



## **Correspondence Coordinator Training**

### **MentorCONNECT Mission & the Correspondence Coordinator Role**

The mission of MentorCONNECT is to provide one-on-one and group mentoring opportunities to individuals in recovery from eating disorders. Facilitating Correspondence between mentors and mentees is the sole reason MentorCONNECT was founded and forms the foundation of how the community is set up to work best.

The Correspondence Coordinator is a critical leadership position that supports the entire leadership team in fulfilling their roles.

### **Time Commitment**

Daily and weekly time commitment depends on volume of correspondence. At times this position may require daily email communications, especially when the volume of membership applications is high.

### **Reporting**

The Communications Coordinator reports to the Executive Director

The Executive Director is: Shannon Cutts

Shannon can be reached at: [MC@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:MC@mentorconnect-ed.org)

### **Training**

The incoming Correspondence Coordinator will shadow the Trainer (Executive Director) to see how the communications take place. Once the new Coordinator feels confident, s/he can take over the role, contacting the Trainer as needed for guidance.

### **Responsibilities Overview**

The Correspondence Coordinator has two main responsibilities:

1. Routing correspondence. Certain correspondence must be routed to other MC leaders (as outlined in this guide). Timely routing is key to MC's efficiency and effectiveness for our members.
2. Answering correspondence. Certain correspondence is more "general" in nature (as outlined in this guide) and can be handled without routing. This correspondence will be the responsibility of the Correspondence Coordinator to answer.

### **Key MentorCONNECT Personnel**

The Correspondence Coordinator will regularly interact with certain members of the leadership via email. Here is email contact information for these key personnel.



### Key MentorCONNECT Personnel, cont.

- **New Member Coordinator:** Shannon Doyle - [shan@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:shan@mentorconnect-ed.org)
- **New Mentor Coordinators:** Forward mentor applications to both of these individuals.
  - Jeanette Yates – [jeanetteyates@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:jeanetteyates@mentorconnect-ed.org)
  - Diana Laird - [diana933@gmail.com](mailto:diana933@gmail.com)
- **Board Treasurer:** Anna deYoung Maddox - [anna.deyoung@gmail.com](mailto:anna.deyoung@gmail.com)
- **Mentor Guide Coordinator:** Alison Smela – [alison@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:alison@mentorconnect-ed.org)
- **Chat Coordinator:** Melissa Cadle – [Melissa@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:Melissa@mentorconnect-ed.org)
- **IT Director:** Becca Shrier – [IT@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:IT@mentorconnect-ed.org)
- **Forums Coordinator:** Abbey Olson - [abbeyolson19@gmail.com](mailto:abbeyolson19@gmail.com)

### Basic Correspondence Types, Responses, and Routing

Here is a basic overview of the types of correspondence that come into MC's main email inbox on a daily/weekly basis, how to respond, and if routing is required, how to route each.

- **New member applications** (general support, mentee, mentor).
  - **Response:** No response needed.
  - **Routing:** General Support and Mentee applications should be routed to the **New Member Coordinator**. Mentor applications should be routed to the **New Mentor Coordinators**.
- **Questions from former or inactive members.**
  - **Response:** Questions typically focus on a) how to rejoin MentorCONNECT, b) how to change an email address, c) How to upgrade membership or match with a mentor.
  - **Routing:** These questions should be routed to the **New Member Coordinator**.
- **Questions from existing members (general support, mentee).**
  - **Response:** Questions typically focus on a) how to match with a member, b) how to switch mentors, c) how to upgrade from one level of membership to another level, d) how to delete a membership account, e) how to join in Chats or access membership services, f) computer problems related to their account, g) Inquiries about the Forums (including questions about Forums navigation, cautions, suspensions, and bans).
  - **Routing:** All non-chat, non-computer, and non-Forums questions should be routed to the **New Member Coordinator**. Chat questions should be routed to the **Chat Coordinator**. Computer questions should be routed to the **IT Director**. Forums questions should be routed to the **Forums Coordinator**.
- **Questions from existing members (mentors).**
  - **Response:** Questions typically focus on a) concerns about a nonresponsive or fragile mentee, b) requests for a new mentee, c) alert of a change in situation.
  - **Routing:** These questions should be routed to the **Mentor Guide Coordinator**.



