

Please Join Us

What if we could support you and other Ipswich and East Suffolk residents feel more confident and able to offer compassionate support for people towards the end of their lives and their loved ones?

Imagine having the training, ongoing support, knowledge and confidence to be a companion volunteer, working alongside other members of the community and clinical teams to provide the best possible care to those at the end of their lives.

Our aims are to:

- Improve end of life care in our communities across Suffolk
- Provide non-medical and compassionate support to individuals in their last year of life and their loved ones
- Enable conversations about the choices available at the end of life
- Support people to live their lives fully as possible before they die



If you are interested to learn more about compassionate companions, please watch the short film which is on the homepage of our website

www.compassionate-communities.co.uk

If you would like more information or are considering joining the companion team please contact Dr Crockett, lead GP at

lindsey.crockett@nhs.net

or call 07443 020291 and leave your name and telephone number for a return call.

How do I know if I'm right for this volunteer role?

No formal qualifications are necessary. Full training is given. Having time to spend with a person in the last year of life and having the ability to share information (learned at the training) when appropriate is plenty.

What training will be given and what is the ongoing support?

- A three day face to face training course by End of Life Doula team.
- Safeguarding training every three years (few hours online).

Informal interview and enhanced DBS check are also part of the enrolment process.

The lead team of clinical, research and administrative support supervise the companion volunteers. Companions attend regular on line zoom sessions facilitated by members of the lead team for debriefs, shared learning and evaluation purposes. The lead team have expertise to support and sign post where necessary.

What commitment is expected of a companion?

The amount and time spent visiting a person is variable and mutually agreed by both companion and individual. Some companions will have weekly contact face to face, others may mix contact types with face to face and telephone calls.

Companions are expected to complete a diary sheet after every visit/contact. Simple questions about the nature of the contact are fed back and submitted anonymously. This is a requirement to fulfil the terms of NHS funding to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the service.

What happens if the companion volunteer does not 'connect well' with the person matched? (or vice versa)

The person will be offered another companion and the existing companion volunteer can be matched with another individual

Is the companion volunteer expected to be in attendance when the individual is physically dying?

This role is primarily to support people and their families by giving time to listen, enable and empower them to make informed choices to be honoured at end of life. There is no expectation for the companion to be present at the very end.