# Phone Support Volunteer Role Description

## Executive Summary

The Facial Pain Association (FPA) maintains a toll-free phone line as part of its mission to provide support, education and advocacy to those living with facial pain, their families, and loved ones. The same toll-free phone line (800-923-3608) serves as the contact number of record for the organization.

The FPA receives the same variety of calls as any other business as well as calls from members of the facial pain community. Calls from members of the facial pain community require specialized skills as they may involve someone in pain or distress. Most often callers are looking for additional resources for themselves or a loved one. However, they may be reaching out to connect with someone who understands what they are going through.

Trained Phone Support volunteers answer informational calls and are prepared to lend a sympathetic ear and offer positive messages. Volunteers practice active listening, direct the caller toward specific support, and follow up with the FPA staff as needed.

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

## Role Description

Phone Support volunteers answer calls in real time during scheduled shifts. Volunteers will use their own smartphone or other internet connected device to access the FPA's vendor Cytracom.

The FPA receives four to seven calls per day during staffed hours Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Eastern. On average, one or two calls per day are from members of the facial pain community looking for resources. Phone Support volunteers are encouraged to stay on calls to their natural conclusion. Support calls can be as short as five minutes or can last 30-40 minutes, or more.

Phone Support volunteers will be trained to answer a variety of calls including sales calls; current vendor questions; professional membership requests; donor questions; calls for specific staff members, and event registration 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 cover two four-hour shifts of their choosing per month.

Shifts are Monday - Friday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM or 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

All times are Eastern.

Volunteers are asked to plan a month in advance by the 15th of the month. Shifts are 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.

**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. Waived for returning or continuing volunteers.

Role Specific Training

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

**Role Specific Tasks**

Answer calls.

Take notes on resources requested.

Ask for a caller's first name, last name and email address, so the FPA can fulfill their request for resources. Whenever possible, ask for a street address as well.

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

Call or text the Volunteer Manager with general business messages other than support calls. Relay messages as soon as practical after the call.

**Technology Requirements**

Volunteers will access the FPA's phone vendor Cytracom and its web-based portal which duplicates the functions of a phone on a computer screen or smartphone. An iPhone app is available. There is limited compatibility for Android devices.

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