The Farming Community Network (FCN) and Macmillan Cancer Support

FARMWELL VOLUNTEER ROLE PROFILE

As part of a UK-wide partnership between The Farming Community Network (FCN) and Macmillan Cancer Support, we are looking for FarmWell Volunteers across the UK to help support and deliver the Rural Communities Cancer Project - a project that aims to reach people affected by cancer in farming and rural communities. More information about this partnership is available here: https://fcn.org.uk/cancersupport/

FarmWell Volunteers will have access to training from Macmillan Cancer Support to help you have supportive and sensitive conversations about cancer and other issues, and to signpost people to the most appropriate sources of support.

Why this role is important

Many people do not know much about cancer or what to do if they are worried about cancer. At FCN we listen, support and connect, and we want you to work in your local rural communities to help people to find out about sources of cancer information, advice and support.

As a FarmWell Volunteer, you will help people to understand some of the risks, signs and symptoms of cancer, and raise awareness of the services provided by Macmillan Cancer Support.

What will you be doing?

- Help deliver our #NipItInTheBud campaign in your local community. Delivering and placing posters and other campaign materials at local marts, sporting clubs, farm supply shops, rural community halls etc.
- Help collect stories and experiences of those in your community who may face or may have faced barriers to cancer care. Record these in our meaningful conversations template and report to our project team.
- Talk to people about the signs or symptoms of cancer, share the importance of screening and early detection and encourage people to attend their GP or screening appointments – this could include helping to deliver short presentations in your local area if you have experience, facilities and are comfortable to do so.
- Attend local events and shows if available to support the project team.

- Provide a listening ear to people affected by cancer who are looking for support in your community.
- Signpost people to Macmillan or other cancer support services
- Signpost to FCN, FarmWell website and other farming, rural and migrant/seasonal worker support organisations and charities if required.

Useful skills

- Ability to work well with others
- Good communication skills, you will enjoy talking to other people and explaining things in a way that is easy-to-understand
- Confidentiality and data protection skills
- A good listener – talking about cancer can be difficult and we want you to help people talk about it with greater knowledge/understanding
- An interest in helping people
- Ability to travel in your local area

What's in it for you?

- Raise awareness of barriers to cancer care your local community might face
- Receive training and support to help you carry out your volunteering role as a FarmWell Volunteer for FCN
- Develop your knowledge of cancer and Macmillan support services
- The opportunity to share and develop your skills and learn new ones
- Have access to bespoke communications through a range of channels
- Receive reimbursement for agreed out-of-pocket expenses
- Receive weekly updates and summer and winter newsletters from the charity
- Other training opportunities available through FCN

FarmWell Volunteers interested in supporting this project will complete FCN and Macmillan Cancer Support training, which includes:

- FCN Volunteer Induction & Macmillan Volunteer Induction
- "Introduction to equity, diversity and inclusion"
- "An introduction to cancer and its treatment"
- "Keeping data safe"
- "Support after grief, loss and bereavement"
- "Listening and responding"

For those wishing to volunteer with us in Northern Ireland and Scotland:

FarmWell Volunteers in Northern Ireland and Scotland will also be given the opportunity to learn more about local support charities working to help people within farming and rural communities. As part of your training, you will be learning more about these fantastic charities, how they support farmers and people within rural communities, and how to appropriately signpost to their services.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Rural Communities Cancer Project?
The rural communities cancer project is a UK-wide partnership between The Farming Community Network (FCN) and Macmillan Cancer Support that will help to improve the support available to those living with cancer in rural areas by…

- Raising awareness of cancer and its impact in our rural community, organisations or businesses
- Encouraging early intervention with cancer screening and diagnosis
- Sharing Macmillan support offers
- Building referral bridges to and from Macmillan's services
- Engaging rural communities on ideas to improve support
- Gathering insight on what personalised care means

Who can become a FarmWell Volunteer?
Anyone who is 18 or over and has a passion for rural communities, agricultural communities and seeing farmers, farm families and rural dwellers thrive is welcome to enquire about volunteering with FCN to help deliver the Rural Communities Cancer Project as a FarmWell Volunteer.