*Basic Correspondence Types, Responses, and Routing, cont.*

- **Questions from professionals.** Often treatment professionals have questions about how a mentor may fit into the overall treatment team for their patients.
  - Response: Refer professionals to the For Professionals page on the main website: <http://www.mentorconnect-ed.org/mcprofessionals/>.
  - Routing: **No routing needed.**
  
- **Questions from loved ones.** Loved ones write for various reasons – some want to apply for membership on behalf of a struggling person, others want information on our members, still others want to volunteer or donate.
  - Response: We do not provide any information regarding our members to any outside individual or any other member for any reason. We only accept applications from recovering or recovered persons directly (no parents, spouses, or professionals are permitted to apply for another person). We accept members ages 14+ only.
  - Routing: **No routing needed.**
  
- **Marketing and sponsorship requests.** Requests for reciprocal links, publicity for outside events, and inquiries about how to become a sponsor are common.
  - Response: We do not offer reciprocal links or assist with publicity for outside events at any time. We have two sponsorship Packages: Legacy (\$1,500/year) and Circle of Hope (\$500/year). Interested sponsors can be sent the link to the Our Sponsors page to review our sponsorship packages: <http://www.mentorconnect-ed.org/mcsponsors/>
  - Routing: **No routing needed.**
  
- **Research requests.** We get a high volume of requests from researchers – both from within and outside the community. Typically the request is to access our membership to promote participation in a study or survey.
  - Response: We do not accept outside research requests or allow any individual access to our community for any reason at any time. A simple “thanks for your request, but MentorCONNECT is not chartered for research purposes” handles these inquiries.
  - Routing: **No routing needed.**
  
- **Donation inquiries.** Donation inquiries relate to making a donation or following up on a donation that has already been made.
  - Response: Direct interested donors to the Give page on the main website: <http://www.mentorconnect-ed.org/mcgive/>
  - Routing: If needed, route to the Executive Director and/or Board Treasurer for follow-up.



### *Basic Correspondence Types, Responses, and Routing, cont.*

- **Event inquiries.** Event inquiries relate to our special events – the majority of these emails will relate to our teleconference series.
  - Response: These inquiries typically are either requests to RSVP or requests to listen to a podcasted teleconference. For the former, provide the link to our Eventbrite page – all live events are open for RSVPs: <http://mentorconnect.eventbrite.com>. For the latter, provide the link to our podcasts page: <http://www.mentorconnect-ed.org/mcteleconferencepodcasts/>
  - Routing: No routing needed.

### **Communications Basics**

These simple communications basics can always be helpful when communication with individuals from inside and outside the MentorCONNECT community.

- Listening skills: Listen to what the other person is saying. It is often helpful to repeat back what you have heard from the other person before responding to make sure you have understood correctly
- Speaking skills: Email and chat-based communications cut out 90% of how we “hear” each other – nonverbally through visual and body language cues. So spend time considering what you say, or type, to ensure clarity and minimize miscommunication
- Conflict resolution skills: From time to time, miscommunication may occur. Stay calm. Backtrack to discover where the misunderstanding first began. Using your listening and speaking skills, work from that point forward to clear up any confusion. Defer resolution of conflicts with individual members to after the meeting conclusion

### **Handling Requests from Members or Outside Persons for Interventions, Referrals or Information**

These policies serve as a guide for communications overall.

- Participation in *MentorCONNECT* is never a substitute or replacement for professional medical help
- Serving as a *MentorCONNECT* volunteer in any capacity does not extend to offering referrals or advice about eating disorders treatment
- *MentorCONNECT*'s official policy is to refer those who seek additional support to NEDA, ANAD, EDReferral, Gurze or other similar website resources
- When offering resources for further information, all volunteer leaders are required to give at least 3 resources as we do not endorse particular services or providers



### **Additional Support**

MentorCONNECT is a team-based community and all volunteer leadership roles are approached as a team. The Correspondence Coordinator should not hesitate to contact the Executive Director or their Trainer at any time for assistance.