

VOLUNTEERING WITH CROHN'S & COLITIS UK

Our Vision: Improved lives today. A world free from Crohn's and Colitis tomorrow.

Our Values: Every day we behave in ways to bring our values of "Ambitious", "Compassionate" and "Stronger Together" to life.



Introduction

We're the UK's leading charity for Crohn's and Colitis. Right now, over 300,000 people in the UK are living with a lifelong disease that many people have never heard of. And the real number could be almost double that. Because of the stigma and misunderstanding surrounding these diseases, thousands of people are suffering in silence. But they're not alone. We're working to improve diagnosis and treatment, and to fund research into a cure; to raise awareness and to give people hope comfort and confidence to live freer, fuller lives.

We're here for everyone affected by Crohn's and Colitis.

As a compassionate and ambitious organisation, we are stronger as we work together with our supporters. Our volunteers help play a huge part in our work improving lives for people affected by Crohn's and Colitis.

Crohn's & Colitis UK recognises that without volunteers it would be less effective in accomplishing its aims. The charity is committed to flexible volunteering opportunities, providing appropriate levels of support and development along with fair and consistent treatment; it is important that all volunteers know what to expect from Crohn's & Colitis UK.

This document enables us to:

- Explain our commitment to our volunteer programme and individual volunteers
- Ensure volunteers are treated consistently and fairly
- Manage expectations and provide a mechanism if anyone feel things are going wrong
- Ensure all staff fully understand the role of volunteers within the organisation

Please see the Charity's [Volunteering Policy](#) for how we define a volunteer, the purpose and scope of volunteering and why we involve volunteers in Crohn's & Colitis UK activity.

Our commitment to volunteers

As part of the volunteering experience, Crohn's & Colitis UK will:

- Provide a clear volunteer role description and responsibilities
- Provide resources and ongoing support, development and training opportunities relevant to your role
- Provide a staff contact for your role
- Respect you and listen to what you have to say
- Keep you informed of any changes or developments affecting you
- Provide the opportunity to be involved with decisions that affect your role, where appropriate
- Ensure you feel comfortable with the amount of volunteering you are asked to do
- Celebrate achievements and recognise your contribution
- Take steps to ensure your health, safety and welfare when volunteering
- Reimburse out of pocket expenses (in line with policy)
- Work within the scope of our values, policies and procedures
- Process and use your personal data in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Encourage you to become a member of the organisation so that you can participate in decision making

Our expectations of volunteers

As part of the volunteering experience, Crohn's & Colitis UK expects volunteers to:

- Adopt our values in supporting us to achieve our aims and objectives by volunteering in partnership with other volunteers, staff and the public
- Volunteer within the scope of our policies and procedures, with particular reference to data protection, safeguarding, confidentiality, financial management and legal obligations e.g. health and safety
- Maintain and protect our reputation and integrity, acting responsibly and within the law
- Remain accountable for your behaviour and actions by being open to learn, listen and receive feedback
- Be reliable and honest, giving the best of your skills and abilities
- Be inclusive and treat everyone fairly with dignity and respect
- Fulfil the commitment you have undertaken, ensuring you are realistic about your availability
- Attend development and training events relevant to your role
- Keep in regular touch with your staff contact as required (informing them of changes that might affect your volunteering) and communicating any problems so that solutions can be found together

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and we do not accept discrimination of any kind. We are keen to recruit volunteers with a range of experience, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sexuality, partnership status or maternity status. It is vital that all volunteers are treated with dignity and respect, that we apply policy consistently and that volunteers know what to expect from Crohn's & Colitis UK. Please see the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).

Attracting and Recruiting Volunteers

Crohn's & Colitis UK welcomes interest in volunteering from all areas of the community. People choose to volunteer for many different reasons and can offer a wide range of skills and experiences.

We are committed to fairness in our recruitment procedures and all potential volunteers will be given the chance to speak with a member of staff about volunteering opportunities. All opportunities are available in the form of an individual role description, developed with the Volunteering Team.

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As part of our recruitment process, all volunteers will be asked to complete a Volunteer Application Form. Dependent upon the role, other processes such as interviews or reference checks are carried out to ensure that the role is suitable for both parties. All volunteers are to be officially accepted and registered by Crohn's & Colitis UK before undertaking any volunteering activities. Roles that require regular involvement with children, young people or adults at risk may require potential volunteers to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

Criminal convictions do not automatically preclude people from volunteering; the suitability of applicants is considered individually in relation to the role. Some roles are restricted to those over 16 or 18 years of age.

Induction, Training & Development

We provide induction and training to ensure that you feel confident and equipped to perform your role. All volunteers are expected to complete a Crohn's & Colitis UK volunteer induction as they begin their role. This includes an e-learning module to help familiarise you with our values, structure, policies and how we work with volunteers.

Volunteers will be provided with access to policies, procedures and role-specific guidance via an online Volunteer Resources site. We encourage volunteers to access these resources during induction and liaise with their staff contact about any queries. Role-specific training will be required for some roles, however Crohn's & Colitis UK is committed to supporting all volunteers develop their skills through ongoing learning opportunities, such as webinars, e-learning and support from others.

