

## Overseas Volunteers at Leonard Cheshire

Arnold House



### What is my role?

At Leonard Cheshire Disability, we value the role our Overseas Volunteers have in our services throughout the United Kingdom. Due to the length of the placements for overseas volunteers (12 months) volunteers have the opportunity to acquire a range of skills, improve their English, enjoy the best of British culture and life, and develop fulfilling working relationships with our residents, staff and local volunteers which often develop into long-term friendships.

Overseas volunteers help support our staff teams in providing an active, involving and stimulating environment for our residents. Through our overseas volunteers, disabled people in our care homes are able to access their local community services and social opportunities more easily and regularly, thus improving their independence and quality of life. This means that in their roles overseas volunteers are engaging in a wide range of activities both inside and outside the home.

There is no typical day for volunteers as our residents' needs and interests determine what volunteers will be doing on a daily basis. Volunteers may be required to accompany residents on activity weekends and short holidays, as well as providing support to the residents who have regular work, education or volunteering commitments. While it is a lot of fun going out with residents, it is also very challenging as volunteers experience first-hand the issues faced by people with disabilities every day. Working in a care home will broaden an individual's exposure to the needs of a different group of people not normally encountered in day to day life.

### What opportunities can I expect for training & skills development?

Thorough training on working with vulnerable adults is provided to all our volunteers and Leonard Cheshire Disability staff helps volunteers during the induction process to understand each individual. Risk assessments ensure that volunteers are not asked to contribute outside of their capability or boundaries. Arnold House is committed to providing training for EVS volunteers to enable them to carry out their role but also to improve their own skills and to allow for access to and involvement with as many aspects of the service's work as possible.

**Volunteers will acquire** a wide range of knowledge; skills and experience including a much greater understanding of the issues affecting disabled people. They will also gain improved interpersonal skills and the ability to interact with a wide range of people, as well as specific skills acquired through our induction & training programme. There will also be an opportunity to learn about the wider activities of the charity, for example our campaigning and lobbying activities in the English Parliament.

## About Arnold House

**Arnold House** is a home providing a range of services for adults with physical disabilities. Our home is ideally located in Enfield, North London, close to local amenities. The home is set in beautiful grounds where you can often see wildlife such as deer and grouse.

**Enfield has lots of shops**, pubs, café's, restaurants and other amenities such as a post office, banks, a swimming pool, a cinema, a bowling alley, roller skating and a library. Enfield Town is about a 15 minute walk or 8 minute bus ride from the bus stop right outside the home. From Enfield there are good transport links. There are over-ground and underground trains to London as well as bus routes. Buses and trains are within a 10 minute walk of the home and the underground is within 20 minutes. The journey to Central London takes about 45 minutes by train and a rail card costs £7.40.

## Expectations & Accommodation

**Volunteers are expected** to comply with Leonard Cheshire policy & procedures & codes of conduct. Failure to comply with this could result in the programme being terminated. Behavior that causes concern as a result of excessive alcohol is not tolerated. The misuse of illegal substances will not be tolerated and will result in instant dismissal. Volunteers are expected to behave in a socially responsible way, and in consideration to fellow volunteers and residents.

**Volunteer accommodation** is in a self-contained flat on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the house. Volunteers will be accommodated in single bedrooms and a shared bathroom and kitchen, a sitting / dining room. Volunteers are responsible for keeping the flat clean. Overnight guests are permissible only a temporary basis, and with permission.

## Volunteer Profile

**We are looking for** enthusiastic people with a good sense of humour who enjoy working with people and working as part of a team. Volunteers should

have a genuine interest in working with disabled people. Simultaneously, it can be demanding and emotionally difficult to support people with disabilities, which require patience, understanding and confidence.

**It is a requirement** that the volunteers can carry a conversation in English, and understand basic instructions. Since we work with vulnerable people, it is essential that the volunteers understand instructions, policies and procedures explained in English. This will also ensure, from a health and safety perspective, that our volunteers follow all procedures in place for their own and our residents' safety.

## Activities

**Our residents** ensure their home has a lively and friendly atmosphere. At their request, we offer a wide range of activities, including bingo, arts and crafts, trips to the cinema, board games and eating out. We also like to hold events in the home such as coffee mornings, cheese and wine evenings and an annual summer fete.

Examples of activities for volunteers:

- Running arts and crafts group, playing board games and language games, music groups, organizing theme evenings, intercultural activities, etc.
- Organizing and supporting fundraising events
- Escorting residents in the community, going to the local college, cinema, performance at theatre, local library, etc.
- Assist in all aspects of the events from planning to advertisement to organising and finally conducting the event.

**EVS volunteers are encouraged** to share their own interests, as a way of developing their own role and also to allow the residents to benefit from volunteers individual skills and knowledge. For example where a volunteer has a particular interest/skill in music, sport or art they will be encouraged to share this with the residents, perhaps arranging classes or an activity for the residents.

**Additionally EVS volunteers** will be actively encouraged to share their own culture, for example through holding an intercultural event or introducing residents and staff at Arnold House to traditional food or dress from the volunteers home country etc. This allows for a positive interaction between the volunteers and service users and brings an important and unique intercultural dimension to the work of the organisation.

### Contact details

Annamaria Papini - Overseas Volunteer Coordinator

Telephone: 0203 2420423 / 07984801414

Email: [annamaria.papini@leonardcheshire.org](mailto:annamaria.papini@leonardcheshire.org)