

## Volunteer Role Description

<b>Role Title:</b>	Online Mental Health Support Volunteer for the Chat with Charlie Instant Messaging Service	<b>Project:</b>	Chat with Charlie
<b>Hours:</b>	5.30pm to 10.30pm 2 shifts minimum per week. The service runs 7 days per week	<b>Base:</b>	Mersea Road, Office in Colchester

<b>Responsible to:</b>	Online Mental Health Support Co-ordinator
<b>Accountable to:</b>	Counselling Service Manager

### Role Summary:

This is an exciting opportunity to join the Chat with Charlie service, volunteering as part of a team offering one to one Instant Messaging support for Students (currently Essex University only).

To provide emotional support, information and signposting to students some of whom may be in considerable distress or crisis.

Full training will be provided including safeguarding and basic Online counselling skills.

### Key Responsibilities:

- Provide one to one support to students via an online instant messaging platform.
- Be able to volunteer for two evenings a week for a minimum of six months.
- Use active listening skills appropriate with Instant Messaging, supporting and responding in a person centred non-judgemental way to each individual
- Be attentive to the words and phrases used by the student in order to pick up , and work closely with the duty team leader in order to respond to any student who may be distressed
- Ensure all information provided to the student is of high quality and up to date
- Signpost students to other statutory or university/college services in line with their assessed need and the individuals wishes
- In collaboration with the duty Co-ordinator, contact the emergency services, when appropriate, for example to request a welfare check or police intervention where a student indicates self-harm or harm to others
- Complete the computerised client records in line with the organisational procedures ensuring the information is accurate, timely and relevant
- Work with the team, supporting one another
- Organise own work based activities in order to ensure the smooth running of the service
- Work to best practice and keep up to date on any changes relating to the Service
- Attend team meetings on a bi-monthly basis or more frequently should the need of the

service require this. Participate in discussion about current operational issues and contribute comments as appropriate in order to contribute to the development and quality of service provision

- Attend and participate in training as required in order to maintain competence in the role and for personal and professional development
- Attend and participate in individual supervision meetings in line with the supervision policy
- Ensure understanding of and implement policies, objectives and management decisions relating to the provision of the service. If in doubt seek clarification from the service manager
- Ensure that the objectives of the service are adhered to
- Work in line with the organisation's policies and procedures with particular attention to confidentiality, safeguarding and respect for individuals personal information

**Organisational values:** *Post-holders should be able to demonstrate the following:*

<b>Value</b>	<b>Phrase</b>
<b>Honest</b>	Trust in our honesty
<b>Empowering</b>	Giving others strength
<b>Non-judgemental</b>	Treating all as equals
<b>Respectful</b>	Showing admiration for others
<b>Supportive</b>	Here when people need us

General:

- Undertake any relevant training as appropriate
- Understand the importance of confidentiality
- Be very patient with people
- Ability to communicate clearly
- Reliability
- Have an understanding of mental health issues
- Able to offer basic emotional support to clients when needed
- Dress smart/casual
- The role holder must familiarise themselves with matters relating to health and safety management as they affect them personally and/or Mid and North Essex Mind; reporting any potential risks to life or property immediately in accordance with the Mid and North Essex Mind's Health and Safety policy
- Refrain from smoking in any area of Mid and North Essex Mind's premises not designated a smoking area

### Person Specification

Category	Essential	Desirable
<b>Education &amp; Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good standard of education to a minimum of GCSE English and Maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling qualification</li> <li>• Psychology A level</li> </ul>

<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working as a member of a team</li> <li>• Working with members of the public</li> <li>• Experience of supporting people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with people with mental health and/or behavioural difficulties</li> <li>• Working on a telephone helpline, instant messaging chat room or similar</li> <li>• Communicating with professional staff e.g. health service staff</li> </ul>
<b>Skills, Abilities &amp; Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent IT skills</li> <li>• Competent in the use of Microsoft Office packages, including Outlook, Internet and Word</li> <li>• Understanding and insight into the needs of people who suffer from mental ill health</li> <li>• Excellent communication and listening skills.</li> <li>• Non-judgemental approach</li> <li>• Ability to communicate and relay information in a professional manner to staff of other agencies</li> <li>• Ability to support people experiencing personal stress in a calm and confident way</li> <li>• Ability to record information in a clear and concise manner using computer based record keeping systems</li> <li>• Initiative and confidence to make decisions</li> <li>• Ability to give information clearly to people who may have barriers to understanding</li> <li>• Ability to remain calm in a stressful situation</li> <li>• Able to work a minimum of 2 shifts per week for a minimum of 6 months</li> <li>• Understanding of and commitment to organisation values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge base related to mental health issues</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathic</li> <li>• Non-Judgemental</li> <li>• Supporting people with dignity and respect</li> <li>• Self-motivated</li> <li>• Willing to learn</li> <li>• Initiative to develop and to be reflective</li> <li>• Team player</li> <li>• Good time keeper</li> </ul>	