

Volunteer Counsellor

Cheshire West and Chester



About the service

Via – New Beginnings - Cheshire West and Chester is a fully integrated recovery service delivered by Via. We offer free and confidential support for individuals affected by drug and alcohol problems and their families and carers. We believe with the right support; people can make long-lasting transformations in their lives to improve their health and wellbeing.

About the counselling service

Our counselling service provides people with the opportunity to meet in private with a counsellor for typically at least 6 and 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: drugs and alcohol, 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.

How you can help

As a Volunteer Counsellor, you'll:

- See a minimum of 3 clients and a maximum of 6 people per week (1 day)
- Keep accurate records of work in line with Via expectations and feedback any issues to the line manager (counselling lead) and clinical supervisor.
- Attend ongoing training in discussion with your clinical supervisor, inclusive of 1-2-1 and group clinical supervision.
- 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 are we looking for?

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, inclusive approach, and the desire to learn are essential, as is a non-judgmental and supportive approach to people who are facing problems with drugs and alcohol.

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To ensure good practice standards and to maximise the safety of both the therapists and the people we support 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 recommended to be a member of one of the counselling governing bodies BACP, BPS or UKCP etc.
- Trainees may need to have conducted a minimum number of counselling hours.
- Trainees are working or intend to work towards counselling, psychology, or psychotherapy accreditation.
- Previous details of supervisor and present college tutor information should be sent to Via and agree that Via can ask supervisor and tutor for references.

What Via can offer you

When you begin volunteering, you will be allocated a line manager (counselling lead), who will act as your main point of contact in your Via service. They will provide you with ongoing support and will work closely with you throughout your time at Via.

You will be also allocated a clinical counselling supervisor, who will provide a minimum of 1.5 hours of 1-2-1 remote (through Teams) or face-to-face counselling supervision. Also, group supervision is run once a month as a cohort, which contributes to an additional half hour of supervised practice (So, a minimum of 2 hours each month).

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 for 1 day per week for a few hours – depending on the Via service and number of counselling sessions.

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We ask that volunteer 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 with your CV.

Email: volunteers@viaorg.uk