

## Back Up Lounge Host

Reports to: Back Up Services Team Staff (will change for each Lounge on a rotational basis)

### Purpose

At Back Up we understand that spinal cord injury can be devastating but we believe it needn't prevent anyone from getting the most out of life. The aim of this role is to enable people affected by spinal cord injury to realise their potential through developing, coordinating and facilitating breakout rooms on rotating/static topics during the bi-weekly virtual Back Up Lounge. The breakout rooms cover a wide range of topics and give attendees the chance to engage with peers with a goal of identifying hints, tips, education relevant to their situation from peers with lived experience(s). This is achieved through open discussion and acts as a great support service to people with spinal cord injury who attend the Back Up Lounge

Hosts will take charge of a singular breakout/"sub-room" within the lounge working with the Back Up services staff to:

- prepare talking points beforehand
- host the room during the lounge
- facilitate open discussion
- feedback/identify common themes of need/issues to the staff team
- Highlight improvements & potential ideas for the service/rooms going forward post sessions.

### Key tasks

#### Before the session:

- Liaise with services staff to identify appropriate session to coordinate/facilitate based on knowledge and experience. Some of the breakout rooms are constants (e.g., Family) and the focus remains similar week on week whereas others (e.g., "Lounge and Learn") rotate topics each time. It is important to discuss which room you feel comfortable hosting with services staff ahead of time to allow for preparation time.
- Develop and prepare talking points and/or lesson plan for the session.
- Coordinate/Liaise with other co-hosts/volunteers if applicable. Often in these sessions there is either one or two hosts, so dependant if you have additional support in the room, you will need to discuss any plans with co-host.
- Attend a pre-lounge 30-minute meeting with other volunteers and services member(s) of staff on rotation prior to the bi-weekly Lounge taking place
- Lead, sustain and develop these strong and effective working relationships with any co-hosts and services staff.
- Contact a services member of staff in a timely manner if you are unable to make your session

#### During the session:

- Support session attendees affected by spinal cord injury
- Ensure that the breakout room provides a productive forum for attendees and ensure every participant has a chance to speak - smooth flow of conversation is important, as is making sure no one individual dominates a session.
- Enabling people to explore their feelings, wishes and needs and provide tailored peer support to help them through open conversations on the subject matter. Making sure attendees:
  - feel supported
  - identify issues they may be having through discussion and advise on solutions
  - can access relevant services from Back Up and elsewhere through signposting or asking a member of the services staff team to provide follow up support
  - become more aware of the possibilities of life after spinal cord injury

### **Post-session/other duties and responsibilities:**

- Attend a 30 minute debrief session immediately after the Lounge to feedback on how session went – any issues identified, follow up or signposting necessary for attendees, attendee numbers
- Input into subsequent planning and activities for future Lounge topics/breakout rooms
- Identify regular Lounge attendees who could be approached to become volunteer hosts in the future
- Work as a team, consulting with others to ensure you give and receive high quality support
- Any other duties relevant to the host role as required by services staff

### **The Person**

- Current Back Up services volunteer
- Personal experience of/ or has a family member who is a minimum of three years post injury
- A highly organised self-starter who can build rapport and connection
- Able to empathise and show compassion to others – patient, sensitive and considerate
- Encouraging, supportive and perceptive – able to identify the needs of others and help individuals identify their own goals
- Excellent interpersonal skills including communication, listening and reasoning
- Able to speak confidently in front of a group
- A confident and responsible session leader
- Able to remain calm and deal with difficult situations and different personalities/perspectives under pressure
- Able to use your own personal experience in a helpful way
- Ability to problem solve and enable others to identify solutions
- Understanding of equal opportunities, confidentiality and data protection
- Punctual and reliable
- Familiar with Zoom platform

### **Time Commitment**

- Attend a training session
- Host at least 1 Lounge breakout room per month (depending on number of volunteer hosts and availability hosts will be rotated)
- Attend pre-lounge briefing meeting and post-lounge feedback meeting 5.30pm – 7.30pm

### **Support and opportunities provided**

- Training will be given by attending a 1 day online training workshop to support you and to help you develop your skills to fulfil the role
- Agreed expenses paid by Back Up
- Support and guidance from Back Up Services Team staff
- The chance to work as part of a dynamic team and to have a real impact on people affected by spinal cord injury and to support them to establish a support network and learn from others lived experience(s)