

Volunteering for Somerset Cancer Care

Volunteer Opportunities

There are a host of opportunities for volunteering with Somerset Cancer Care.

C.A.F.E. (Cancer Aid For Everyone):

Our C.A.F.E.s are local cancer support groups each of which is run by a C.A.F.E. Co-ordinator. Our volunteers welcome clients (new and returning), make and serve teas and coffees, and sit and chat with the group or an individual, listening to their cancer experiences, or maybe just chatting about the news of the day. The Co-ordinator or more experienced volunteers offer visualisation/relaxation sessions, and will facilitate the group to ensure that all clients have the opportunity to contribute and benefit from our expertise. Volunteers also support our clients by providing information about local services and help in any way they can. We do not encourage our volunteers to give clients their personal contact details. Should clients need support from home we have a telephone support group available.



Complementary Therapy:

Each C.A.F.E. is supported by volunteer complementary therapists who offer a range of therapies, depending on availability, to enable relaxation and support the emotional and physical needs of our clients. Therapies may include: hand massage; reflexology; reiki; spiritual healing, and relaxation/visualisation. These volunteers are fully trained professional therapists working within the boundaries of their professional body.



Taunton & Somerset NHS Hospital (Musgrove Park):

Cancer Information & Support Centre

Somerset Cancer Care volunteers in the Information & Support Centre have the guidance of the Centre Manager or Manager's Assistant but will generally work autonomously after the training period. Here they provide extensive information about cancer and services available to all visitors to the centre. Support to cancer patients and/or their friends and relatives can sometimes be intensive. All information is readily accessed from the centre, either in leaflet form or through the internet.

Beacon Centre

Our volunteers work in a number of areas in this busy and newly opened cancer centre. They sit and listen to patients and visitors whilst they are waiting for appointments or are undergoing treatment in the Day Unit. They can also provide hand massage to patients or visitors to aid relaxation at a stressful time of their lives.

Patient Experience Groups

These groups are run by the hospital in order to evaluate the service and identify where improvements may be needed. Somerset Cancer Care volunteers facilitate and help to run the experience group meetings. This activity is open to volunteers with 12 months experience of the service, or similarly acquired skills.

Telephone Support Team:

Some clients are physically unable to attend C.A.F.E. or other areas of the service, and therefore benefit from telephone support from fully trained volunteers. We also find that new clients drawn to the service sometimes feel encouraged to participate in group situations after talking through their fears. Once again, volunteers with 12 months experience of the service, or similarly acquired skills, may join this team.

Drivers:

We are very keen to develop a bank of volunteer drivers across the county as some of our clients are unable to drive and find using public transport quite a challenge, particularly if they are currently undergoing treatment. Volunteer drivers who, working on a rota system, occasionally provide transport for our clients to and from the C.A.F.E.s would be a great asset to the service. Mileage expenses are claimable.

Expert Patients and Carers Support Group:

If you have had direct experience as a cancer patient or carer, and would like to help others living with cancer by sharing your experiences then we would love you to consider helping us on this basis. This new service would be delivered through telephone support or direct in one of our C.A.F.E.s.

For those wishing to help but would perhaps prefer volunteering without direct client contact please do also consider supporting our fundraising efforts or helping us with the administration!

Raising funds is an important task for any charity, and we always welcome voluntary help with our fundraising events! This can include collection days at supermarkets, helping our Community Fundraiser with local events, or brainstorming new ideas for raising funds. We also require local volunteer fundraising co-ordinators to help develop new teams of Somerset Cancer Care "Friends" across the county. Fundraising volunteers are not required to undertake training other than a half-day induction session.

Our support groups also need help with their administration and this could be as little as a few hours a month if that is what you have available!

Volunteer Training

All volunteers joining our client-centred areas of service start as trainees, and are initially required to attend a half-day induction session and then complete a

9.5 day training programme over a period of 12 months. Training is an integral part of volunteering for Somerset Cancer Care - we believe that it is important to support our volunteers by helping them to hone and/or develop the necessary skills needed to support our clients. Many volunteers come to us with a variety of skills acquired from all areas of their life, and we believe that our training programme re-enforces those skills and sometimes acts as a refresher course. During the training period they work in their chosen area of the service as a 'trainee volunteer' under the guidance of an experienced volunteer mentor.

What to do if you want to help?

If you think that you have the necessary qualities and skills to help support people living with cancer and would like to join us, then we would love to meet you! There are just 5 Steps to volunteering for Somerset Cancer Care:

1. Download an [application form](#), [email](#), or contact our office direct on 01823 346952 for further information.
2. On receipt of your application form we will contact you to discuss your application and make a date to meet you. Here we will discuss the various areas of service that may interest you, and is an opportunity for you find out about us and us you! Following our meeting we will take up your references and apply for a CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) reference. We are sure that you will appreciate that this is required under law as we sometimes work with vulnerable adults.
3. On receipt of satisfactory references you will be invited to attend a half-day induction session to ensure that you are fully aware of our aims, how the service operates, and to welcome you to the organisation. These are informal sessions which may be held on an individual basis, or include other new volunteers in your area if they are joining at the same time.
4. As a trainee volunteer you will join the area of your choice under the guidance of an experienced volunteer mentor. You can join our training programme at any time, attending the 10 study days during the course of the next 12 months. The one commitment that we ask from you during the training or 'trainee' period is that you let us know if at any time you feel that volunteering for Somerset Cancer Care is not right for you.
5. At the end of the training programme you will be asked to feedback your experiences, and become a fully qualified Somerset Cancer Care Volunteer!

Thank you for your interest - we look forward to hearing from you!

For further information please telephone 0845 070 8910 and ask for the Somerset Cancer Care office or [email](#) us.

[Somerset Cancer Care main page](#)

[Volunteering for St Margaret's Hospice](#)

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