

Buddy Service Buddy – role description and specification

Responsible to: Education & Support Services Manager / Volunteering Development Manager

Location: home-based/ National

Time Commitment: variable. Expect periods with no links, and during links we suggest contact around six times or over a period of three months. Each contact is likely to be up to an hour.

About Lymphoma Action

With the help of our passionate volunteers we're ensuring that no one has to face their lymphoma alone. Lymphoma Action is the UK's only charity dedicated to lymphoma, the fifth most common cancer and the most common cancer in young people aged 15-24. We've been providing in-depth, expert information and support for over 30 years, helping thousands of people affected by lymphoma.

How this role makes a difference

Our Buddy Service offers people affected by lymphoma the opportunity to talk to someone with similar experiences. Individuals are linked to a Buddy with closely-matched experiences, to share their experiences. Buddies offer this support on a time-limited basis, via phone or email. The service is not a befriending service, counselling or a long-term support.

The Buddy Service aims to:

- offer peer-support on a one-to-one basis by phone or email;
- put individuals in touch with a buddy with closely-matched experiences; and
- offer a short-term opportunity to share experiences with someone who 'understands what they are going through'.

As a Buddy you will use your personal experience of lymphoma to support others affected by lymphoma to feel understood, less isolated, and more able to cope with living with their lymphoma. Our Buddies include people with lymphoma as well as family members and carers.

What's involved?

- Delivering short-term support by phone or email to an individual. This might be individuals with lymphoma, or a family member or carer (depending on your situation and experiences).
- Using your own experiences of lymphoma to empathise with and support individuals who are in similar situations to your own, or who are likely to be going through something similar (for example, particular treatment regimens).
- Using interpersonal skills to sensitively share your experiences, whilst observing boundaries of the role and signposting back to Lymphoma Action as appropriate.
- Volunteering within Lymphoma Action guidelines, policies, procedures and record-keeping.

What skills and experience you'll need

- A personal experience of lymphoma is required. You may have, or have had, lymphoma yourself, or you may be a family member or carer of someone who has or had lymphoma. You will have come to terms with your own diagnosis, or that of the person close to you, and be able to support others sensitively.
- You'll feel comfortable and able to talk about your experiences of lymphoma and the emotions around this, and be able to support others through their own experiences.
- You'll be engaging, empathetic and non-judgemental, and able to communicate well with a range of people, ages and backgrounds.
- You will be able to understand and adhere to the boundaries of the role, including not offering medical or other advice, not offering 'counselling', not encouraging dependency or an on-going relationship.
- Experience of skills used to support people, such as active listening skills, empowerment and emotional support are an advantage.
- You will be able to offer contact by email and phone, and have access to a quiet and confidential space to offer this contact.
- You will be over 18 years of age.
- You will be at least 12 months on from completing treatment or starting on active monitoring.

Training and support you will be given

- Induction to Lymphoma Action.
- Specific training to deliver the Buddy role (delivered as a one-day training workshop).
- Ongoing support from a designated Lymphoma Action team, and opportunities to debrief with the team following contacts.
- Additional support from the Volunteering Development Manager.
- News and updates about volunteering for Lymphoma Action.

What you will get out of volunteering with us

- You'll make a positive impact in supporting people affected by lymphoma.
- You'll be part of our volunteering community who are at the heart of our work.
- You'll develop a deeper understanding of lymphoma and the work of a national charity.
- You'll bring your own expertise and interests to the role.
- You'll improve your own wellbeing by connecting with others.

Next Steps

To apply for this role please fill out our volunteer application form and a member of staff will be in contact with you. You can contact the Volunteering Team by emailing volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk or 01296 619424.