon as possible.