

# Volunteer Role Profile

Volunteer Role

**First Steps Host**

Volunteer Manager

**First Steps Programme Manager**

Where you will be based

**Home**

## Why we want you

People tell us that finding out about the information and support that is available and meeting other people with Parkinson's was important when they were newly diagnosed. It helped them take the first steps to living well with Parkinson's.

The First Steps programme helps people to take those first steps. It is a structured group programme hosted by people with Parkinson's. The hosts' own personal experience of living well with Parkinson's provides inspiration and motivation to course participants.

We're looking for volunteers to co-facilitate online First Steps courses, delivered via Zoom. You'll use your personal experience of living well with Parkinson's to inspire and motivate course participants who have been affected by a new diagnosis of Parkinson's. The group size for an online course is up to 12 participants. During the course people have the opportunity to ask questions, share their experiences, take part in group discussions and hear from other people in a similar situation. Some people attend the course with a member of their family or a friend, other people attend on their own.

Feedback from participants is overwhelmingly positive, as is that of current hosts: "For me, with Parkinson's, I often feel very lost, alone and somehow freakish. So to meet a group of lovely people who also happen to have Parkinson's felt very reassuring and comforting. The shared information was really good to hear - like signposts appearing on an unknown road." course participant

"When you help someone across the street you feel good. When you help 12 people from a dark place you feel awesome." Jason, programme host.

We are committed to the active involvement and support of all volunteers and your input helps us to constantly improve what we do. You'll liaise with and be supported closely by Parkinson's UK staff at all times.

## What you will be doing

- You'll facilitate an agreed number of groups (made up of four separate online sessions, each three hours in duration) per year using the programme script and presentation provided. The course is scripted to

- ensure a consistent and structured programme is delivered.
- You'll contribute to the ongoing development of the programme by encouraging feedback from participants.
- You'll deliver the role in line with Parkinson's UK values.

## **The skills you need**

- To be a volunteer programme host we ask that you are a person with Parkinson's
- A positive attitude - it is much easier to deliver a positive message if you have a positive outlook on your personal experiences that you can share.
- Good communication skills - being heard and the ability to listen is essential. Some experience of facilitating group conversations would be an advantage.
- Integrity to handle confidential information - these groups include honest conversations about life - you will receive support on confidentiality. You should be an empathetic and sensitive listener.
- Newly diagnosed people are often very nervous about joining a group and they need to feel they can trust the hosts in order to feel comfortable and able to contribute fully. You will receive training to feel confident signposting to our Helpline and the Parkinson's Local Advisor, as the role is to facilitate discussions only.
- Basic IT skills - this includes joining online meetings and confidently navigating the Parkinson's UK website. You'll be supported in each session by an online meeting assistant volunteer.

## **What's in it for you**

- You'll meet new people, connecting with other people living with Parkinson's across the UK.
- You'll be supporting people affected by Parkinson's, knowing that thanks to you people know what support and information is available to them and have started to take those first steps to living well with Parkinson's.
- We'll support you to learn more about Parkinson's UK, and you'll be able to develop your facilitation and communication skills.
- You will be able to choose to host groups with dates and times that fit in with your lifestyle.

## **Disclaimer**

To become a volunteer First Steps Host we ask that you:

- Complete an online induction to volunteering at Parkinson's UK. You can complete this from home at your own pace; it should take no more than 2 hours.
- Attend a one-hour video conference introduction to the First Steps programme.
- Practice rehearsal sessions with other hosts online.
- Attend a one-hour video

conference introduction to Zoom. • Co-host at least two sessions with a more experienced host. There will be regular opportunities throughout your time as a volunteer for coaching and Q&As with your fellow hosts, programme trainers, and your staff contact.

This role involves handling personal/sensitive information about people affected by Parkinson's with care and in accordance with the GDPR 2018. Your training includes support on confidentiality and data protection.