

Media Volunteer Role Description

Purpose:

Media Volunteers speak to journalists about their experiences of mental health stigma and discrimination.

We have media volunteers to ensure that people who experience mental health stigma and discrimination are reported accurately in the media.

Stigma often exists when people don't understand something. As a See Me Media Volunteer you can help change behaviour by telling people all over Scotland what it is really like to have a mental health problem and how stigma and discrimination can affect lives.

Our Media Volunteers are a vital part of the See Me movement, telling their own stories of mental health stigma, to assist in challenging people's attitudes and behaviours.

This could include:

- The mental health stigma and discrimination they have faced.
- Their personal experience of mental health problems.
- Recovery.
- Suicide.
- Positive support they have given and received.

Recruitment:

We need to know that being a media volunteer is right for you.

Our recruitment process is designed to give potential media volunteers the opportunity to consider the possible consequences of speaking out about their experiences and explore the realities of working with the media.

Recruitment Stages

1. Application form submitted

2. A phone or face to face chat to talk about potential volunteer's story and experiences. [If there are a large number of applications this may be done as a workshop day]
3. See Me and the volunteer work together to get their story down in writing and create a synopsis.
4. A day of media training sessions.

Training & Support:

Media volunteers have a day of training which will prepare you to speak to the media.

On the day you will be interviewed on radio and TV and will be given tips how to get your message across. We will also talk about what you do and don't want to cover.

Being a media volunteer, how does it work?

There are two main ways in which media volunteers are involved.

1. A reporter will contact See Me, asking to speak to someone with a specific diagnosis to give a real life element to a story they are writing.
2. When See Me is promoting a new campaign or piece of work we will contact our media volunteers to see if they want to take part in the promotion and be featured in a press release.

Volunteers are fully supported throughout this process.

You will receive written information about the media request before deciding whether they would like to proceed with it.

Before the interview they will also be provided with a briefing sheet of potential questions and key messages.

Your main point of contact is the See Me media officer, and they can provide extra support and accompany media volunteers on interviews if required.



Time Commitment:

The nature of this type of work means that you could possibly only receive requests a few times a year or you could be contacted more often.

It is also likely that after you have taken part in a few interviews with the media you may be called upon less often.

Due to the nature of news media, stories are not often retold a large number of times. However there will still be opportunities to tell your story in different formats after the first couple of years.

If you have told your story in the media a number of times before you join with See Me, it may be that other volunteering opportunities may be better.

The amount of interviews you are able to be involved in will be entirely up to you; depending on how busy you are and the time you have available. Either way we value your time, support and commitment.

Location:

Interviews mostly take place over the phone. Face to face interviews, often with TV or radio, can take place either in a studio or a location that suits you.

Photography is quite often required on feature pieces and this is usually organised to take place somewhere in the volunteer's local area that is convenient for the volunteer (we discourage using volunteer's homes for this).

What you could gain:

You'll be trained in speaking to the media and have the opportunity to attend a variety of events and meet lots of new people.

You'll also be part of the See Me movement for change, taking action to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

What sort of skills and experience are we looking for?

- Personal experience of stigma and discrimination in relation to mental health
- You should feel comfortable talking about your experiences.
- Ability to communicate with different types of people
- Good organisational and time-keeping skills
- The ability to look back on your experiences – good and bad – without assigning blame or ‘naming and shaming’ people or organisations (this helps to avoid a sense of ‘them and us’)
- Willingness to travel to and from interviews (if they require it)
- Be able to be contacted by phone and email and have regular and confidential access to the internet and an email account.
- Willingness to talk about See Me at a basic level.