



# Voluntary Support Scheme

## GUIDELINES FOR REFERRERS

The **Voluntary Support Scheme** exists to link volunteers with people suffering from emotional stress or isolation. The volunteers meet with their client for up to an hour a week to offer them support in their journey back to ordinariness. We also run self-help groups.

The confidential nature of this work is understood and observed by all the volunteers as well as the Co-ordinator.

- Referrals (for one-to-one support or the self-help group) are accepted from:
  - GP practices or other health professionals
  - staff of other statutory or voluntary agencies
  - clients themselves, or family members (but backing for the application for a volunteer will be sought from an appropriate person e.g. GP, vicar, community nurse)
- All referrals must be made with the full agreement of the client and any carers they have.
- Volunteers initially agree to visit for three months. To make best use of this time **there must be an agreed aim** for the volunteer and client to work towards, together. At the end of the three month period progress towards this aim will be reviewed.
- The Scheme does not in any way seek to replace professional health or social services, but rather to complement the statutory service involvement with clients. The Co-ordinator will continue to liaise with the referrer, as appropriate.
- Due to the way the Scheme works and the areas covered by the training the volunteers receive we are unable to offer support to people who:
  - may hurt others;
  - have drug or alcohol abuse problems;
  - are suffering from dementia.
- The volunteers do **not** offer their clients:
  - counselling
  - a “sitting” service
  - befriending in the sense of regular companionship for an indefinite period.
- All volunteers give references and have a CRB check. They receive :
  - initial training before undertaking this support work;
  - on-going training through regular group meetings;
  - on-going individual support from the Co-ordinator;
  - travelling expenses;
  - insurance cover.

For more information, or to make a referral, please ring the Co-ordinator, Dawn Hampshire, on 01884 258507 or email [voluntary.supportscheme@virgin.net](mailto:voluntary.supportscheme@virgin.net).

Our website is [www.voluntarysupportscheme.org.uk](http://www.voluntarysupportscheme.org.uk)