

A Volunteer's Journey

Dukinfield, July 2020



My name is Clare and I volunteered for Tameside, Oldham & Glossop Mind between September 2016 and July 2020. I mainly volunteered in various admin roles, doing admin for the Buddy Project, the Children and Young People's Team, the Training department, the Counselling department and the HR department. I also helped out at "Time to Change" events. "Time to Change" is an organisation which aims to end stigma and discrimination due to mental health issues.

In my time at TOG Mind I have done a variety of different tasks, ranging from something as easy as putting volunteer files in alphabetical order in a filing cabinet to something as challenging as researching organisations which could possibly provide funding for "Time to Change" events.



Most of the work I have done, however, has involved entering data into TOG Mind's data management system.

My line manager, Kelly, has been promoted to a variety of different positions, while I have been volunteering for TOG Mind, which is one reason why I have worked in so many different departments. She has always been very supportive, arranging regular supervisions, finding new and interesting work for me to do and suggesting I attend different courses, such as City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Community Mental Health Work and Dementia Friend training. Kelly has also always provided references for me in the hope that I would gain paid employment or further education, including a reference for a successful teacher training course university application. Although Kelly has always remained my main manager, I have worked with some other managers as well, such as Tom, Gemma, Joanne, Jenna, and Alexander, who have also all been very friendly and supportive.

More recently, I was a Buddy for the Buddy Project. I enjoyed going to "knit and natter" with my client and seeing how she became more confident at making new friends. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, I didn't support a second client, but did admin work for the Buddy Project instead. As I had to enter data for a large number of Buddy Project clients into the database, it made me realise how many vulnerable people the Buddy Project is helping and, therefore, what an impact it is having on the local community.

I have recently stopped volunteering for TOG Mind as I will be starting teacher training in September at university and have a lot of work to do in preparation for that. However, if I ever find myself with enough free time in the future, I would gladly volunteer for TOG Mind again.