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Signposting

Do

Provide information and an introduction to other agencies that can help the person.

Story

A team of four people, some of whom have Katie attends the day centre and told her key worker that she wanted to be a volunteer. The key worker provided information about the local Volunteer Bureau and its Supported Volunteering project. Katie called in to see them the next time she was in town and was eventually fixed with a suitable placement.

Hints & Hazards

Use notice boards, scrapbooks and other resources that people can interrogate by themselves. Generate a list of possible places where help might be found and then support the person to choose for themselves.

If the same worker arranges all the person's access to advice, this can erode the person's 'shopping around' skills. Beware of offering advice about topics where you have insufficient knowledge (some people are put off employment because of wrong information given to them about benefits by people without a good knowledge of welfare rights), or assuming that there is no provision simply because you are unaware of what is available.

Check out what is already out there in the community, as advice may be already available. Gathering information and keeping it up-to-date is very time consuming, so don't duplicate what others are doing. Some people will need support to use community advice agencies, and some of these agencies will need help to provide an effective service to people who need support.