

Background: The UW Medicine Memory & Brain Wellness Center (MBWC) promotes the well-being of persons living with memory loss and their families by providing exceptional care, advancing scientific understanding and clinical best practices, and building dementia-friendly communities. As part of its mission, the MBWC offers a variety of education, support and social engagement programs for the community – including the Virtual Caregiver Forum.

The Virtual Caregiver Forum is a weekly online support group for people who care for a loved one with memory loss or dementia. It takes place from 10 – 11 a.m. on Monday mornings via Zoom. It offers an opportunity for mutual support among people in a similar caregiving role. A typical group begins with a brief round-robin check-in on how the week has been and any pressing caregiving issues that members would like to discuss with the group. Then the group discusses the themes that came up, offering care, validation and coping strategies. While the group was originally launched in response to the pandemic, group members have asked for it to remain an ongoing MBWC program – noting that the virtual format makes it accessible to a much wider range of participants from throughout the region. We are currently seeking volunteer program facilitators to support this ongoing need.

Position Title: Program Facilitator, Virtual Caregiver Forum.

Supervisor: Marigrace Becker, MSW, Program Manager for Community Education & Impact. 206.744.2190, mbecker1@uw.edu.

Responsibilities:

The volunteer Program Facilitator works with a co-facilitator to lead this weekly virtual support group. Depending on the number of people participating each week, the co-facilitators may work together, or may divide into two break-out rooms. Duties include establishing and maintaining a positive and inclusive group environment, welcoming newcomers, facilitating group discussion, validating emotions, drawing connections, building group rapport, time-keeping, managing the Zoom meeting and trouble-shooting any technology issues, and reporting any concerns to Program Manager. Other duties possible depending on interest/experience.

Time commitment/Schedule:

- Total time commitment is roughly 1.5 hours per week, to include meeting with co-facilitator before and after the group.
- Volunteer must be able to serve for minimum 6 months.
- Volunteer will attend an orientation/training for 1.5 hours.

Requirements:

- Age 21+
- Have attained, or are pursuing, a graduate degree in social or health sciences, or equivalent experience. Retired professionals encouraged to apply.
- Experience leading a support group or equivalent, and personal or professional experience with family caregivers
- Reliable and dependable
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills

Volunteer Position Description
Program Facilitator, Virtual Caregiver Forum

- Reliable access to internet, computer/tablet with webcam; comfortable using Zoom platform

Volunteer Benefits:

- Learn more about the clinical, research and community education offerings of the UW MBWC
- Learn about the roles and challenges of family caregivers
- Make a difference in the lives of family caregivers from across the region
- Letters of recommendation available upon request

More Information:

For questions, concerns or more information, please contact Program Manager Marigrace Becker: mbecker1@uw.edu, (206) 744-2190.

Thank you for considering service at the UW Memory & Brain Wellness Center!