## Role Description: Nightlight Crisis Volunteer

**Responsible to:** Crisis Volunteer Coordinator

**Time commitment:** A minimum of 3 hours per shift, at least once a week

**Age restriction:** Volunteers must be aged 18 and over

**Location:** Hemel Hempstead (Crisis House), Watford (Crisis Café/Helpline), Stevenage (Crisis Café/Helpline), Ware (Crisis Café/Helpline), Hatfield (Crisis Café/Helpline)

**Who we are:**

We deliver essential mental health support in Hertfordshire, providing a diverse range of services from our eight centres and other locations across the county. Funded locally, our services are available to all residents in Hertfordshire over the age of 18 and we offer separate services for 5-18 year olds. We help individuals experiencing mental ill health to make choices, find their solutions, build resilience and manage their wellbeing. We offer opportunities for individuals to get support to allow them to recover from or live with mental ill health.

**About Nightlight:**

Hertfordshire Nightlight is a growing crisis service, providing a safe and welcoming space for people who are feeling distressed and are experiencing a mental health crisis. We operate both at nighttime with our Crisis Cafés and Helplines as well as 24 hours a day with our Crisis House.

Our Crisis Cafés in Watford, Stevenage, Hatfield, and Ware aim to provide a wide range of therapeutic activities for those who are experiencing a mental health crisis.

Watford and Stevenage Cafés are open from 7pm – 1am every day of the week, and our Ware and Hatfield Crisis Cafés operate during the same times over Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.

Our Crisis Helpline also operates seven days a week, all year round during the same operating hours as our Crisis Café and is for service users or referrers to phone in for support.

Finally, our Crisis House in Hemel Hempstead provides both a daytime and nighttime safe space for those experiencing crisis, with an overnight stay capacity of four beds which are available seven days a week, 365 days a year.

**Purpose of role:**

We are seeking volunteers for our Nightlight Crisis Service to work a minimum of 3 hours an evening at least once a week, to support people in the community who are feeling distressed and experiencing a crisis. Volunteers will work alongside staff to provide support at one of our centres. The Nightlight service has recently been expanded so the role is extremely flexible and diverse and is expected to develop as the service does.

This is a great opportunity for anyone wanting to increase their understanding of mental health issues and provide support within their local community. It’s also a fantastic opportunity for students studying towards a mental health care professional qualification, particularly one requiring practical experience working alongside a wide range of mental health professionals. It can also be a route forward to working as a paid member of staff within our Nightlight team.

**Main tasks:**

* Welcome clients to the centre, ensuring they are comfortable
* Engage with clients through talking and active listening
* Signpost clients to other Hertfordshire Mind groups as well as external services, which may be of benefit
* Provide support to clients over the telephone through the Helpline
* Helping to provide a high-quality person-centred support

**What we are looking for:**

* Good listening skills, non-judgemental attitude, and empathy
* Confident and effective communication
* Ability to deal with stressful and difficult situations in a calm manner
* Adaptable to the changing nature of a crisis service
* Willingness to be hands on, proactive and use own initiative
* Able to work evenings (volunteers can choose their shifts)

**Why become a volunteer for Nightlight:**

Supporting someone who has struggled with a mental health crisis can be a very challenging yet rewarding experience, where you can use your own lived experience of mental health to help others:

* Be an integral part of an individual’s recovery from ill mental health by inspiring hope and empowering them towards positive change.
* Develop your understanding of mental health and its service provision.
* Invaluable experience for anyone with a desire to work within mental health services or Hertfordshire Mind Network.

**What we can offer you:**

* All volunteers will receive relevant training, including but not limited to an induction day session, which includes Adult Safeguarding, GDPR, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, as well as access to over 60 modules of training provided by our in-house training team.
* Regular supervision from the Crisis Volunteer Coordinator and debriefings during/after shifts from Nightlight teams.
* Access to listings of paid-work opportunities within HMN when they arise.
* Flexibility to volunteer on weekends and evenings to accommodate busy schedules.

**Before applying:**

Please consider whether you are suited to this role carefully. Whilst we are ideally looking for people who have lived experience of a mental health crisis, we recognise that this role could put you in an incredibly triggering environment. If you have any doubts that this role could severely impact on your mental health, please get in touch with the Crisis Volunteer Coordinator (volunteer@hertsmindnetwork.org) to discuss these concerns in more detail.

If you feel that this role may be too much to commit to at this stage, there may still be a space for you in one of our other volunteer services, where you can develop the skills and confidence to join our team. All our other volunteering roles can be found on our website.

**Next steps:**

If you are interested, please complete our application form which can be found on our website at https://www.hertsmindnetwork.org/join-us/volunteer-with-us/ and if you have any further questions, please e-mail the Crisis Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@hertsmindnetwork.org