

DGMEFM Network

Support for sufferers and carers of those with ME, CFS, Fibromyalgia

CONTRACT OPPORTUNITY

Admin & Development Support (self-employed)

Maximum Contract Value: £6750 (£100 per day)

Start Date: July 2021

Timescale: The successful candidate will be recruited in June 2021 and will begin work in July for an average of 1.5 days per week over 45 weeks, up to a total of 67.5 days.

Purpose: To assist the Trustees carrying out the activities and work of DGMEFM Network.

Reporting to: The Trustees of Dumfries and Galloway ME and Fibromyalgia Network

Skills and Qualities we are Looking For

- Some awareness of issues facing people with ME, Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Confident people person, able to enthuse, engage and be supportive to a wide variety of individuals
- Effective communicator, both written and verbally
- Competent IT skills including MS Office, social media and video conferencing platforms
- Experience of inter-agency work
- Experience in organising community projects, events and activities
- Organised and able to manage workload and meet targets
- You must hold your own public liability insurance

Application Process

Please send us an up to date CV, including names of two referees, alongside a covering letter of no more than 1 side which tells us why you think you would be a suitable candidate. This should outline skills and experience which are relevant to the role as well as why you think you might be a good 'fit' with our organisation.

You should send this no later than **Friday 2nd July at 5pm** to admin@dgmefm.org.uk

Interviews for shortlisted candidates will be held via zoom on Wednesday 7th July, afternoon/eve.

Any questions about this opportunity should also be directed to the email address above. You can find out more information about us at www.dgmefm.org.uk

Background

Dumfries and Galloway ME and Fibromyalgia Network (DGMEFM Network) is a member-led Scottish Charity formed in September 2000 to support the needs of people in Dumfries and Galloway who suffer from Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), Fibromyalgia (FM) and Long Covid (with PEM). It is the only support network of its kind in SW Scotland.

DGMEFM Network has been providing a vital range of support for people in Dumfries and Galloway affected by the conditions for the last 20 years. Run by a group of committed volunteer Trustees, and until recently funded almost entirely by member donations, DGMEFM Network seeks to:

- Raise awareness of the issues surrounding these illnesses.
- Offer support to any person suffering with any of these illnesses on any matter concerning them
- Facilitate a mutual support network
- Enable access to transport, shops, public buildings, education, and any other public facility for any person suffering with any of these illnesses.
- Act as a central point for representative consultation between people with these illnesses and other agencies, including Dumfries & Galloway Council and NHS Dumfries & Galloway.
- Gather and provide information about all aspects of these illnesses

Our Main Activities

We run a variety of well-used activities in line with our aims, including:

- Online peer support and information through a **private facebook group** with over 300 members, with linked 'social café' and a 'get crafty' pages
- (pre-Covid) monthly face to face **meetings** in Dumfries as well as 'pop-up' meetings at other locations across the Region. As well as providing members with a vital opportunity to engage with each other to provide peer support and reduce isolation, these meetings often have guest speakers such as MSPs, useful service providers or medical professionals to help break down barriers. Since Covid struck we have moved our face to face meetings to weekly, held online via zoom.
- Quarterly **newsletters** (available online and in print) advertising events, providing members with information about local and national services, linking members to consultation opportunities, articles by members and experts about illness management, experience of health services, information for newly diagnosed etc.
- An informative **website** and information portal including a small lending library of books (www.dgmefm.org.uk)
- Occasional **training sessions** for members e.g. self-advocacy
- An on-line craft project with 8 sessions earlier this year funded by Foundation Scotland. A further 8 sessions will be offered this winter with funding from the Lottery Community Fund.

Since Covid struck we have been doing our best to continue our work and, with temporary paid help funded by Foundation Scotland, we have been reaching out to those in our region suffering Long Covid whose symptoms are similar to ME/CFS. We expect to return to face to face meetings in the coming months and extend our support where possible. However, our Trustees all experience fluctuating low energy levels due to the nature of the illnesses, and struggle to run our activities without help.

It is for this reason that we are recruiting to this position, to support us in the delivery of our vital work. This contract opportunity has been made possible by funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.

Focus of the Role

We are looking for a skilled, experienced, person-centred, and creative self-employed individual to support us with the delivery of our work. Given the limitations that our Trustees face because of our illnesses, we would expect you to work flexibly with us, supporting us in the best way to help meet our organisational needs. We anticipate however that your main tasks will include:

- undertaking a **targeted campaign** to raise awareness of DGMEFM Network and of the illnesses themselves (including long-COVID symptoms) via social media, local press, poster / leaflet drops and by engaging with local agencies and health professionals.
- **engaging with members** through our Facebook pages and at meetings to understand their needs and aspirations, to better represent them while building **relationships with local agencies**.
- **writing reports** of meetings including discussion and action points: committee and steering group meetings, member meetings with guest speakers, and liaison with other agencies.
- When social distancing / Covid restrictions allow, re-introducing monthly face to face **meetings** in Dumfries as well as 'pop-up' meetings at other locations across the Region.
- Updating our **website** and **email mailings** with events, blog, newsletter and relevant links (induction given).
- helping us to write, produce and distribute our quarterly **newsletters**.
- co-ordinating a winter **crafts programme** where starter packs are posted out to members and tutors demonstrate various crafts via zoom, with some meeting face to face if restrictions allow. Reviewing the project and providing a written report with feedback from participants and tutors.

The Outcomes we Hope to Achieve

The activity described above will allow us to:

- ensure the continuity of our activities, and organisational and development tasks, allowing Trustees to concentrate their energies on peer support, governance and future development.
- raise a wider awareness of the Network, reaching out to others suffering with ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia as well as long-covid sufferers.
- build on relationships with partner agencies.
- reach people earlier, to support self-management and reduce isolation.
- offer support and the benefit of our experience to long-covid/post viral fatigue sufferers
- meet the ongoing information and support needs of ME/CFS and FM sufferers to ensure their health and wellbeing (both physical and mental/emotional) is maintained or improved.