Support, Supervision & Recognition

All volunteers are provided with a named staff contact to support them through their role. The staff contact will provide oversight and guidance, keep in touch with volunteers and ensure they have access to all of the resources required to enjoy and excel in their role. Volunteers can also contact the Volunteering Team for support. At the start of the volunteering journey, as the volunteer develops and as the role concludes, this regular contact provides the opportunity for the volunteer to discuss any difficulties experienced within their role.

Keeping in touch also offers the opportunity for regular review to discuss progress and achievements and we are keen to recognise the contribution of volunteers. This may be through press coverage, publicity, personal celebrations or award nominations; we will always say 'thank you' in recognition of volunteer contribution.

Expenses

It is our commitment that volunteers should not be out-of-pocket because of their volunteering activity and our policy is to reimburse any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking the voluntary role (e.g. travel, accommodation), in line with the [Travel & Subsistence Policy](#) and subject to the production of receipts and advanced agreement of the staff contact.

Health & Safety

We are committed to creating environments that promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all volunteers. All health and safety incidents should be reported to your staff contact.

Volunteers that are active in the organisation or delivery of community events must ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure the safety of themselves and the public (i.e. risk assessments) in accordance with general health and safety legislative requirements. It is important that volunteers accept the responsibility to comply with health and safety information and speak with their staff contact if they are unsure about a situation or believe they require training. Please see the [Health & Safety Policy](#).

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Insurance

Crohn's & Colitis UK's public and employer's liability insurance policies provide cover for the activities of volunteers. The organisation does not insure personal possessions against loss, theft or damage. Volunteers using their own vehicles for the course of carrying out their role are required to ensure they are adequately covered with their own insurance company. *Please note that the existing insurance cover of Crohn's & Colitis UK also provides a level of personal accident, but this only extends to employees.*

Safeguarding

Crohn's & Colitis UK is committed to ensuring that every child, young person or adult with care or support needs who participates in activity or accesses services provided by us can do so in an enjoyable and safe environment and should be protected from abuse. The [Safeguarding Policy](#) is designed to make welfare a priority and dedicated Safeguarding Officers are on hand to support and advise on any concerns. Volunteers are required to operate in line with the policy and the guidance provided to them.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

It is the responsibility of volunteers to maintain confidentiality in their role. This means that any sensitive information about volunteers, supporters, beneficiaries or staff and the work we do is not disclosed. Additionally, volunteers are not to share, copy or retain any such information that they may have access to. Our Volunteer Application Form also includes a confidentiality declaration to reflect these principles; failure to maintain confidentiality may result in being removed from your role. Please see the [Confidentiality Policy](#).

Crohn's & Colitis UK works to all the principles for obtaining, processing and using personal data as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. All volunteers involved in the collection, administration or use of personal data are required to comply with these principles. Unless an explicit part of your role, we ask volunteers to signpost all supporters directly to Crohn's & Colitis UK for data collection and processing. Please see the [Data Protection Policy](#).

Dealing with Difficulties

We recognise that sometimes difficulties can occur, and it is important any such instances are dealt with clearly and consistently, to maintain mutually agreed expectations. Dealing with issues can be difficult, but it is a positive opportunity to improve and provide a better experience for all concerned. If your role is not working out as you hoped, please speak with your staff contact as there may be other roles available. It is important that all volunteers (and staff) are aware of the relevant procedures - if you experience any issues in your role please notify your staff contact as soon as possible. They will provide advice and support, aiming to identify and solve the problem at the earliest possible stage. We are committed to resolving issues in an informal manner at first and will work sensitively to a resolution. It is important that all relevant facts are obtained as quickly as possible to inform the member of staff.

Volunteers are entitled to be informed about concerns that affect them; it is important that their voice is heard and understood. Informal solutions may include teamwork, problem-solving, retraining, mentoring, a break from the role, mediation, trial periods or similar, where appropriate.

If after discussions an amicable solution cannot be reached, or if a formal complaint is received, the complaints procedure will be followed in line with the [Complaints Policy](#) and the volunteering relationship may have to cease.

Taking a break or moving on from your role

There may be circumstances such as ill-health, bereavement, or other personal circumstances when it is advisable to take a break from your volunteering role. Please speak with your staff contact about this and be mindful that they may raise it with you if they believe it is an appropriate course of action, in line with our duty of care to volunteers.

Some roles are time-limited and come to an end at the conclusion of a project or event. We also recognise that at any point in time, a volunteer may choose to stop volunteering in a specific role(s). It is our hope that volunteers provide as much notice as is possible of their intention to stand down, notifying their staff contact as soon as possible. Your contact will want to record your reasons for leaving for monitoring/development purposes and may offer an 'exit interview'. We encourage all feedback at this stage to help improve the volunteering experience at Crohn's & Colitis UK.

Either party can bring your volunteering to an end - you may be asked to leave your role with Crohn's & Colitis UK if, through the complaints procedure, it has been identified that your contribution has not met the standards required for the role and/or you have not kept to the outlined expectations of volunteering.

Whistleblowing

All organisations face the risk of things going wrong. We have a duty to identify such situations and take the appropriate measures to remedy the situation. Volunteers are encouraged to report any wrongdoing by the Crohn's & Colitis UK or its employees, which you believe has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.

Useful Information

For further information regarding volunteering at Crohn's & Colitis UK please contact the Volunteering Team on 01727 734 475 or volunteering@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk.