

Our Someone Like Me service

The Someone Like Me service matches people affected by breast cancer to a trained volunteer who has experienced similar situations and concerns. The volunteer will understand the issues they're facing – whether its concerns relating directly to the cancer and its treatment, or to the physical or emotional impact on any area of life. This confidential service provides the opportunity for people to talk openly without worrying about the feelings of the person listening and to ask any questions. Most of the support is offered by telephone, but some volunteers additionally provide support by email.

What experience do I need to have had to apply?

- To have had a diagnosis of primary breast cancer in the last three years and be at least 6 months past the finish of active (hospital based) treatment; or
- To meet one of our 'service gaps' (if you meet a service gap, then we'd welcome an application from you, regardless of when you had your initial diagnosis). You can find out service gaps **at the foot of this document***

What skills and qualities do I need?

- Non-judgmental and non-directive, empathetic and compassionate
- Understand the importance of boundaries and self-care
- A good listener, communicator and confident using the telephone
- To be willing and able to refer to your own experiences
- Access to a laptop or similar device, and confidence using this
- Able to work within Breast Cancer Now's policies and guidelines, including confidentiality, safeguarding, and data protection
- Sharing Breast Cancer Now's commitment to ensuring that the support we provide is inclusive and accessible to people from a diverse range of backgrounds

What commitment is required?

- The number of people you support and how often you call them will vary based on the requirements of our service users and your capacity/time, but we hope that you're able to make one or two calls each week if required. You will always be able to tell us if you are not free to provide support.
- You'll be contacted when you are identified as being a suitable match to provide support. Calls are made from your own home, at a mutually convenient time for both you and the service user.

What training and support will I receive?

- Attend a 2-hour Welcome Workshop, introducing you to the charity
- Attend 5 online training sessions, supplemented with further reading. You may be asked to complete further training throughout your time volunteering. Our team are always on hand to support you, and you'll also be assigned a volunteer mentor

What will I gain from volunteering for the service?

- Developing your communication and support skills, and experience of supporting people during a difficult time
- The opportunity to network and meet new people as part of our wider volunteer community
- The chance to 'give back' to people affected by breast cancer; many volunteers report feeling a greater sense of purpose and mental wellbeing as a result of their volunteering
- Being part of the UK's foremost breast cancer charity and helping us support people with breast cancer to live well

Service Gaps

Based on requests from our service users and to meet a 'gap' on our service, we particularly encourage applications from people who have had any of the "experiences" listed below, even if you received your diagnosis more than three years ago.

- Over 65 years old when diagnosed
- From a black, Asian or underrepresented background
- From the LGBTQ+ community
- Rarer form of breast cancer such as Occult or Inflammatory breast cancer
- Diagnosis of PALB2 genetic mutation
- Opted not to have further surgery or treatment
- Treatment which included Kadcyla, Neratinib, Perjeta, Immunotherapy or chemotherapy both before and after surgery
- Tug, IGAP, SGAP, LICAP flap reconstruction
- Had a child after a diagnosis
- Cared for children under 5 years old whilst undergoing treatment
- Lives alone or lived alone when diagnosed
- Speaks a language that the service is need of. This includes but is not limited to: Polish, Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu, Cantonese, Arabic, Ukrainian, BSL and Gujarati
- Managed other health conditions whilst underdoing treatment for breast cancer

Please note that the above list is not exhaustive. Breast Cancer Now will assess applications based on the likelihood of you being matched to service users as well as suitability for the role, so please do apply if you can help us with any of the above or any additional experience relating to your experience of breast cancer.