

# Community Volunteer Handbook


# Volunteering with us

This handbook provides practical information to help make sure you have a meaningful and safe volunteer experience with us. This is alongside the support you will receive when carrying out your activities.

This handbook references several of our policies, procedures and guidance to help and support you carry out your role.

You can access these online via our dedicated volunteer resources hub: [lymphoma-action.org.uk/vr](https://lymphoma-action.org.uk/vr)

## Volunteering Strategy

Our [strategy](#)  shares our commitment to make volunteering inclusive, meaningful and impactful so that together we can help make sure no one has to face lymphoma alone.




## Support for you

We're here to support you throughout your time as a volunteer. Your main point of contact is the Volunteering Team - Carly Benton, Volunteering Development Manager and Sophie Duval, Volunteering Development Officer.

 [volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk)

 01296 619415

## Induction and learning

You'll be sent the Charity's [Volunteer Welcome Guide](#)  to read, as well as taking part in an induction webinar.

Please spend time familiarising yourself with information in this handbook and our policies and procedures.

We'll provide you with the additional information and learning that you may require for the activities you take part in, and for your role on the day of an activity.

# About our work

Lymphoma Action is the UK's only Charity dedicated to lymphoma and we're here for everyone, however they are affected.

We **inform** with trusted information, approved by medical experts and reviewed by users, to help and empower people to fully understand the complexities of lymphoma.

We **support** at every step of the way. From symptom awareness through diagnosis, treatment and beyond, we're here to help. We support doctors and nurses to deliver the best possible treatment and care.

We also support the dedicated volunteers and fundraisers who make our work possible.

We **connect** people to lymphoma expertise, and to those going through a similar experience, to make sure they are not alone.

We **raise awareness** and make sure that lymphoma is not forgotten by government and policymakers.

Read how we hope to change how people live with lymphoma in [Our Strategy for 2023 - 2025](#).

Our vision is that everyone affected by lymphoma will receive the best possible support, treatment and care.

Our mission is that through information, education, support and influence, we will make sure no one has to face lymphoma alone.

Our values underpin all of our work:



# About lymphoma

**Lymphoma is a type of blood cancer that develops when white blood cells called lymphocytes grow out of control. Lymphocytes are part of your immune system.**

Lymphoma is a complex cancer, with over 60 different forms or subtypes – each with their varying presentations, diagnoses and treatment options.

Despite its prevalence, lymphoma is still not widely recognised or understood.

Our [Understanding lymphoma resource](#) provides links to further information about lymphoma, and our [webpages](#) have plenty of information.

## Key information about lymphoma:

- Lymphoma is the fifth most common cancer in the UK
- Every 26 minutes someone in the UK is diagnosed with lymphoma
- Lymphoma can occur at any age
- It is the most common cancer among people aged 15-24
- There are over 60 different subtypes of lymphoma broadly grouped into two main types - the most common are Hodgkin and non-Hodgkin
- There are effective treatments for most types of lymphoma.

## Common symptoms of lymphoma:



A lump in your neck, armpit or groin?



Feeling worn out for no reason?



Losing weight but don't know why?



Itching all the time but don't know why?



Drenched in sweat during the night?

# How you can get involved

Community activities offer flexible and often occasional opportunities in your local area, or online. This section outlines the different activities you can choose to take part in.

Some activities are self-led and you can get started with them straight away, while others require additional learning or resources.

For organised events, we will send you requests about suitable volunteering activities in your local area. We welcome your ideas too! If you see or hear about something that you think would be a great way for the Charity to raise awareness, let us know.

If you'd like to manage and arrange your own events, please always discuss them with us first so we can help support you with this.



## Display and distribute our information

Raise awareness of lymphoma, the Charity's services and events by distributing and displaying posters, flyers and information in your own time, across your community.

## Fundraising events

There are lots of ways you can fundraise in aid of Lymphoma Action. From organising an event, hosting a quiz night, running a sweepstake to taking part in a personal challenge.

The Fundraising Team are always happy to offer support and ideas.



I really enjoy using my skills and experience to make a difference in my community, which has improved my self-esteem knowing that I am helping others.

## Attend information or awareness events

Attend an event or run a stand in your area to raise awareness of lymphoma and the Charity's services. These events may be aimed at the general public, patients or healthcare professionals.

## Give talks and presentations

If you have experience and feel comfortable with public speaking and presenting (and sharing your experience of lymphoma if you have been affected), you could represent Lymphoma Action by delivering a talk virtually or in person.

Speaking opportunities could be to rotary clubs, women's institutes, schools, universities, businesses, healthcare networks, or other cancer services.

