

## **Nurse/PA role description**

**Reports to:** Karim Dafallah, Course Coordinator

On the course, report to Lead Carer then Group Leaders then Merryn Thomas (on call)

### **Purpose of role:**

- To encourage and support Back Up course participants to increase their confidence and independence by:
  - meeting any personal care needs, enabling participants to feel well, comfortable, and fully able to participate;
  - providing a safe and supportive environment for people to develop their skills, to make life easier at home.
- To contribute to a positive experience for the group as a whole.

### **Key tasks:**

#### **1. Meeting personal care needs**

- Offer support and encouragement prior to and during the course to help participant(s) feel reassured and comfortable about using assistance.
- Be someone to turn to on the course if participants need a listening ear or have a medical or care issue (be on call around the clock for emergencies).
- Assist individual participant(s) with all aspects of care as needed: bathing, toileting, dressing, skin checks, transfers. This may involve morning/evening routines as well as ad hoc assistance during the day. Ensure that you have any kit you may need to hand at all times.
- Support participant to take responsibility and be in control of their care as well as general safety/wellbeing (e.g. body temperature, skin condition).
- Work in partnership with participant to look out for any problems such as infections, Autonomic Dysreflexia, marks on skin.
- Support participants with other tasks as needed, e.g. medication/organising kit/meals, ensuring that this is always under their direction (do not take overall control/responsibility). Encourage and support them to use help from others (e.g. buddies/each-other) wherever possible.

#### **2. Supporting participants to develop their skills**

- Use your skills and experience to help support and advise people about ways they could be more independent, either physically or verbally. This may mean trying things for themselves and/or getting more comfortable with instructing others to help them – you and others.
- Encourage problem solving & discuss new approaches to their activities of daily living where appropriate (e.g. transfers), working in partnership with the participant and maybe Wheelchair Skills Trainers / other members of the group, to find solutions in a safe and empowering way
- Use your skills and experience to provide care-related hints and tips to make life easier at home.

#### **3. Contributing to the positive experience of the group as a whole**

- Work as part of a team – work together with others, communicate, help out and muck in generally, to help things run smoother on the course.
- Contribute to a positive atmosphere/experience for ALL participants and the wider group.
- Look after your own health & safety and wellbeing and that of others. In particular for manual handling – be prepared to give practical demonstrations and use your experience to look out for everybody - safety first.
- Work within your training & capabilities; liaise with participant and Lead Carer to get advice and regarding any potential concerns.

- Be a part of the group and participate in general activities. You, like all group members, are there to get involved, learn, stretch yourself, and have fun!
- Be a source of information; share your knowledge about SCI / care with other group members as appropriate.
- (Nurses) – be on call in case of medical emergency for the whole group including possible catheter changes.

## **The person:**

### **1. Care skills**

Either: Registered Nurse – spinal cord injury experience and knowledge is preferable.

Or: Trained PA/HCA able to recognise and deal with spinal cord injury-related problems.

Essential skills: (which have been practised within the last 12 months):

- Bowel management: digital evacuation / insertion of suppositories / digital stimulation / Peristeen
- Bladder management
- Skin care/checks
- Moving and Handling
- Autonomic Dysreflexia: awareness and knowledge of how to respond
- Assistance in activities of daily living

Desirable skills: (which have been practised within the last 12 months):

- Catheter changes: male urethral / female urethral / suprapubic
- Working with children / young people (for Under 18s courses)
- Ventilator Management

### **2. Personal qualities**

- Team player: able to work with others including people from all walks of life. Keen to 'muck in' and participate. Able to work with, support and respect the authority of the Group Leaders.
- People person: approachable, friendly, encouraging. Good listener. Thoughtful and sensitive. Respecting confidentiality (but willing to share information as appropriate to get the support you need).
- Highly organised, a good time-keeper, reliable.
- A positive approach to problems (even when tired).
- Keen to learn, flexible and adaptable to new environments and ways of working.
- Able to ask for support if/when required
- Honest and open.
- A sense of humour helps a lot!

### **3. Interests**

If you are interested in developing yourself, prepared to work hard and get tired, if you enjoy meeting new people, sharing experiences, and new challenges, and are passionate about making a difference to people's lives, then you would love being a volunteer nurse or PA on a Back Up course.

## **Accompanying information:**

- Information about Back Up
- Back Up Care Provision Policy
- Back Up Care Provision Risk Assessment
- The role of buddies and how to work with them