



## **Chat Support Volunteer Role Description**

### **Executive Summary**

The Facial Pain Association (FPA) offers live chat support as part of its mission to provide support, education and advocacy to those living with facial pain, their families, and loved ones. The “Get Help” function appears on all FPA website pages and offers links to commonly requested website pages, the 988 Crisis Line, and the option to “Connect with a Volunteer”.

Chat requests from members of the facial pain community require specialized skills as they may involve someone in pain or distress. Most often members of the facial pain community are looking for additional resources for themselves or a loved one. Or they may be reaching out to connect with someone who understands what they are going through.

Chat Support is not intended to be a crisis intervention service, which is beyond the scope of the FPA.

### **Role Description**

Trained Chat Support volunteers will respond to chat requests in real time with pre-set resources and are prepared to interact with patience and offer positive messages in a chat environment. Volunteers practice active listening within their written responses, direct the chat client toward specific support, and follow up with the FPA staff as needed.

Chat Support volunteers are encouraged to continue the conversation to its natural conclusion. Conversations can be as short as five minutes or can last 30-40 minutes, or more.

Pre-set resources are available to answer frequently asked questions.

The FPA welcomes volunteers from varied backgrounds, life experiences, and medical histories. No specific skills, educational background or experiences are required.

Volunteers are encouraged to provide feedback, suggestions for improvement, and lessons learned.

### **Time Commitment**

8 hours per month. Split into 2 four-hour shifts

Volunteers are asked to schedule shifts by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month. Shifts will be scheduled at the convenience of the volunteer and according to the needs of the organization. Shifts do not need to be the same every time.



The Chat Support role is an expansion of support services offered by the FPA. Based on experience from pilot program, we expect 2 to 4 chat requests in a four-hour shift. However, we expect the number of chat requests will increase as the community becomes aware of the option.

## **Training**

### **General Volunteer Orientation**

All volunteers are asked to complete a 90-minute Volunteer Orientation. Volunteers are encouraged to attend a live video session scheduled in September. A self-study video is available as needed.

### **Role Specific Training**

All Chat Support volunteers are asked to attend one 60-minute live video training session. The topics covered include active listening, resources review, role play, chat etiquette specific to the FPA, and accessing LiveHelpNow. A self-study option is available upon request by contacting the FPA Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Role Specific Tasks**

Respond to chat requests.

Take notes on resources requested.

If the chat client asks for resources not immediately available then the volunteer is encouraged to ask for first name, last name and email address, so the FPA can fulfill their request for resources.

Forward resource requests to the Volunteer Coordinator in a timely manner, preferably on the same business day.

## **Technology Requirements**

Volunteers will access the FPA's chat vendor LiveHelpNow.

A stable internet connection.

Volunteers are asked to use their personal internet connected device which may include a laptop, desktop, tablet, or smartphone that supports applications. Smartphone apps are available for iPhone and Android.