## Provide on-the-day support at events

Help Lymphoma Action staff or lead volunteers deliver successful community events through supporting with stewarding, or general admin such as registering and welcoming people.

Or attend local challenge events to cheer on individuals taking part in support of Lymphoma Action. You will have access to a pack of cheering goodies such as flags, banners and balloons.

## Support cheque presentations

Every year local groups, organisations, schools, businesses and individuals raise around £150,000 for Lymphoma Action through community fundraising.

Attend a cheque presentation to thank the fundraisers for the money they have raised in aid of the Charity. The event may feature in the press or include having your photo taken - we will let you know beforehand.

## Co-ordinate collection tins

Every year local shops raise around £1000 from placing collection tins on their counters.

Help us raise even more money by placing collection tins in local shops or stores in your community and coordinate the collection and counting of the money that is raised.



# Information for your role

**This section provides an overview of your responsibilities as a Community Volunteer, and our policies and procedures.**

The [Community Volunteer webpage](#) on our volunteer resources hub lists guidance and information for you, including individual briefing sheets about each of these activities, as well as a linked form to update us on which areas interest you most.

## Communications with Lymphoma Action

Keeping in contact with us is essential, especially as you are supported remotely. As well as knowing that you have all the information and resources you need, we'd like to understand how your volunteering is going.

Communication from the Volunteering Team is occasional in-between the monthly email updates and your activities, but we'll be available to offer support at the end of an email or phone.

You'll also receive a general quarterly volunteer e-newsletter.

## Representing Lymphoma Action

All volunteers are representatives of the Charity, and as a Community Volunteer you will be taking in part in activities as a 'face' of Lymphoma Action.

Therefore, throughout your volunteering, including all communications and any relationships you build, you have a responsibility to represent Lymphoma Action and our mission and values positively.

Should you have a concern or complaint to raise about your volunteering or the Charity, we're here to support you and ask that you speak directly with us so we can aim to resolve these with you.

We'd also love to hear any compliments you have, or any that might be shared by others during your volunteering. We have a [Compliments and complaints procedure for volunteers](#) .

If you are ever unsure about what to say, write or wear during your volunteering, we're happy to offer support.



## Sharing information responsibly

Community activity connects people with information about lymphoma and the work of the Charity. It's therefore important to understand the right level of information to share, within the scope of the role.

Your role will generally be to share an overview about what is lymphoma, who Lymphoma Action are and our information and support services. This may include sharing your own experience, which we'll cover in the induction.

Signposting people to the Lymphoma Action [website](#) and [Helpline](#) will help them find up-to-date and trustworthy information about all aspects of lymphoma.

Increasing and updating your knowledge of lymphoma and our work is an ongoing process throughout your volunteering. Our [Sharing information responsibly](#) resource will provide an overview on this topic and useful resources to support you with your learning.

## Information

Books and information can be viewed or downloaded for free from the [website](#). You can also order our free information on Lymphoma Action's [online shop](#).

## Logging your volunteer hours

It's very important for you to log all of your volunteering with as some Community Volunteer activities are entirely self-led. By sharing information about your volunteer activity we can understand and celebrate the impact of volunteering across the UK.

We have an [online form](#) that we ask you to fill in. You may find it useful to let us know after each activity, or submit the total each month.

## Expenses

You shouldn't be out of pocket as a result of your volunteering. You can claim back any travel expenses for mileage or public transport costs associated with your volunteering.

We have an [expenses policy and claim form](#) for you to fill out, sign and return to the Volunteering Team.

## Handling money

You may take part in fundraising activities, or collect money on behalf of the Charity during your activities.

Please read our [Cash handling and fundraising resource](#), which includes our safety and security information about fundraising and collecting money in aid of Lymphoma Action.



## Equality, equity, diversity, inclusion

Lymphoma Action is committed to providing equal and fair opportunities, and creating an environment where everyone feels included.

You will be supporting equality, equity, diversity and inclusion through your community activities. You have a responsibility to be welcoming, and help create an environment where everyone feels respected and valued regardless of identity, age, sex, disability, background or religion.

Please see our [Equality, diversity and inclusion policy](#)  for more information.

## Safeguarding

Lymphoma Action has a duty of care to protect everyone involved in the Charity's activities, including volunteers and staff.

You have responsibility to report any information or concerns you have, or are made aware of, about safeguarding during your volunteering activities. For example, someone shares something with you, or you have a reasonable suspicion of actual harm or risk of harm.


Please report these straight away to the Volunteering Team, and to the event organiser on the day (if applicable). If you're in doubt, always report a concern and we can talk it through with you.

