

ASUME

Volunteering in Dementia



Trust

Trust was seen as an important element of relationship building between volunteers, people living with dementia and carers. This was linked with the need for respect and the need to build relationships of trust over longer periods of time. This was seen as important in the area of volunteering with those with dementia and carers were perceived as particularly vulnerable.

[its] important that you don't blurt out the whole thing wherever you go and that sort of thing and that people can trust your stories, particularly the carer's stories because they are the ones whose stories you believe. (CVF10, Cumbria)

Trust building was again linked to the skills and experiences of volunteers. Past carers were seen as particularly trustworthy as 'they had seen it, done that'. Other professional backgrounds, such as the GP mentioned earlier, had noted this was often a strong foundation for building trusting relationships as her profession was linked to confidentiality and trust. Consistency was seen as a key skill to help build long term trust with the family of those living with dementia also. When this bond was established, volunteers could effectively support the wider network around those living with dementia. One volunteer in Stirling noted she had become a 'conduit' (SVF02) between the person with dementia and their wider family who lived in Inverness.

Trusting relationships were also seen as important between the volunteers and volunteer agencies.

We have a support network ... she's the befriender coordinator. She's also on the welfare committee but if we feel we've got anything that's troubling us, shall we say, we can speak to [her] in confidence, total confidence... obviously we trust her and it's a two way thing but you feel you've got back up as well that you can discuss things, you know, issues that you might be worried about. (SVF07, Stirlingshire)

Therefore, agencies involved with volunteering in dementia should focus on the longer-term as this enables trusting relationships to be built within the social networks of those living with dementia. Furthermore, support and trust between volunteers and volunteer agencies is important in them gaining confidence in their volunteering activities.



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