

Role description: Volunteering to be a Helpliner

“For me volunteering for the helpline makes some sense of all that I went through, using my experiences to help others.”

Julie, Helpline Volunteer

The Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust Helpline is a vital part of the Charity's support services for people affected by cervical cancer and cell changes (abnormalities). The Helpline gives callers the chance to access reliable information and be able to talk about their feelings and experience with a trained supportive listener.

The rewards of being a helpline volunteer are very special. Knowing that you have helped a caller can be immensely satisfying.

The Helpline Volunteer's role

Helpline volunteers offer reliable information, friendly support and useful signposting.

Our Helpline is here for everyone. Whether someone's living with or beyond a cervical cancer diagnosis, have recently been affected by cell changes or have questions about cervical screening, and/or Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). We're here for family and friends too.

Helpliners do not offer advice of any kind, particularly medical or legal advice. Volunteers work anonymously from their own homes. They must cover **two shifts a month**, each shift lasting for **3 hours**.

The helpline is open at various times throughout the day and evening according to the availability of our volunteers. Please note we do not open on Sundays.

It is essential that helpline volunteers are able to speak knowledgeably about cervical screening, HPV, cell changes, and cervical cancer. This is why all our helpline volunteers are people who have a personal or professional experience of these conditions, and will receive appropriate training.

What makes a good helpliner?

The most important qualities for Helpline volunteers are having the ability to listen and be non-judgmental, having patience, empathy, and keeping the details of calls strictly confidential.

Key skills:

- Confident
- Objective
- Good with people
- Friendly
- Able to deliver our basic information clearly
- Able to follow instructions given by the charity
- Have a genuine desire to help people
- Clear telephone manner

- Good command of the English language

“I love it when the phone rings when on shift so that I can try and make just one person feel a little bit better or to point them in the right direction.

“I feel very supported as a volunteer.” - Marianne, Helpline Volunteer

Recruitment & Training

To be a helpline volunteer, you must be willing to go through a careful selection process.

All of our volunteers are provided with training to assist them in developing the skills required for their role. This consists of an initial assessment call, attendance at our annual residential training weekend, and ad hoc development of skills and support throughout your time volunteering with us.

All our volunteers are required to complete a criminal convictions form.

Once trained initially, volunteers are only required to attend the annual training every other year, although many enjoy meeting other volunteers and are encouraged to attend each year as an opportunity to share and continue learning. All expenses for the weekend are paid for by the Charity.

“I don’t just feel like a volunteer - I’m part of a very supportive team” - Sue, Helpline Volunteer

Our requirements

- You must be able to do 2 shifts a month, both 3 hours long.
- We ask for a minimum of 1 year commitment.
- You must have access to a landline telephone, computer/laptop, and the internet in a quiet setting
- When you are on your shift you must be able to give 100% focus to the role.

- We send out a blank helpline schedule each month and then you give us a range of times in the month that work for you for us to choose from. We require the dates to be given to us each month by a set deadline so we can finalise the helpline schedule before the next month begins. We understand that sometimes people won’t be able to do commit to a certain month and we will always be as flexible as possible.
- After each shift your call details need to be inputted straight away onto the online form.
- We expect you to keep in regular contact with us.
- If affected by cervical cancer you must be physically and emotionally recovered enough to feel able to support others without there being a negative impact on your own health and wellbeing. For this reason we ask that you are at least one year post treatment before you apply to volunteer.

What you will gain

- Training, guidance and support to carry out your volunteer role.
- Skills that you can use in all aspects of your life, and an opportunity to develop your existing skills.
- Satisfaction of helping those in need of information and support.
- Build experiences for your CV.

What do I do next?

If you feel this role is for you please apply using our online application form. We will then schedule in an interview with you if we feel the role is right for you.

If you have any questions about the role, recruitment or training please call the Support Services Team on 020 3096 8100 or email Meghan Herring our Support Services Officer at meghan@jostrust.org.uk.