

## Questions

### What level of support can the Companion offer?

You will have an opportunity to discuss the support you would like with your Key Worker and when the Volunteer Coordinator visits you to arrange a suitable match.

### Can I choose to have a male or female Companion?

We will certainly try very hard to match the right Companion to your needs and where possible we will accommodate your request, subject to availability.

### Can I choose a Companion from a specific age group?

As with the gender question, we will do our best to match the right person to visit you.

### How much will it cost?

The service is funded by Macmillan Caring Locally and is provided free of charge to our patients.

## Contact us...

If you would like more information about using our Community Companion service please speak to your Macmillan Unit Key worker or contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

**Macmillan Unit Palliative Care Sisters**  
01202 705470

**Anita Rigler**  
Volunteer Coordinator  
01202 705353  
anita.rigler@rbch.nhs.uk

The Community Companion Project is funded through kind donations to Macmillan Caring Locally  
Macmillan Unit  
Christchurch  
Dorset  
BH23 2JX  
01202 477628  
www.macmillanlocal.org  
Registered Charity no. 268218

***Local charity***

***Local fund***

***Local care***



**Community Companions**  
supporting the  
**Macmillan Unit**



**Community Companions**

**01202 705353**

## About us

The Royal Bournemouth and   
Christchurch Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

The Macmillan Unit at Christchurch Hospital is operated by the Royal Bournemouth & Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Macmillan Caring Locally is a local charity who work in partnership with the NHS Trust and administer funds donated to the Unit, for the care of our patients and their families.

Together with the support of a team of valuable volunteers we can help to support patients and carers who have been referred to the Macmillan Unit due to their life-limiting condition.



*Local charity, local fund, local care.*

## Volunteer roles

### Who are Community Companions?

Our Community Companions are volunteers and have significant experience of supporting staff and patients at the Macmillan Unit.

They will:

- Liaise with Macmillan Unit services
- Be a listening ear
- Help you work out your needs
- Help you to develop your support network
- Help you make practical plans
- Point out support services that you could access
- Visit the patient whilst the carer takes a break
- Be a Companion and accompany you to visit shops, garden centres, clubs, societies or other social activity
- Help you access the internet to reduce the feeling of isolation
- Help with paperwork, telephone calls or light errands
- Read to you

## Questions

### Who will visit me?

Volunteers and carefully matched to patients or carers to ensure that they have similar interests and skills.

### How often will they visit me?

Depending on the level of support you need we can ask the Companion to visit you weekly, fortnightly, monthly or as required.

### How long will a visit last?

Usually each visit from a Companion will last between 2-3 hours. Again this will depend on your requirements.

### Will it be the same Companion who visits me?

For continuity we try our best to use the same Companion for each visit. However if the Companion is on holiday or unwell we will offer a replacement visitor.

### What if I ask for a Companion then change my mind?

We can cancel your visits at any time. Just inform the Volunteer Coordinator or your Key Worker.