



 Priory Campus Pontefract Road  
Lundwood Barnsley S71 5PN

 01226 770610

 [info@barnsleycvs.org.uk](mailto:info@barnsleycvs.org.uk)

[www.barnsleycvs.org.uk](http://www.barnsleycvs.org.uk)

## Community responder frequently asked questions

### What are community responders?

We know that there are many people who want to offer their time to help others through a time of crisis. People can volunteer informally within local neighbourhoods (in which case there is no need to contact us) or through a more structured and targeted route to assist providers who may not be able to cope due to increased demand or staff shortages.

### What age restrictions are there on volunteering?

Anyone over the age of 18 is welcome to apply to become a community responder. We have a wide variety of roles available, so we'll be able to find a great opportunity for you based on your skills and abilities.

### Do I need a DBS check to volunteer?

No, unless you will be undertaking some specific roles that require it. Please advise us if you have a DBS so we can match you to these volunteer roles.

### Why do I need to sign up to be a community responder? Can I not just come out and help locally?

Yes! We encourage people to take sensible steps to look after each other in our communities. What we are also looking for is people to register with us so that we can target available support to the most vulnerable.

### How many hours can I volunteer for?

We're happy for you to give as much or as little as your time as a volunteer as every little bit makes a big difference to communities. There is a range of volunteering opportunities that can be carried out at times that are convenient for you. When completing the online form to register your interest, you will be asked to let us know what times are usually best for you.

### When can I start volunteering?

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer, please fill in your details on our online enquiry form. When we reach a stage where your support is required, the team will contact you to discuss specific roles. It may be some time before you are contacted depending upon how the virus develops and how well existing services are able to cope.

We will give as much notice as possible. You may be contacted at short notice, but if you are unable to help say so, this is completely voluntary, and there is no pressure on you to say yes.

### **What protection is there for me if I choose to volunteer?**

You will be provided with PPE (personal protective equipment) relative to the role you are asked to undertake. A written briefing will also be provided to all volunteers. Please always continue to follow the NHS advice in terms of good hand hygiene.

### **What volunteering roles are required?**

At present services are largely meeting demand as part of their business as usual arrangements, therefore we are recruiting in anticipation of future demands. As such we cannot be certain with what support is required but it may include:

- calling people for a chat so they don't get too lonely
- delivering food and care packages or doing shopping
- delivering medicines and equipment that people might need
- working alongside care services (if you have the right skills and qualifications)
- administrative support

### **I have specific skills and experience; can I use them?**

We have a range of volunteering opportunities for people with different skills and experience – everyone really does have something to bring. When filling out the form to register your interest, there will be questions about training and qualifications, which will help us to make sure that our volunteer's skills are best placed.

### **Will I be paid?**

You will not be paid when you are volunteering. However, you may be entitled to claim expenses back. Please refer to “can I claim my expenses”.

### **Can I claim my expenses?**

Yes, you will be entitled to claim for any expenses, including reasonable travel costs and car parking. When discussing volunteering opportunities, the team will be able to talk to you about costs that can be reimbursed in your activities. The process for claiming and form will be decided soon. In the form, we do ask if you have access to your own vehicle and a full UK driving licence, please let us know if you would be happy to use your own vehicle.

### **What car insurance do I need?**

You must inform your insurance company that you will be using your vehicle whilst volunteering (business use). In most cases, as this is not a regular day to day role but an ad hoc response there should not be an additional charge.

### **Will I be expected to go into people's homes?**

There will be a wide range of opportunities available, where suitable, some roles may involve visiting residents at home. However, this will be discussed with you by the volunteering team, so please let us know if you are uncomfortable with entering people's home.

**Will I receive training?**

You will not be asked to do anything that is beyond your skills, capabilities and training. You will receive a written briefing and induction training as appropriate.

**What if I become ill and can no longer help out?**

If you become ill, please let us know as soon as possible and withdraw yourself from further volunteering until you have fully recovered. Once you have fully recovered you will be able to volunteer.