About Via Merton

Via (formerly VIA) has a long history of delivering treatment services in London, the South East and East of England. Via is proud to be the lead provider in the new partnerships responsible for treatment services as well as performance and quality standards in the borough of Merton. Working in partnership with other agencies, our substance misuse services enable us to deliver a fully recovery-focused model of treatment that is forward-looking, innovative and committed to the achievement of positive outcomes for all our service users. Via Merton has been running the drug and alcohol service since 1st of April 2018. We have a dedicated team of substance misuse practitioners who work alongside other professionals including doctors and nurses in the London Borough of Merton.

About the counselling service

Our counselling service provides people with the opportunity to meet in private with a counsellor for up to 12 weekly fifty-minute sessions to discuss issues and concerns which are currently making life difficult. These could include any of the following and more: addictions, low self-esteem, stress, anxiety, panic attacks, self-harm, relationship difficulties, loss of purpose or meaning, family difficulties, loss and bereavement, anger, depression, trauma etc.

About the role

As a Volunteer Counsellor, you will support the delivery of a wide range of interventions for service users. These will include:

* See a minimum of 3 clients and a maximum of 5 clients per week (1 day).
* Keep accurate records of work in line with Via expectations and feedback any issues to their line manager/supervisor
* Attend ongoing training in discussion with your clinical supervisor
* Adhere to all Via policies and procedures

In addition to the above you will be invited to participate in meetings where relevant and to carry out other tasks as deemed necessary to support the needs of the counselling service.

What skills do I need?

The role would be ideal for someone looking to develop their therapeutic experience in the drug and alcohol field and accrue some counselling hours towards your future accreditation with BPS, BACP, UKCP. While some knowledge of the sector is desirable, we are specifically looking for people who have a passion for the work that we do. A positive attitude, an inclusive approach and the desire to learn are essential, as is a non-judgemental and supportive approach to people who are facing problems with drugs and alcohol.

To ensure good practice standards and to maximise the safety of both the therapists and the clients at Via we require all students to confirm and adhere to the following:

* Trainees are in their final year of an undergraduate degree or equivalent, or are at a postgraduate level. Alternatively, students should be in their third year of a Diploma, BSc,or MSc in counselling or psychotherapy training (preferably accredited)
* If students are not in the third year of their Diploma, BSc, or MSc in counselling or psychotherapy training, trainees need to be in their second year (at least) but have undertaken (or be prepared to undertake prior to seeing clients) significant and appropriate training.
* Trainees are expected to be a member of one of the counselling governing bodies BACP, BPS, UKCP or BABCP.
* Trainees may need to have conducted a minimum number of counselling hours
* Trainees are working or intend to work towards counselling or psychotherapy accreditation
* Previous details of supervisor and present college tutor information should be sent to Via and agreed that Via can ask supervisor and tutor for references.
* In some cases, at the discretion of the service, students may need to provide their own clinical supervision

**What Via can offer you**

When you begin volunteering you will be allocated a line manager who will act as your main point of contact in your Via service. You will be also allocated a clinical counselling supervisor (BABCP accredited), who will provide fortnightly counselling supervision via Microsoft Teams (this may be a mix of individual and group supervision). There is also a central volunteer services team that will support you while you are on placement. In addition, you can expect:

* A full induction to your role and continuous local training
* Access to central staff training opportunities
* Reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses and lunch expenses

When

We are looking for someone to support the team from 1 day per week – depending on the Via project. We ask that volunteers counsellors try to commit for at least one year where possible.

How to apply

If you would like to apply for this role, please read the guidance notes on applying for volunteer roles and complete and return an application form directly at our VIA website – [www.viaorg.uk](http://www.viaorg.uk)

You can also contact us on:

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Email: [volunteers@viaorg.uk](mailto:volunteers@viaorg.uk) Post: Volunteer Services

Telephone: 0207 421 3100 18, Dartmouth Street, London, SW1H 9BL