

„Volunteer to learn“: best-practice / project form

Partner: Gemeinsam leben und lernen in Europa e.V.

Identification of the organisation	
Name	CSV
Location	UK
Type of organization	Volunteering Charity
Contact details	psadowski@csv.org.uk
Identification of the practice / project	
Title	Mentor Training
Objectives of the practice/ project	The SAM Project supports mental health service users into employment, volunteering and training. A key part of this work is achieved through volunteer support. Volunteers make this work possible and as such it is important to ensure that they are adequately trained.
Detailed description of the project (methods, instruments, working plan ...)	One of the training schemes provided by the SAM Project is a Mentoring Level 2 qualification. This qualification provides volunteers with a core set of skills - Record keeping, communication, referral process and situational awareness - and understandings to allow them to support vulnerable adults to achieve their potential. This training provides volunteers with an understanding of the stages of the mentoring' relationship; an understanding of a range of techniques to make mentees feel comfortable and at ease; and the boundaries of a mentoring relationship, as well as an understanding of when and to whom referrals should be made. It is important that volunteers feel supported and confident in their role. Training is one way of ensuring this and meeting the safeguarding of beneficiaries, volunteers and staff.
Target group volunteers: who should be reached by the project? Which measures have to be taken to reach them?	SAM Volunteer (mentors) and SAM service users (mentees)
Context of the project: What needs/problems existed that make it necessary to implement the project?	The SAM Project supports mental health service users into employment, volunteering and training.
Steps to take	
Required time to prepare and implement the practice/ project	The training course consists of 6 sessions, each 3hrs. Volunteers are then matched with service users.
Resources and costs	Please contact Suffolk Education Business Partnership for costs

Staff (paid, voluntary)	This course is run by Suffolk Education Business Partnership Felaw Maltings 44 Felaw Street Ipswich IP2 8SJ UK Email: paul.mccarthy@suffolkebp.co.uk Phone: +441473 408062
Involvement of volunteers in planning and implementation	This is a standard opportunity offered to all Project volunteers.
Possible obstacles for implementation and ways to overcome them	Potential obstacles include having sufficient numbers to run the training; min. require is 6, max is 12. Also need volunteers with the right attitude to provide the right level of support with empathy and sensitivity.
Needed partners / support for the project	Good partnership work is needed, with local volunteer centres to make sure that suitable volunteers know of this opportunity with the SAM project.
Effects and benefits of the practice /project	
Quantitative results of the practices/ project (how many volunteers were involved, how many hours of training, gained certificates ...)	The course has been run 3 times and has been completed by 25 volunteers. Volunteers are then matched with service users and meet with them on a fortnightly basis.
Added value for the volunteers: what learning opportunities and skills were gained through the project?	This is a great chance for volunteers to learn new skills and gain experience which can help them into employment or further training.
Added value for the involved organization	Training volunteers makes them feel valued and improves their performance in their roles. This helps the project run smoothly and improves overall outcomes.
Summary	
Why is the practice/ project a good example?	Training volunteers makes them feel valued and improves their performance in their roles. This helps the project run smoothly and improves overall outcomes.
What works well?	Mentors act as role models and help improve mentees confidence and self-esteem.
What doesn't work well?	The caliber of volunteers is not always to a level which facilitates 1-2-1 mentoring. In these instances a group mentoring approach is adopted to that volunteers can support each other whilst working with service users.

Appendix: more information about this project e.g. website, blogs, audiovisual or printed material