

Macmillan 'Year of Listening' Project
Medway & Swale Community Health Research
Volunteer Role Description



Funded by

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CANCER SUPPORT

What is the 'Year of Listening' project about?

A 'Year of Listening' is an exciting new 12-month Kent wide community engagement project. Medway Voluntary Action (funded by Macmillan to deliver this piece of work in Medway & Swale) is working in partnership with local Voluntary & Community organisations and groups to engage with local communities and residents to understand the barriers and challenges local people are experiencing in accessing local Cancer treatment and support services.

Why do you need me?

The Community Health Researcher (CHR) role is an important part of the programme and we need someone who is interested in helping improve health and care services in Medway and Swale by gathering feedback from local residents about their experiences accessing Cancer services and treatment.

The programme will engage with and support Medway and Swale residents to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities within the existing system (in relation to accessing treatment and services), and their views will be shared with key decisionmakers who have committed to taking action based on these insights.

As part of your training you will learn about research skills and how to carry out effective 1:1 interviews within your community and amongst Medway and Swale residents.

What activities will I be involved in?

Activities you are likely to undertake include:

- Attending training days and debrief sessions to learn about carrying out community based research.
- Carry out interviews with local residents and people in your community.
- Take notes and write up the results of interviews, working with other Community Health Researchers to do this.
- Share your ideas and feedback with the MVA project team.

This is a good opportunity to find out about the breadth and depth of the work carried out by not-for-profit organisations in Medway and to develop your communication skills and knowledge.

What skills and abilities will I need to have?

You don't need to have specific experience in any of the above activities. We are looking for a volunteer who is reliable and who wishes to extend their skills and experience. You must be willing to follow MVA policies e.g. health and safety, equal opportunities, confidentiality and financial guidelines.

The following personal interests/skills are desired:

- Be a resident of Medway or Swale with sufficient time to give to the role.
- Care about how local people experience Cancer services and treatment.
- Good verbal and listening skills.
- An interest in learning about research skills.

What training and support will I be given?

- You will be offered training in how to carry out interviews, how to listen in depth, how to ask probing questions, how to capture and write up information.
- You will receive an induction and ongoing support from the MVA team.
- You will be invited to attend volunteer meetings hosted by MVA and to join any relevant online volunteer groups/forums moderated by MVA.
- MVA may offer you opportunities to become involved in other activities that they deliver locally.
- This role is unpaid but we reimburse volunteers' 'out-of-pocket' expenses within agreed guidelines which should cover your travel.

How much time should I offer?

We envisage you should allow at least two days for training and debrief sessions and then a flexible commitment to conduct interviews within local communities. This should amount to no more than six to eight days over the year.

What are the benefits of being a Community Health Researcher with MVA?

- You can earn 'Medway Time Credits' linked to your volunteering activities. For more information on the Time Credit Scheme offered by an organisation called Tempo check out this link: <https://timecredits.com/spend?location=Current+location&lat=51.367069&lng=0.5111473>
- You will be contributing to the improvement of local Cancer services and learn more about health and care issues in Medway and Swale.
- You will learn research skills.
- You will have the opportunity to meet new people.
- You could gain new skills and references to add to your CV.

How to Apply

Applications for this volunteering role will be reviewed on a rolling basis between September and January, and we recommend applying as soon as possible. Priority will be given to candidates who can commit to at least nine months volunteering with us.

If interested, please get in touch with MVA and ask for an application form either by email on contact@mva.org.uk or by phone on 01634 812 850.

If you require this document in an alternative format, ie: easy read, large text, audio, Braille or a community language please contact us on the details above.