

Action for M.E. Young People's Services Steering Group Volunteer application pack



About Action for M.E.

We know that living with M.E. can be hard, especially when you're young.

Action for M.E. is here to help. We offer services and support for young people, adults and families living with M.E., work to improve access to appropriate care and support services, and collaborate with scientists and patients for more biomedical research.

We are very grateful to have the support of many wonderful volunteers who add huge value to our work, and help us reach even more children, young people and adults with M.E.

In this application pack, you will find the information you need to help you consider and apply for one of our exciting volunteering roles – and contact details on the back page, in case you have any questions.

Thank you for considering joining our team!



Sonya Chowdhury
Chief Executive

Background and overview

Action for M.E. offers a range of services for children and young people with M.E. aged up to and including 18 years. Our [Young People's Community](#) is free to join and gives members access to:

- Cheers, a monthly e-magazine written especially for and by young people with M.E.
- our lively Young People's Forum, moderated by brilliant volunteer Peer Support Moderators
- a pen pal service that connects young people by email and/or post
- a buddy service for more severely affected members
- handwritten cards on their birthday every year.

We also offer a free, independent [Advocacy service](#), supporting young people with M.E. to have their voice heard; and free monthly [Breaking Isolation workshops](#) for games and discussions.

In spring 2024, thanks to funding from the the National Lottery Community Fund, we will launch a free Counselling service for young people with M.E./CFS. It's really important that young people have a say in how we deliver this new service, to make sure we are getting it right!

So we are extending our existing Young People's Steering Group (set up help us run our Breaking Isolation workshops) to shape all our services for people aged up to and including 18 years. The Steering Group will take a leading role in deciding how and where we promote our services and help us measure the difference these services make.

What we ask of all Action for M.E. volunteers

We ask you to make a commitment to us for 12 months if you can. We understand that this isn't always possible and will explore the best options available with you. We also ask you to:

- treat fellow volunteers and the people that use our services with respect and compassion
- tell us if you are not clear about your role or activities that you are involved in so we can help you understand them better
- let us know if you are not able to complete tasks or come to work when agreed
- act in a professional way when volunteering on behalf of Action for M.E. or talking about us and our work
- make sure you do not discriminate against another person or exclude people.

What all Action for M.E. volunteer can expect from us

People volunteer for all kinds of reasons and we want to ensure that you get something back as well as giving you time and commitment. We will work with you to ensure that we get the balance right. We will:

- treat you with respect and compassion
- ensure you are clear about your role and responsibilities
- provide you with support through regular contact and meetings that fit with your work and your needs as well as ours
- offer you honest and fair feedback on your volunteering and achievements
- listen to, and act on, feedback that you share with us
- value the role you play in our team and the contribution you make to our work.

Role description

Team:	Support Services
Key contact:	Clare Ogden, Head of Support Services
Location:	Home-based
Hours:	Online meetings via Zoom, every four to six weeks, for up to an hour (including breaks), ideally for a minimum of 12 months but we are always willing to be flexible.

Main tasks and activities

With support from the staff team, you will help us:

- design the content and materials we use to promote our services, like social media posts and printed posters/leaflets
- develop a plan to advertise our services as widely as possible to young people with M.E./CFS
- decide how we make sure our counselling service is working well for the clients that use it
- check in with the wider M.E. community to get input on what other kind of support young people need and how Action for M.E. might help.

This will involve taking part in online Zoom meetings every four to six weeks. We will make sure meetings work for everyone in the Steering Group, eg. sending out information to think about in advance, having scheduled breaks, and offering a range of ways to input thoughts/feedback.

About you

We are looking for young people with M.E./CFS aged 13 to 18 years who:

- get excited about sharing their ideas and enthusiasm
- want to help others access the services they need
- are able to review short documents between meetings
- are able to offer constructive feedback – we want to hear what you think, good and bad!
- have access to the internet so you can use Zoom for meetings.

What you will get out of this role

This role offers you:

- a way of meeting new people and making a real difference to your peers
- the chance to shape valuable support services for young people with M.E./CFS
- experience of volunteering in the charity sector
- space to develop new and existing skills in areas including planning, creativity, marketing and impact.

What next?

If you think you would make a good Steering Group member, we would love to hear from you!

Please send an email to Clare at clare.ogden@actionforme.org.uk with:

- your full name and date of birth
- a paragraph about why you would like to join the Steering Group, mentioning any skills and/or experience you have that you think will be useful.

You are also very welcome to ask any questions about the role if there's something you would like more information on.

If you are under 16, we will need to speak to your mum, dad or carer to make sure they are happy for you to take part (we will get back in touch to ask for their details).

Recruitment for the Steering Group is ongoing as we get the project set up, which means there's no deadline to get in touch.

We will reply to everyone who contacts us within three working days.

If we think you might be a good fit for the Steering Group, we will arrange an informal chat. This will be a chance for us to get to know each other, and for you to find out about the role.

We will then get back to everyone we've chatted with to let them know the outcome.

For those invited to join the Steering Group, we will set up a session to help you understand the process, and to give you a clear idea of what to expect from being in the Group. We will also make sure you know who to contact if you need any support or have any questions.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Action for M.E., 42 Temple Street, Keynsham BS31 1EH. Tel: 0117 927 9551.

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