

Calling all golfers – Edinburgh Leisure is looking for golfing buddies

An Edinburgh project supporting people with dementia to be more active and healthy, is recruiting golfing buddies.

Movement for Memories, launched in September 2018, and delivered by Edinburgh Leisure is looking for volunteer Golf Buddies to support people living with dementia to be physically active. The project is supported with funding from the Life Changes Trust. The Trust is funded by the Big Lottery.

Sam Scott, Health Development Officer (Dementia) explained: “This an excellent opportunity to play a round of golf and support people with dementia around any of Edinburgh Leisure’s golf courses. Whilst you don’t need to be an expert golfer and have the golfing skills of Tiger Woods, volunteers would be expected to have a basic knowledge on the rules of golf; need to be friendly, warm, and non-judgemental.

“It might interest retired people or indeed students, or anyone with some spare time on their hands, who might like the opportunity to get away from their books and get out in the fresh air, at the same time as giving back something and doing something good for someone else.”

The role of a Buddy Golf Volunteer includes:

- Meeting the participant in the reception area at the golf course and providing them with a warm welcome;
- Collecting clubs, balls and tees from the golf venue staff

or supporting the participant to do this;

- Supporting the participant by either accompanying or playing round the course with them;
- Keeping score for the participant and guiding them appropriately around the golf course;
- Remaining aware of other golfers on the course and allowing people to play through where appropriate;
- Providing the participant with support, encouragement and reassurance as required;
- Completing Movement for Memories activity evaluation forms to enable the team to support the participant and evaluate the programme;
- Provide information to the participant or carer, where appropriate, on other physical activity opportunities available.

Each volunteer will receive full training, which will include Active Communities core training (1/2 day) and dementia training (1/2 day).

Volunteers would need to commit to a minimum of two hours volunteering a week for at least six months. Sessions can take place any time between 11am – 3pm, Monday – Sunday. Each session should last between 60-90 minutes, depending on the ability and needs of the participant. Volunteers would be required to undertake a Protected Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check.

It is estimated that there are currently around 8,000 people living with dementia in Edinburgh and this is likely to increase by 685 over the next 20 years.

According to researchers one in three babies, born in 2015, will go on to develop the condition. Research by the Alzheimer Society has found that 34% of people living with dementia are not living as well as they could, and do not feel part of the community.

Whilst there is no cure for dementia, recent studies have shown that physical activity may improve memory, slow down mental decline and improve mental wellbeing.

Anyone interested can apply as a Health & Physical Activity Volunteer via: <https://vacancies.edinburghleisure.co.uk/>

For more information: www.edinburghleisure.co.uk



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