

Question & Answer Sheet – Becoming a Bereavement Volunteer

Firstly thank you for your interest in volunteering with Cruse Bereavement Care. This sheet aims to answer the most frequently asked questions regarding both training and working as a Bereavement Volunteer within the Cruse Richmond upon Thames area.

Q. What does Cruse do?

A. Cruse is a national charity with localised branches that provide advice, information and support to anyone who has been bereaved (children, young people and adults), whenever or however a death has occurred. The service is provided by trained, experienced volunteers, in the client's own home. It is confidential and free.

Q. Do I need to train to be a Bereavement Volunteer?

A. Yes. Everybody who works with Cruse clients needs to first complete the ***Awareness in Bereavement Care (ABC) course***, regardless of previous experience and/or qualifications. This is to ensure clients receive a consistent approach, irrespective of where in the UK they seek support.

The ABC course comprises both theory and practical skills practice, has 48 hours of contact time (16 sessions of 3 hours each) and at least 12 hours personal study time. It is expected that trainees will attend the entire course but to successfully complete it, they must attend at least 13 of the 16 sessions including the first two days.

In addition all trainees are required to complete a portfolio to provide evidence of their learning. Completion time is normally 12 hours undertaken in the trainee's own time.

Q. When is the next ABC training course?

A. The next ABC course will be run jointly by Cruse Richmond and Cruse Lambeth in Spring 2014. All sessions will take place on Saturdays at **St. Mary's The Virgin Church Hall, Mortlake High Street, London SW14 8JA.**

Dates for the Spring 2014 course are below with timings expected to be 9.30am to 5.30pm.

Saturday 1st March
Saturday 8th March
Saturday 22nd March
Saturday 29th March
Saturday 5th April
Saturday 12th April
Saturday 17th May
Saturday 7th June

Q. How much does it cost to join the training course?

The cost of the course is £300.00 payable within 7 days of a place being offered. Cruse Richmond also operates a bursary policy for applicants able to offer a firm commitment to the branch but who would have difficulty meeting the financial cost of the training. Details of eligibility requirements and how to apply can be downloaded separately from our website.

Q. I haven't studied recently does this matter?

A. No. You are well supported on the training course by the trainers and the others who are on the course. We are keen to recruit from people with a wide range of skills and experiences.

Q. Can I start volunteering immediately after completion of the ABC course?

A. Volunteers who have newly completed their ABC training course can commence working with clients only when:

- i) They have successfully passed the Cruse Bereavement Care post-training interview
- ii) A DBS and reference check has been completed.

Q. What on-going commitment do I need to give to Cruse?

A. We are seeking to recruit volunteers prepared to give a minimum of six hours a month. Initially supporting one client face to face or over the telephone for fifty minutes each week, we would hope that with experience our volunteers would be able to support two clients at any one time.

Volunteers are also required to attend a monthly supervision group and an annual individual supervision session. This session is intended to give you the opportunity to discuss what additional support and training you might want from us. Both are mandatory requirements when volunteering for Cruse.

Ideally once accepted by the branch we would be looking for a two-year commitment.

All bereavement volunteers are required to attend further training modules on Child Bereavement and Sudden Death within their first year. No charge is made for training once the Branch has accepted you as a volunteer, but 15 hours continuing professional development each year is expected.

Q. Do I need to live within the Borough of Richmond upon Thames?

A. All our client referrals are drawn from the local area and your supervision groups will also be held within the Richmond Borough. Although it is not essential to live locally you may be asked to demonstrate that you can offer the flexibility needed to support clients and attend meetings.



Q. What happens next?

A. You need to complete the Cruse application form and return it by email to: abc.cruiserichmond@gmail.com by January 12th 2014.

By completing an application form, you will automatically be added to our mailing list and receive regular updates on ABC training as they become available.

In addition, please go to the following link to fill in a short equal opportunities monitoring form: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LNRDTWY>.

If you need any further information, please send an email to the course organiser at the above email address.

Robin Legard, ABC Course Organiser (Richmond)