

Healthwatch Representative Volunteer – Role

Description

About us:

There is a local Healthwatch in every local authority area of England. Healthwatch Wandsworth is the independent champion for people using local Health and Social Care services in Wandsworth.

We listen to what people say they like about services and what could be improved. We then share their views and experiences with the people with the power to make change happen. Healthwatch was given significant statutory powers in the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to ensure that the voice of local people is strengthened. Those who pay for, deliver and regulate Health and Social Care services have to respond to what we tell them local people think.

We also share the views of local people with Healthwatch England, the national body, to help improve the quality of services across the country.

Healthwatch is operated by Wandsworth Care Alliance (WCA) a local charity a member-led organisation.

Role description:

Our Representative Volunteers represent Healthwatch on committees and work to influence the way that services in the local area are run. These could be around all sorts of health and care or community-focused topics. Some of our representatives focus on services for young people or new parents and others focus on sight loss or social care. The topics depend on your individual interest.

Representative volunteers attend workshops, committees, and other meetings to reflect the concerns of their community in Wandsworth to decision-makers.

Who are we looking for?

We believe that it is important for the community's voice to be heard and our representatives are crucial in doing this. We are looking for volunteers who are passionate about reflecting the views of the community of Wandsworth about health and social care. We welcome people that reflect Wandsworth's diverse population.

We are recruiting volunteers for this role who:

- Have an interest in health and social care issues affecting local residents.
- Are good listeners.
- Act with care, respect and discretion.
- Enjoy communicating and sharing the views of their community.
- Are happy to proactively seek and share information.
- Can work independently when needed but are comfortable asking for help too.
- Are committed to promoting equal opportunities and a non-judgmental approach.

Desirable experience

- Some experience of participation on a committee or board in any context is desirable.
- Some experience and knowledge of a community or health and social care topic area, although this will develop in the role.
- Reliability, diplomacy and tact in discussions.

In this role you will:

- Take part in an induction process.
- Be familiar with the Healthwatch Wandsworth understanding of topics and issues and promote information about the charity
- Maintain knowledge of Healthwatch Wandsworth priorities, its work and reports
- Let us know in advance if you are unable to attend meetings.
- Prepare for meetings and regularly feedback a summary of important information including things that the local community should know about.

- Be in the room with quite senior people in health and social care and be willing to build your confidence in speaking up.
- Present the voice of local people and encourage commissioners and service providers to address issues of concern or highlight areas of good practice.
- Observe Healthwatch Wandsworth's Code of Conduct and the principles of data protection.

What will you get from volunteering with Healthwatch Wandsworth?

- Get to know people in your area and make a difference to the people who use health and social services in Wandsworth
- Acquire new skills, refine old ones and increase your confidence. Such as practice in attending formal meetings and speaking publicly.
- You could update your CV and use your experience with Healthwatch to seek work in health and social care or other fields of employment.
- Learn or improve your knowledge about health and social care

Support provided:

- Reasonable travel and out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the Healthwatch Expenses Policy
- Induction and support from a supervisor, and a volunteer buddy if you want one.
- We can provide support and supervision to our volunteers. If you ever have a question, concern or need some guidance there is always someone available via call or email to support you.
- Where available training or events will be offered to help with the role or learning on the specific topics

Please note that this is an unpaid position. We aim to find opportunities that fit around our volunteers' availability whether that is in the daytime or the evenings, and how much time you have to give. Although this position is unpaid, we offer excellent references upon the successful completion of your role.

If you are interested in this volunteer role, please email us at

information@healthwatchwandsworth.co.uk or call us on **0743 463 3745**.

We look forward to hearing from you!

