

**Crisis At
Christmas
2010**

Crisis

Opticians service

Specialist volunteers needed

**CAN
YOU FILL**

**THIS
GAP?**



Image: Bob Johns

Help us transform lives

If you are homeless or living in hostel accommodation, Christmas can be a lonely and depressing time. For the past 38 years, Crisis At Christmas has helped to alleviate that loneliness, opening centres across London from 23 to 30 December that not only offer vital companionship, hot meals and warmth, but a wide range of essential services. Over 8,000 volunteers staff the entire event.

“Without Crisis At Christmas I’d be all alone, but here you get a friendly welcome, a big smile from the staff at the entrance.”

Guest at the Women’s Centre

Crisis makes a difference

Last year, over 2,500 guests visited Crisis At Christmas. 424 guests accessed the advice service for assistance with issues such as housing, benefits and employment. 401 people used our medical service, 263 had a dental check-up, 219 had their feet treated and 189 people had their eyes tested.

We are recruiting volunteers in the following service areas:

- Advice
- Befriending
- Catering
- Dentistry
- Dog handling
- Hairdressing salon and nail bar
- Healthcare, pharmacy and dependency
- Massage and therapies
- Natural healing
- Opticians
- Podiatry
- Sewing and alterations
- Translation
- Transport
- Activities (creative and performing arts, entertainment, IT, ESOL, literacy and numeracy)

Seeing is believing this Christmas

The opticians service provides eye examinations to the same standard as those completed at high street opticians.

“This centre has saved me, they are helping me to find a hostel and listened to what I have to say.”

Crisis At Christmas guest

This year we are aiming to build on the success of CC 2009 when 189 homeless guests had an eye test and 222 pairs of glasses were dispensed and we need you to make that happen. We are looking for optometrists, dispensing opticians and optical receptionists and assistants to help run our opticians service this year.

If you have relevant skills and experience, please apply to join the team. And if you know anyone else with these skills, please spread the word.

Shifts run from 10am to 5.30pm in the opticians service, from Thursday 23 December through to Wednesday 29 December.

We ask that every volunteer signs up for a minimum of two shifts.

Recruitment opens early October 2010. Please check our website for further details: www.crisis.org.uk/volunteering

Volunteer case study: Elaine Styles

Elaine first started volunteering in 1997 as an optician at CC and within two years had become service organiser when she expanded and improved the opticians service. Elaine describes her first impressions of CC:

"What an amazing set up it was. It had a fantastic positive energetic buzz. The range of services available for people was excellent and I found it inspirational. I think that it expressed the true meaning of Christmas to me not the commercialisation that we have become so wrapped up in."

What makes it memorable for Elaine are:

"the amazing people I have met, both among the guests and volunteers. Quite a few individual characters stick out in my mind; people whose life I have made a difference to just by being there, but equally they have had a huge impact on my life. I enjoyed the community spirit of being among friends for Christmas."

Apply from October 2010

To find out more and to apply on-line, visit www.crisis.org.uk/volunteering

When are the Christmas centres open?

Crisis At Christmas centres will open across London from 23 to 30 December.

What are the shift times?

Shift times for service, activities and support volunteers are all different. Look up the specific role on our website for more detailed information www.crisis.org.uk/volunteering

What are the minimum requirements?

All volunteers are required to sign up for a minimum of two shifts on two separate days. All new volunteers should attend a new volunteer induction session in December.

Where are the centres located?

The centres are located in donated buildings so we often do not know until much nearer the time where the exact locations will be but they are always within zones 1-3 in London. We post specific information on our website as soon as the locations are confirmed and we send details to all volunteers who have been assigned shifts.

Further information

For answers to any other questions, please visit www.crisis.org.uk/volunteering. If you do not have access to the internet, call us on 0844 892 8980.