

# HELPLINE & WEBCHAT VOLUNTEER

STAMMA's Helpline Services include our phonenumber, webchat and email support services and are a hugely important part of STAMMA's work. This is frontline stuff, responding to people reaching out for information and support. It's a great opportunity to spend time chatting with people who stammer, as well as their parents, grandparents, teachers and employers, taking the time to make space to listen and to value what they have to say. Where appropriate we then signpost people to useful information, support and services.

We use a virtual call centre which means you can take calls and webchats from home, using a desktop or laptop computer.

We are currently recruiting 2 volunteers to work on the helpline and webchat: one person covering a Monday shift and one person covering a Wednesday shift.

## Basic information

Hours	4 hours per week + 1 hour per month for Helpline Team meetings
Day and time	A regular slot as follows:  <b>Mondays 10am-2pm</b> <b>or</b> <b>Wednesdays 10am-2pm</b>
Location	Home-based
Supported by	Lee Millam (Helpline Services Training Manager) Kirsten Howells (STAMMA's Director of Services)

## What does the role involve?

Working within our Helpline Services, we're hoping you'll feel comfortable to:

- Take helpline calls (listening and speaking on the phone)
- Respond to webchats (reading on-screen messages and typing responses)
- Sending occasional emails

If you wish to, you can also be linked to an area of project work. That way, if the helpline services are quiet during your shift, you can get involved in other areas of STAMMA's work. Project work is likely to involve reading and reviewing documents and resources, contributing to discussions and campaign ideas, and helping develop new resources.

## **What training and support would you get?**

Structured, online training programme which can be taken at your own pace but is likely to take you about 8-10 hours in total. Following the training, you'll have practice helpline calls and webchats. If you feel ready after that, you'll start working in the helpline services.

Ongoing support includes:

- Monthly helpline services meetings where you can meet other helpline volunteers. These monthly meetings include a short training session and discussion where we share and learn from our experiences of different calls and webchats.
- We have a WhatsApp group where you can keep in touch with other volunteers.
- Lee and Kirsten are available for one-to-one support and discussions.
- Access the training modules as many times as you want.

## **What would you need?**

- A quiet place where you can work in privacy and not be overheard during calls
- A mobile phone or landline
- A computer or laptop

## **Who might enjoy this volunteer role?**

You're likely to enjoy volunteering in the Helpline Services if you:

- have a genuine curiosity about people and their experiences
- are able to understand written and spoken English
- are comfortable enough to speak on the telephone
- are comfortable with basic email functions
- have good administration skills
- enjoy listening and talking to people

It's not essential to stammer yourself if you're interested in working in our helpline, but it can be an advantage if you do, or if you are the parent of a child who stammers. Many of our callers find it really helpful to know that they're speaking to someone who really 'gets it' and who has that personal insight into some of the issues and questions they have.

## **Other information**

As a volunteer you can, of course, step back from the role at any time, although we do ask that you give us notice so that we can train someone to take over your role. However, both you and the service are likely to get most out of the opportunity if you're able to volunteer with us for at least 12 months or more. By gradually learning and developing your confidence in the role, you can have the biggest impact.

This is a volunteer role and is unpaid.

**For more information**

If you have any questions, or to express an interest in volunteering in STAMMA's Helpline Services, please email us at [lee.millam@stamma.org](mailto:lee.millam@stamma.org) or phone the office on 020 8983 1003. Or to chat with one of our current helpline volunteers and see what they think about their role, feel free to call the helpline on 0808 802 0002 or use our webchat service!