

Volunteer Role Description



Attendance Allowance Form Filler

Introduction

Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove Information and Advice (I&A) service provides information and advice to older people on matters such as welfare benefits, health and social care, housing and local services. The team cover the whole of West Sussex Brighton and Hove. They are supported by the First Point of Contact (FPOC) team.

Helping older people to claim Attendance Allowance is one of the most important functions of an Age UK I&A service. Attendance Allowance is a benefit that can be claimed by older people with health problems who require support and care at home to be able to remain living independently. The form is quite lengthy and to fill it in well you need a thorough understanding of how the benefit works. Because of this older people are either often put off claiming or do not receive the benefit even though their health problems would suggest they should be entitled to it.

In this volunteering role, you will be helping the I&A service support older people to claim Attendance Allowance, which will help them to live independently.

You will either visit clients in their own homes or complete forms at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove offices or in anyone of our outreach location. You will also be required to attend training and supervision meetings either via Microsoft Teams or at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove main office.

Responsible to: Quality Assurance officer

Key responsibilities

- Interviewing older people and their carers or family about their health and care needs
- Completing Attendance Allowance claim forms for clients

- Providing guidance to clients on 'next steps' to be taken after the completion of an Attendance Allowance claim form to progress their application
- Completing records of client interventions on our bespoke database and liaising with key staff at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove I&A service
- You may also be responsible for arranging appointments to visit clients in their own homes, following our lone working policy and keeping the team updated on the location and time appointment arranged

Previous experience and role requirements

Full training and on-going support will be provided. This role would suit somebody with previous experience of completing complex forms or supporting individuals with complex needs.

People who have previously worked in the public sector, for example the local council, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Health Service, the emergency services or in a regulated care setting, would be particularly suited to the role. Any potential volunteer will need to be able to demonstrate:

- Strong IT skills including using our bespoke database, Microsoft teams, and ability to complete forms on line
- literacy and basic numeracy skills
- the ability to understand written information and explain things clearly without using jargon or being patronising
- a commitment to ensuring that customers are provided with accurate, relevant and timely information and support
- the ability to write clear notes and records
- a methodical and orderly approach
- an open-minded approach to individuals, avoiding judgement and stereotyping while demonstrating patience and empathy
- a willingness to undertake training and elearning on Safeguarding, Confidentiality, Equality and Diversity in addition to all role specific training.
- provide at least one form filling session per week (approximately 2–3 hours).

If you are completing the form in an older person's home:

- you will probably need your own transport and your mileage will be reimbursed
- you will need to be willing to undergo a DBS check if working in clients' homes.

Confidentiality

We expect you to maintain confidentiality - please don't talk about the client's personal details to anyone, including your partner or friends. The only exception to breaking confidentiality is safeguarding and you should then only discuss the concerns with your line manager. If you are talking about a client in a group debrief session, please only discuss the case details that are relevant to the session and ensure you anonymise.

Safeguarding

You may come across clients who are at risk of abuse, neglect or harm. We need to ensure these cases are followed up and you can help us to do this. It doesn't matter if you cannot provide all of the information required or if you are unsure about what kinds of potential harm you are reporting.

These risks might include: scamming, being physically harmed, medication error, indications of being a victim of crime, significantly mentally confused, or at risk of harming themselves.

Even if someone tells you something in confidence, you must say that you are now worried about them and have a duty to let someone else know.

Please remember that in an emergency situation, where there is immediate risk of serious harm to a person or property call 999.

Boundaries

Boundaries are important to maintain safe relationships for both parties. You are interacting with the client to support a benefit application, you are not contacting them to strike up a friendship. This will make sure that you are also safe and not taking on any emotional stresses that will leave you feeling vulnerable or anxious and/or worried too.

Someone may have a practical or emotional difficulty that they need help with and you can pass that on. It is natural to want to help someone, and the right services have the qualified social workers, therapists, medical professionals or financial advisers that are able to do this. This is their role and they have the right information, support and supervision in their organisations to do this safely.

When boundaries are not maintained you can be left feeling taken advantage of, the recipient can ask/expect unrealistic things from you and ultimately it can leave people feeling as though they are not getting what they need from the volunteer role or from the service. If you feel that someone is asking for or discussing something that you are not comfortable with, then talk to us and we can support you with how to work this through.



Please do

- Agree date and time of appointment and keep to it.
- Respect the client as an individual.
- Raise any concerns about the client to AUKWSBH via email to info@ageukwsbh.org.uk

Please do not

- Give your personal contact ie: phone, address
- Discuss your own family/friends
- Take any form of payment or gift for your help unless it is a donation then you must give them a receipt.
- Become involved in family disputes or personal affairs.
- Talk about religion or political opinions.

Please note that this role is subject to a DBS check and will require an enhanced check.

Volunteer Agreement

I have read and understood the above Role Description and would like to become a volunteer for this service.

Signature.....

Date.....