

Role of Peer Support Volunteer (PSV)
in Facebook closed group and weekly group chats
Jan. 23/18

Responsibilities:

- facilitates and organizes a positive and safe peer group experience for everyone (on behalf of VHL Canada)
- confirms all peer-participants and knows the website-program where the groups occur
- follows a *peer support model*, the source of support (emotional, experiential, informational, and practical) is for and mainly provided by the group's peer participants
- provides individual social-emotional support to others outside of the group setting as needed (as well as to peers not in the group)
- offers evidence-based perspective on common "what works", or self-help, practices (e.g. through posts and webcasts)
- devotes at 10+ hours per month just for group chats and posts (and another 10 hours for individual contacts and resource sharing)

Facilitation techniques:

- leads, by example, as an equal-peer, not as an external staff etc.
- multi-tasks by monitoring group posts daily, and holding group chats weekly
- encourages participants to be reasonably active—to get AS WELL AS give social-emotional and moral support
- records brief summaries of group chats and tracks activity

Trained formally; qualified formally or by lived experiences; and receives ongoing PSV/administrative support

- Is fair and ethical, they do not present themselves as facilitators of group therapy or counselling
- Accountable and open to feedback
- Observes boundaries and is self-aware
- Practices self-care
- Knowledgeable with psychosocial issues (related to coping as a patient or family member) and familiar with VHL disease-related information for patients

Adapted from "Role, Facilitation and Ethics for Facilitators", Self-Help Resource Centre Ontario (SHRC)