**(Remote) Befriending Volunteer - Role Description**

**Responsible to: Volunteer Service Coordinator**

**Location: Remote**

**Hours: 2-3 hours per week plus monthly supervision**

**About Womankind**

**Womankind** is an established charity run by women for women. We provide a range of confidential and accessible services in Bristol and the surrounding area. Every year we help hundreds of women to improve their mental health and well-being so they can experience a better quality of life.

Our befriending services aim to offer consistent support to women who are experiencing, mental distress, isolation and who may be at risk of abuse. Women may have faced difficulties including childhood abuse, trauma, sexual and domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence.  Befrienders will offer emotional support, promote self-care and healthy lifestyle choices to improve wellbeing, help alleviate isolation, empower women who may be at risk of abuse, provide and model a healthy relationship, help women to gain in confidence and self-esteem, and generally contribute to women making positive, sustainable changes in their lives.

**What will I be doing in this befriending role?**

* Providing weekly support, most likely in the form of two 1-hour telephone or video calls per week
* Providing emotional support, including non-judgmental active listening
* Modeling and promoting positive, safe and healthy relationships
* Offering aspects of ordinary friendship, having a chat and promoting fun
* Helping women to think about self-care, healthy lifestyle and development of routine
* Supporting women to pursue interests/hobbies and opportunities
* Supporting and gently encouraging women to make changes to improve their lives
* Helping women achieve their goals and become empowered and independent
* Helping women to feel safer and more in control of their lives

**What experience do I need?**

Womankind provides comprehensive training and supervision, but it’s helpful if you have some of the following skills and qualities:

* To be non-judgmental, reliable and patient.
* To be a good listener.
* To be enthusiastic and interested in helping someone regain confidence
* To be honest and friendly with good communication skills
* To be able to calmly respond to the needs of the woman you are befriending, including managing a crisis situation
* Ideally you will already be confident in using the phone / video call technology, but if this doesn’t apply to you, don’t let it be a barrier: we can support you to acquire the skills you need, or there may be some opportunity for providing face to face support.

 **What commitment do I need to give?**

* To complete all sessions of the (Remote) Befriending Volunteering Training Program (home study and online sessions)
* To provide weekly support for 6months-1 year once you are matched (with some time off for holidays during this period)
* To receive individual supervision and attend group supervision with your fellow volunteers online, monthly.
* To follow Womankind’s guidelines, policies and procedures including Safeguarding, Equalities and Confidentiality policies

 **What you will gain as a volunteer**

* A really rewarding experience and opportunity to make a positive difference in the life of another woman.
* Comprehensive in-house training that has been developed over 27 years, enabling you to develop new skills and broaden your knowledge. The training is trauma informed and covers active listening skills and specific issues such as mental health, sexual and domestic abuse, boundaries and endings. It also covers essential organisational and befriending policies, procedures and guidelines.
* Valuable experience of providing support and using active listening skills in a specialist (women’s) mental health setting
* Support and supervision
* Out of pocket expenses
* On-going training and opportunities for personal development and progression
* Becoming part of a group of fellow volunteers with similar interests

**We welcome volunteers with personal experience of mental health and other relevant issues. We will require you to have at least a one year period of stability before taking on this role and ideally to have received professional help like counselling in your recovery.**