## Confidentiality and data protection

Lymphoma Action has a legal and ethical duty and responsibility to securely protect the personal and sensitive information of all individuals. Throughout your volunteering, and even after it has ended, you must maintain the confidential information and personal data of everyone you interact with during your activities, including other volunteers and staff.

You may have access to personal details of others, for example, if you're signing people into an event. You may also speak with people who are affected by lymphoma so are likely to hear details about their health. This information must be treated as confidential, securely stored, and only used as required for the activity, which will be outlined to you before the activity takes place.

**If you think confidentiality or data protection has been breached, even accidentally, you must tell us as soon as possible. The only justification for breaching confidentiality is reporting a safeguarding concern.**

**The charity's [safeguarding policy and reporting procedure](#)  overrides confidentiality and data protection, and all other policies and procedures, in almost every circumstance.**

# Health, safety and wellbeing

Lymphoma Action has a duty of care and legal responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of our volunteers, staff and service users to make sure everyone has a safe experience.

You have a responsibility to follow all health and safety policies and instructions provided for your activities, and let us know of any issues or concerns for yourself and others.

If there is ever an immediate risk of harm to yourself or others, call 999.

## Reporting accidents or incidents

You must report any accident or incident that occurs during your volunteering, including near misses, however minor they may be. We have an [Incident report form](#) to make a formal report, and return it to the Volunteering Team.

## Lone volunteering

Your role is supported remotely, so you may undertake activities without close or direct support from Lymphoma Action staff. This is called lone volunteering.

Please familiarise yourself with our [Lone volunteering procedure](#), which is there to support you in staying safe.

## Your safety

Never take any unnecessary risks when volunteering for us. If in doubt, follow your instincts and do not put yourself in a risky situation. We have a [Personal safety checklist](#) with information and tips to help you think about your safety.

We also ask you to provide emergency contact details, in case of a situation occurs during your volunteering.

## Your health and wellbeing

Your health and wellbeing is a priority while volunteering. Please be mindful of your own needs and feelings, particularly if sensitive and emotional topics arise during your activities.

We're here to support you, including getting in touch with us when you need to talk about situations you may find difficult, or discussing the need to take a break from volunteering. We also provide access to an external counselling service upon request.

## Helpline Services

You may also wish to contact our confidential Helpline Services.

The Helpline is available Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm.

• **Freephone number:**  
0808 808 5555

**Email:**  
[information@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:information@lymphoma-action.org.uk)

• **Live Chat:**  
window in the bottom right of [Lymphoma Action's website](#)

## Information for community events

As a volunteer, you and your volunteering activities are insured by the Charity's Public Liability Insurance and Employer's Liability Insurance, provided everything is in accordance with our policies, procedures and guidelines.

The venues and locations where community activities take place should be covered by their health and safety policies, procedures and insurance. Please speak with the Volunteering Team if you are organising your own event.

Please familiarise yourself with the volunteer activity brief, as well as any additional information given by the event organiser or venue on the day.

### Key information

- When attending an event organised by an external organisation, identify the organiser and/or venue staff should you need anything on the day.
- You must be aware of any actual or potential hazards. For example, faulty equipment; trip hazards; access routes blocked; facilities out of action.
- If you notice anything dangerous or faulty, report it straight away. If you can safely reduce the risk, for example, moving a chair that is blocking a fire exit, please do so. If it cannot be minimised safely, don't continue the activity.

## Safely handling equipment

You may need to transport equipment and resources to your volunteering activity.

In most cases, these can be delivered directly to the venue to minimise the need for you to transport them, although you will still need to set up the items safely.

Don't worry about saying no if you are unable to lift or carry anything. Let us know if you have concerns about handling or transporting equipment.




### Key information

- We recommend taking a wheeled suitcase to transport equipment.
- Assess what you can safely lift and carry - please do not carry heavy loads; more than you can manage or large items that obstruct you from looking straight ahead.
- Check the route you'll be taking and remove any obstructions along the way.
- Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height.
- Reduce the amount of twisting, stooping and reaching you do when lifting and carrying.
- Keep the load close to your waist, keeping your head up as you move.





Thank you for joining our valued volunteer community helping us to inform, support and connect people affected by lymphoma.

Together we can make sure no one faces lymphoma alone.

## Volunteering information

-  01296 619415
-  [volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@lymphoma-action.org.uk)
-  [www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/Volunteering](http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/Volunteering)

## Lymphoma Action Support Services

-  Helpline (freephone) 0808 808 5555 (Mon to Fri, 10am to 3pm)
-  [information@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:information@lymphoma-action.org.uk)
-  [www.lymphoma-action.org.uk](http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk)
-  Live chat via our website (Mon to Fri, 10am to 3pm)

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