

## HELPLINE AND SUPPORT GROUP VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

### Purpose of Role:

The role is divided into 2 main areas:

1. To develop and maintain our patient support helpline,
2. To expand and maintain our network of patient peer-to-peer support groups, liaising with the relevant group leaders

### What qualities and skills are you looking for?

Volunteers must be able to commit to working a minimum of a 4hrs per day, 3 days per week. We look for people who possess the following qualities, skills and experience:

- Strong organisational skills, with the ability to work to deadlines
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to communicate
- Commitment to volunteering for a minimum of one year
- Non-judgemental attitude
- Ability to empathise with people
- Good listening skills
- Understand the importance of empowering callers to make their own decisions
- Ability to work under pressure and handle difficult situations
- Experience of working on a telephone helpline, or in a position offering advice and support (desirable but not essential)
- Must be willing to travel at weekends, some nights away may be necessary, (all reasonable expenses will be reimbursed while volunteering)
- Must have a good understanding of, or personal experience of Hidradenitis Suppurativa.

### What kind of work do helpline volunteers do?

Staff and volunteers working on the Helpline provide confidential emotional support and practical help to patients affected by HS. The Helpline may also receive calls from friends and families of patients, and other professionals and agencies who may be seeking advice and/or information.

### As a Volunteer you will be responsible for:

- Answering calls on a four-hour rota basis
- Listening and offering practical and emotional support to callers
- Liaising with agencies on behalf of callers
- Performing any administrative tasks connected with taking calls
- Attending supervision sessions as agreed
- Attending relevant training sessions
- To assist in training new helpline volunteers when required
- Adhering to health and safety regulations
- Liaising with existing support group leaders, as well as the recruitment and training of new leaders
- Liaising with Communications officer to promote and advertise support services
- Initiating "first run" of support groups

Volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement before training, and are expected to follow the terms of that agreement at all times.

### What about training?

Volunteer will undergo a number of training programmes provided by experienced agencies (may involve some travel, which will be fully funded). The programme helps volunteers to learn about the following:

- Essential helpline skills
- How to respond to challenging calls
- How to deal with emotional callers
- Text-based helpline skills
- Welfare benefits
- Employment law
- Housing

### What can we offer you?

- Develop your skills within a leading national charity
- Gain valuable experience for your CV
- Meet new people
- Make a valuable contribution to the work of The HS Trust
- Ongoing training and support within your role
- Expenses will be reimbursed for costs incurred while volunteering

If you are within easy reach of our head office in Chatham, Kent, and would like to apply for the position, please send us an email, including your CV, to [volunteering@hstrust.org](mailto:volunteering@hstrust.org) for an informal meeting.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

This is an unpaid volunteer position, however, it is possible that it could be offered as a paid part-time/full-time position at a later date.

CLOSING DATE: 09/11/2015