

Introduction to Heading Home:

Heading Home is a project that has been designed to help prisoners and their families prepare for release. The periods of release and resettlement can be a challenging time for families, often because family members have different expectations and concerns about how life will be once their relative has left prison.

The project offers support to families through two interventions. The first intervention is a listening and signposting service called Re:Settle and is supported by an informative booklet which offers families guidance and useful information on how the whole family can prepare for release. The second intervention, Re: Connect, is a group programme that will be delivered in prison with prisoners and will involve families attending a meeting with their relative in the prison. The purpose of the meeting is to give families the opportunity to discuss concerns and expectations around the release, and to work together on how they can overcome these challenges.

General overview of role:

Volunteers in this role will offer 1:1 support, information and guidance to families of prisoners who are preparing for release. The volunteer will be offering a listening ear and emotional support as well as signposting people to other agencies, and offering some practical support.

In the prison, volunteers will co-facilitate a group programme and also arrange and facilitate meetings between prisoners and their families to discuss release and resettlement. This element of the project will require specialist training which will be provided by Nepacs. Due to the specialist training that is required for this role, volunteers are asked to commit weekly or fortnightly though we would hope that some volunteers would have some flexibility so that the project is able to respond to the needs of the service users.

Role Description:

Tasks will include:

- To listen to prisoners and their families, either face to face or on the phone
- To ensure that children and families of prisoners are treated with respect, dignity and care
- To offer non judgmental support
- To facilitate group work within a prison setting
- To facilitate meetings between prisoners and their families
- To research information about local support services for families
- To offer practical guidance in accessing support from other agencies and organisations
- To keep accurate records of work completed

Skills required:

- Friendly
- Reliable
- Non judgemental
- Well developed communication skills
- Understanding of confidentiality
- Understanding of professional boundaries

- Ability to write up brief but clear case notes
- Empathy with prisoners families serving the 'hidden sentence'
- Ability to listen actively and to empathise
- Calm and positive in their approach
- Ability to work individually but also contribute to the team

Locations:

HMP Holme House in Stockton, HMP Northumberland , HMP Kirklevington Grange in Yarm, HMP&YOI Low Newton

Expenses:

Public transport costs or mileage up to 22 mile radius at 40p per mile.

Training and support:

- Initial project induction and training
- Level 1 Safeguarding training available
- Invite to Nepacs Generic induction
- Volunteer meetings are held at regular intervals throughout the year
- NEPACS offer a training day for all volunteers annually
- Volunteers are eligible to attend some prison organised training

Commitment

NEPACS asks volunteers

- To commit to the project and its purpose and give notice of absence as soon as possible
- To undertake an induction programme
- To agree to a DBS check and prison clearance (this will require a form of photo ID)

Volunteers can expect

- Support from staff
- Training opportunities
- Invitation to volunteer meetings
- Recognition of their work

To apply:

Please download an application form from our Volunteer Opportunities page of our website or contact: volunteering@nepacs.co.uk , or ring us on 0191 375 7278.