

# Recruiting and selecting cancer Peer Support Volunteers – What does success look like?

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## Background

For nearly 20 years Counterpart has recruited and selected women who have had cancer to become Peer Support Volunteers (PSVs). The model of providing peer support to women with cancer has been carefully developed, implemented and monitored to ensure safety and care for both women with cancer and PSVs.

Over 140 women across 13 separate intakes of PSVs have undertaken comprehensive training to prepare and equip them for providing connection, support and information to other women with cancer.



## Peer Support Volunteers

- Listen to and provide a space for women to talk through their feeling and concerns following a cancer diagnosis.
- Validate women's experiences and share useful aspects of their own cancer experience if helpful.
- Assist women to locate reliable, evidence-based information.
- Direct women to other services that provide practical help, clinical advice or support.

## What does success look like?

Women feeling confident to commence as PSVs after completing training program  
**Measurement:** post training self-assessment

Women feeling comfortable and eager to learn new skills through their three-month orientation.  
**Measurement:** Completion of orientation self-reflection tools and staff assessment

Collegiate 'on the job' support from experienced PSVs as mentors

PSVs who embrace change and are energised to consider service developments and volunteer enhancements.

### **Measurement:**

- Volunteers contributing to service improvement and providing input into ideas for change
- Volunteers joining advisory and working groups
- Volunteers providing formal feedback

## Peer Support Volunteers are:

Engaged and give amazing commitment, care, enthusiasm and the precious gift of time to Counterpart and Victorian women with cancer.



Low rates of complaints or disciplinary issues.  
**Measurement:** number of complaints received, and disciplinary processes undertaken

PSVs who keep volunteering even if re-diagnosed or diagnosed with metastatic disease

Women making calls to other women with cancer independently during orientation

Highly trained, enthusiastic and experienced PSVs who support future recruitment processes.

### **Measurement:**

- Being on selection panels for future PSVs
- Assisting with and contributing to training program
- Mentoring new PSVs during orientation and beyond

**Counterpart Peer Support volunteers are integral to all aspects of Counterpart's service delivery and continually contribute to the success and evolution of our work.**

