

Volunteering in Care Homes project Dementia Awareness and REAL Communication Zoom workshop for volunteers

Workshop outline

Becoming more dementia aware and gaining an understanding of how the world feels through the eyes of a person with dementia can help volunteers to engage with the residents they spend time with, encouraging them to open their hearts and see the person behind the dementia and then develop more meaningful and enjoyable engagement with them – REAL Communication.

Dementia Awareness

This two hour workshop is specially designed for volunteers on the project. It will include stories, interactive exercises and discussion. Powerpoint slides will guide the timetable and a handbook will be provided to support the content, activities and learning.

We will arrange a subsequent feedback session so that participants can share their experiences and observations of using the techniques with us.

‘What?’

The first part focuses on building dementia knowledge and awareness including the brain, memory, the dementia journey and what it all means to the individual.

‘How?’ and ‘Why?’

The second part explores communication with a person with dementia, in the context of Reminiscence, Empathic Engagement, Active Listening and Life Story – the ‘REAL Communication Framework’. We consider a range of behavioural issues; and how to engage more authentically with the person living with dementia.

Families

The workshop considers some of the challenges faced by families with a loved one living in a care home through Covid – especially if they have dementia – and how volunteers can help support them, as well as the residents and staff team.