How many hours do I need to commit?
You can commit as many or as few hours you would like. As a FarmWell Volunteer on the project we want you to go into your rural community to help deliver the project in your area – may that be 2 hours on a Saturday delivering and placing posters or 3 hours mid-week going along to your local mart or sporting event to raise awareness of cancer and Macmillan through having "meaningful conversations" with those in attendance – it's entirely up to you.

Where do I volunteer?
Anywhere that is safe and appropriate to do so in your local rural communities. Some examples include…

- Livestock marts and markets
- Rural community centres
- Local farm supply shops
- Local sporting events – rural GAA, Rugby, Football, Cricket clubs etc.
- Attending local rural groups or organisations such as WI groups, men sheds, Young Farmers' Clubs etc.
- At local agriculture shows and events supporting the project team during "show season"

Do I have to deliver presentations?
No, you don't have to deliver presentations as a FarmWell Volunteer. However, if you have experience and skills in delivering presentations and wish to deliver more formal presentations as part of our project we can provide you a presentation slide deck and training to do so.

How do I complete the training?

FarmWell Volunteers are initially asked to receive our standard FCN Introduction / Induction training, to help you to better understand the work of our charity and how we support people in farming/rural communities. Once you have completed this initial training and indicate you would like to undertake the Macmillan Cancer Support training, we will provide you with the relevant web links and information to access it. You will need online access to complete the training.

How long will this training take?

- FCN Induction training – 2 hours
- Induction presentation from Macmillan Cancer Support – 30 minutes
- An introduction to cancer and its treatment – 3 hours
- Introduction to equity, diversity and inclusion – 45 minutes
- Keeping data safe – 1 hour 30 mins
- Support after grief, loss and bereavement – 1 hour
- Listening and responding – 1 hour

These courses consists of modules and/or videos. The Macmillan training is accessible on the Macmillan Learning Hub and is self-paced, giving you the opportunity to progress through the materials at your own pace.

What do I receive upon completing this training?
Once you have completed the training, please confirm by emailing training@fcn.org.uk and copying in your relevant FCN/Macmillan Programme Officer. An electronic information pack will also be shared consisting of specific resources to support volunteers.

Will I have access to additional training/resources/ongoing involvement with Macmillan Cancer Support?
You will be able to use the Macmillan Learning Hub to access different and ongoing training to help to enhance your knowledge, skills and understanding on a range of topics.

Please note: upon completing this training you will not be considered a cancer specialist or a Macmillan Professional. You will, however, have a greater awareness of cancer, its signs and symptoms, and how it can impact people in different ways. You will also be more aware of the support that Macmillan Cancer Support can provide people affected by cancer.

How will I be asked to represent the charities?
You will be encouraged to wear an FCN name badge and Macmillan pin, which will be provided.

Other useful information

Please note due to resourcing we have limited volunteering opportunities available. We welcome expressions of interest but will advise you if we have enough volunteers in post.

Volunteer positions supporting on our Rural Communities Cancer Project are required for the duration of the project, which is currently funded to March 2026.

There may be other opportunities within FCN in the future to assist in other projects with a focus on different health inequalities in rural communities.

Contact information

If you would like to volunteer as part of this project, please contact the following:

- Scotland: Sheena Horner / sheena@fcn.org.uk
- Northern Ireland: Caitriona Crawford / caitriona@fcn.org.uk
- Wales: Linda Jones / linda@fcn.org.uk
- England (Midlands): Sam Evans / sam@fcn.org.uk
- England (South East): Angharad Binder / angharad@fcn.org.uk
- England (South West): Dave Gregory / dave@fcn.org.uk
- England (North): Kate White / kate.white@fcn.org.uk