



Peer Connections Volunteer: Self-Help Group Leader

Overview:

Self-Help Group Leaders provide in-person and/or virtual connection within community groups that provide emotional support, education, and peer connections. Group Leaders implement and guide peer led solution focused emotional support within their group setting while also providing organizational and logistical aspects of group facilitation and management.

The National MS Society is committed to embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything we do. We strive to create communities and connection opportunities where everyone feels empowered to bring their authentic selves so we can foster a sense of authenticity and belonging.

Staff Contact:

Peer Connections Resource Team (PeerConnections@nmss.org) and assigned Staff Partner (*TBD*).

Key Responsibilities:

- Serve as a positive representative of and liaison to the Society within the community.
- Provide an authentically safe and inclusive space that aligns with the Society's [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion principles](#), where participants can share their common lived experience.
- Adherence, at all times, to the Society's [Inclusion Policy](#).
- Adherence to all Society policies & guidelines provided on the [Resources for Peer Connections Volunteer](#) website.
- Ensure that group meets in accessible and appropriate meeting space; determine meeting schedule; and communicate with group members in between scheduled meetings.
- Together, with group members, plan and implement meeting agendas, welcome new members, encourage participation and facilitate group discussions.
- Communicate regularly with Staff Partner and Peer Connections Resource Team consistently and respectfully.
- Work with Staff Partner annually to complete volunteer compliance requirements.

Education and Support:

- Required new leader training & orientation, including modules focused on: Welcome to the Society, Group Leadership, and Challenging Situations & Crisis Support.
- Attend and participate in additional Society Peer Connections Volunteer trainings as offered.
- Utilize volunteer & community resources provided on the [Resources for Peer Connections Volunteer](#) website.

- Optional peer support provided through the [Connections Volunteers Facebook group](#).

Qualifications:

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Have a connection to MS (living with MS, spouse/support partner, parent, sibling or child w/MS).
- Maintain an active email address for communication with Staff Partner, Peer Connections Resource Team, and group members.
- Ability to manage individuals, group dynamics and meeting agendas.
- Strong listening and communication skills; empathic listener and a desire to help others.
- Knowledgeable about Society resources.

Time Commitment:

- Uphold meeting cadence as agreed upon with Staff Partner (monthly, bi-weekly, etc.).
- Communication with group members and potential group members in between regularly scheduled meetings. Leaders are encouraged to set realistic limits on the time they spend during the month communicating with group members outside of the group meeting.
- Minimum of 1-year commitment.
- Time required will vary if there is shared leadership within the group.

Impact:

- Group Leaders provide a local community presence for the National MS Society.
- Group Leaders empower individuals to address MS-related life changes by providing emotional support.