



Volunteering

Would it be a good option for
the people I support?

Things to think about and ways to move forward:

Voluntary work is **usually** a really good idea!

It can offer....

- A structure to the day
- A change in a person's status
- A sense of identity
- Involvement in the community
- A sense of achievement
- A chance to build confidence
- A chance to gain new skills
- A break from the past and much **more...**



BUT Voluntary work **cannot** offer....

- A job
- The promise of a job
- Clinical therapy
- Security
- Replacement for care services
- Money, other than reimbursement of out of pocket expenses





AND It can go wrong if:

- The placement is not well planned
- There has not been co-operation between people
- Thought has not been given to whether or not volunteering is the **right step** for the person you are supporting at that time!

And then...

- The placement will be **unsuccessful**
- The volunteer will have a **negative experience** of volunteering
- **You**, the referrer will be disappointed
- The organisation who had involved the volunteer will lose the volunteer and will have a **negative experience**
- Everyone's **confidence** will be affected

To maximise the chances of success, before you start...



Carry out a careful assessment to gain an understanding of a person's particular needs, especially any implications the person's condition may have on their volunteering e.g.

- are they able to take instruction?
- do they have mobility issues?
- do they need someone with them to feel safe?
- do they get tired easily?
- do they feel comfortable with groups of people they don't know?

Questions to ask **yourself** and **your organisation**

- Why are you suggesting voluntary work?
- What do you hope people might achieve?
- Do you think a person's current needs might be met through volunteering?
- Are there other ways of meeting those needs?
- Will they need support, if so how much support will people need and at what stages?
- Are you/your organisation able to offer support?
- What other roles can you or your organisation play?



Things to discuss with the people that you support!

- Is the person REALLY **interested** in volunteering?
- What does that person **want** from volunteering?
- What does the person **want** to do?
- Has the person got **realistic expectations** about what they can offer?

Sometimes the answers to these questions can be difficult to find. It may be an idea:

- For the **Volunteer Centre** to come and provide a workshop on what volunteering is and what types of things you can do
- For people to look at some of these questions in groups

If you **and the person that you are supporting** decide that volunteering is the right option, please get in touch with the Volunteer Centre to discuss options prior to referral.

Dudley CVS Volunteer Centre

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Please be aware that we like to manage expectations and if a client wishes to volunteer in a particular area, it does not mean there will be an appropriate role e.g. a post office, construction site, retail shop or accountants would not be a volunteering placement as they are profit-making businesses.

There are also some popular areas we don't have roles for such as animals or catering.

Just give us a ring and we will do our best to help 😊

**To assist in an appropriate referral
ensure the Volunteer Centre is given
relevant information.
(With your client's permission)**

There is also a WEB SITE where you can see what benefits there are to volunteering and get some ideas about the types of volunteering opportunities out there. Just CLICK on:

www.volunteeringcounts.org.uk



We would like to say a big 'Thank You' to Telford Volunteer Centre for providing us with this guide