



Helpline Volunteer

Candidate Pack



ABOUT US

LGBT Health and Wellbeing exists to help LGBTQ+ people across Scotland have somewhere to turn, somewhere to belong, and somewhere they can be themselves.

Since 2003 we've been improving health and wellbeing through counselling, helplines, community groups, support for trans and non-binary people, work with older LGBTQ+ people, LGBTQ+ New Scots, mental wellbeing programmes and national influencing work.

Today we're Scotland's national charity for LGBTQ+ adults. Every year thousands of people access our services because they need connection, support and hope.

None of that happens without our people.

From counsellors and development workers to volunteers, trustees and corporate staff, everyone plays a part in creating welcoming spaces where LGBTQ+ people can feel safe, valued and connected.

ABOUT THE HELPLINE

In 1974, LGBTQ+ activists set up Scotland's first helpline (the Lothian Gay and Lesbian Switchboard) from a home phone in Marchmont. It answered 10,000 calls in its first decade and became a constant source of support during moments like the HIV/AIDS epidemic and Section 28. After serving our community for 35 years, LGBT Health and Wellbeing were proud to take on the responsibility of maintaining this lifeline.

Volunteering in this role means you can be part of continuing to provide this vital service for our community, at a time when many are feeling isolated and unsure where to turn.

The role requires an open, empathetic and non-judgmental approach to providing emotional support, as well as the ability to provide up to date information, resources and signposting. You will have the opportunity to enhance your communication skills and benefit from an ongoing programme of tailored training. You'll work closely with a dedicated team of volunteers and staff and gain experience in supporting the LGBTQ+ community across Scotland.

THE ROLE

Supervisor	Fiona Smith, Helpline and Telephone Coordinator fiona@lgbthealth.org.uk
Role Purpose	To answer calls, emails and live chats on our LGBT+ Helpline. Provide emotional support, information, and signposting to LGBTQ+ callers, those questioning their sexuality/gender as well as friends, families, and professionals seeking support.
Specific Tasks	Following our comprehensive in-house training: Emotional support • Listen and offer emotional support to callers on a wide range of issues and topics including sexual health, relationships, coming out, sexual orientation, trans issues, LGBTQ+ rights and community safety. Signposting • Familiarise yourself with social and support services and resources to share with callers and research options for enquiries. • Use our database and systems to provide up to date information and signposting to enquirers. Recording engagements • Accurately record all engagements (phone, live chat and email) using the relevant platforms and systems. Confidentiality • Uphold confidentiality, safeguarding, and suicide prevention protocol. Other • Attend one-to-one and group supervision sessions.

Skills and Qualities needed	Knowledge • Good understanding of LGBTQ+ identities and the issues affecting a wide range of LGBTQ+ people. • We welcome volunteers that can also offer support in non-English languages as we aspire to making our national LGBTQ+ Helpline more accessible. Qualities for the role • Excellent communication skills via telephone, email and live chat. • Capacity to offer emotional support to others. • A compassionate, patient, and non-judgemental approach. • Self-awareness and ability to reflect. • The ability to sensitively and confidently discuss topics including sex and relationship issues, sexual health, gender identity and transition, abuse, and emotional distress.
Time Commitment	Attend all initial in-person training sessions at our Edinburgh office in full: • 30th October 4pm-8pm • 31st October 10.30am-5.30pm • 1st November 10.30am-5.30pm Then: • Minimum of one 3-hour helpline shift per week (plus 15min handover) during our opening hours. Plus: • Attend group supervision sessions (minimum 2 per year) • Attend one to one Support and Supervision sessions (arranged at a time to suit). • We're ideally looking for people who can commit to volunteering for a minimum of 12 months.
Support and training	• Ongoing support and supervision from your volunteer supervisor • Training opportunities and development needs will be discussed and agreed with the supervisor • Ongoing training opportunities around relevant issues will be offered • Reimbursement of public transport costs to location of volunteering (up to maximum of £15 each session) • (Any issues of concern should be raised with your named supervisor or the Edinburgh Service Manager)

Expectations of Volunteers	• Ability to abide by LGBT Health and Wellbeing's Policies, Procedures, and safer Space Commitment • Willingness to join us in our commitment to being a trauma-informed and anti-racist organisation • Commitment to providing non judgemental support to all of our LGBTQ+ community • Commitment to trans inclusion and a fully inclusive approach to all • Understanding of and willingness to commit to the highest level of confidentiality and data protection at all times • Willingness to use support systems • Commitment to attend ongoing support meetings and training • Punctuality • Reliability in and regularity of communication, especially in providing as much advance notice as possible if unable to attend an event or meeting
Location of volunteering	• The helpline is delivered remotely; there may be some scope to come to one of our offices in Edinburgh or Glasgow to deliver (you can discuss this with your supervisor). • You need to have a quiet, uninterrupted, confidential space with internet connection in their home. • Please state in your application if this would be necessary and/or possible for you.
IT required for the role	• Phone - landline or mobile for Voiphone set up • Tablet/computer to log call information • Ethernet cable if using landline • Wifi connection (i.e.router) Your supervisor will specify what equipment etc is required and ensure this is available before you start volunteering.
What's in it for you?	• Valuable volunteering experience • The chance to develop your communication skills and build confidence • An ongoing training programme to boost your skills and experience • Opportunities to meet new people, work with other volunteers and the wider team for peer support and social events • Gain experience of providing emotional support, being a listening ear and signposting • Make a difference to people's lives by contributing to reducing isolation and loneliness • Updates and news from LGBT health and wellbeing

Recruitment Process

This pack outlines the role and skills that we are looking for, as well as the selection process and timelines you can expect from us. We ask you to complete the application form.

[Please click here for the application form](#)

Please note, that the deadline for applications is 5pm on Friday 11th September.

We will contact people who we are taking to the next stage of the process, which will be an interview, **by 5pm on Wednesday 16th September.**



Please ensure that your application includes an **email** where you can be contacted.

Interviews will be scheduled to take place online or in-person during the week commencing 21st September.

If you have any questions, or if you would like to request an alternative version of the application form, please contact: **fiona@lgbthealth.org.uk**

LGBT Health and Wellbeing is an equal opportunities employer. We aim to create an equal and fair volunteer recruitment process open to all. We commit to being accessible and welcoming to all the diverse communities and partners that we engage with. If there is anything that we can do to help you throughout this process, please let us know.