

About Kites Trust

Kites Trust works in partnership with government, community, consumer organisations and individuals to promote social inclusion using the principles of community development by:

- Encouraging people to define their own problems and issues
- Involving the skills, knowledge, and experience of people with experience of mental distress and addiction issues
- Promoting collaboration
- Facilitating local solutions to local problems
- Creating purposeful conversations and ways of working together
- Facilitating resolution where there are conflicting interests
- Engaging in policy development at both community and government levels.



[Kites Trust: Valuing, respecting and utilising people's mental health experiences](#)

Background: Buddies Peer Support Service ('Buddies')

Buddies is a peer support service delivered by Kites Trust under contract with Capital and Coast District Health Board and Hutt Valley District Health Board. The service has been in operation in Wellington since 2002 and began servicing the Hutt Valley in 2016.

The service is staffed with teams of Buddies volunteers, who make regular visits to Te Whare O Mātairangi (TWOM) and Te Whare Āhuru (TWA), the mental health recovery units at Wellington and Hutt Hospital. Buddies volunteers spend time alongside people (peers) currently at the ward who may be experiencing disruption to their lives due to mental health and/or addiction difficulties.

Buddies Peer Support Service is highly valued by its key stakeholders (peers, ward staff and volunteers themselves) and offers the hope for recovery through social interaction, utilising the principles of Intentional Peer Support (IPS).

For more information about IPS, visit:

www.intentionalpeersupport.org/

To find out more about the work of Kites Trust, visit:

www.kites.org.nz

Being a Buddies Peer Support Volunteer

Buddies volunteers must identify as a 'peer'—what does this mean?

In a Kites / Buddies context, the term 'peer' refers to someone who has had a personal experience of mental distress and/or addiction that has unsettled their life for a significant period of time.

Buddies volunteers must have sought support from mental health services such as their primary care physician, counselling, their local mental community team or acute mental health care units. Buddies volunteers must have a level of understanding of the impact mental distress crisis can have on a person's life. They must also be far enough along on their journey of recovery and willing to safely share and utilise their own experience of this to extend support to others.

Relationship with the Buddies Peer Support Coordinator

The Buddies Peer Support volunteer reports to the Buddies Peer Support Coordinator at Kites Trust.

The Coordinator administers the service, maintains good relationships with the Buddies volunteer team and offer 1:1 support and guidance to volunteers.

Ongoing training and professional development

Buddies Peer Support Service offers ongoing training and professional development opportunities to volunteers to help

them achieve their longer-term goals and aspirations. For some, volunteering as a Buddy has been a pathway to paid employment.

Mentoring Period – gaining experience and developing confidence and competence

New volunteers are mentored by experienced ('mentor') Buddies who provide them with support and feedback while visiting the ward together. Buddies will also meet on a regular, 1:1 basis with the Coordinator to talk through any issues, concerns. The Coordinator supports the volunteer on their journey with Buddies.

New Buddies pair up with a mentor Buddy on each initial ward visit. Once new Buddies have gained experience and confidence through attending regular ward visits over an agreed length of time, they can then choose to graduate to become mentors themselves if they so wish (in discussion with their coordinator).

Becoming a Mentor Buddy

Mentor (experienced) Buddies offer support to new Buddies and show them the ropes when starting their visits to the ward. They can also provide support and give feedback on how visits went. When new Buddies have completed 6 months of service (depending on their level of self-development), a small but formal graduation ceremony is held to acknowledge their personal and professional achievements as well as their commitment to the service and to peers who access it. Graduated mentor Buddies are then able to attend ward visits

with co-Buddies who are new to the service, offering support and mentorship.

Time Commitment

Ward visits

Buddies are expected to do a minimum of 2 hours visit time across a fortnight at their designated ward. Some Buddies like to break this up and do a 1-hour visit each week and some Buddies wish to visit more often, which is ok too.

Meetings

Team meetings are held monthly, and it is expected that Buddies attend these on a regular basis. These meetings cover day to day business and housekeeping and enable coordinators to plan the roster for the upcoming months.

Supervision

Buddies are expected to attend group supervision monthly. This is run by a qualified external peer supervisor and excludes the Buddies Coordinator. Supervision offers a chance to discuss issues and concerns in direct relation to Buddies volunteer work. Supervision is an opportunity to reflect and grow from your experiences and learn coping strategies from the supervisor and other Buddies.

Kites core training, ongoing training and development

Kites core training is a one-day core competency training for all people who wish to join any of the services Kites provide to the community.

Ongoing training is delivered in 2 hourly evening sessions, once a month. This can include developing cultural competencies, presentations from other mental health / social service providers and any other topics identified as relevant by the team. Some however, are targeted at specific services: eg: Buddies, Youth Peer Leadership, and Speak Our Mind Facilitators.

Want to apply to become a Buddy?

Here is what we need from you.

We would like to meet you!

One of the Buddies main tenets is the importance we place on the power of contact. We are more than happy to make time for you if you would like to meet should you have further questions about Buddies prior to any commitment. Please reach out to one of the Buddies coordinators who will arrange a time to meet that is convenient for all parties.

Application forms are [sent on request](#).

√	Completed Application form - required
√	You resume (optional) and a short email introducing yourself and why you want to volunteer!

If you are interviewed:

√	*Police consent form for a criminal background check – completed and signed
√	ID: Driver's license, passport or birth certificate (or other valid photo identification) and proof of address
√	Details of two people who can act as referees in support of your application

**Having a criminal record does not automatically disqualify someone from becoming a Buddy – applications are considered on a case by case basis.*

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about Buddies Peer Support Service, please contact:

Buddies Peer Support Coordinators,
Buddies Peer Support Service
Kites Trust

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