



## Become a Voice for your community

### How to become a Community Voice?

**VAC – Improving Local Lives Kirklees, in partnership with Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), offers free training for local people to become Community Voices and help local communities to have a say when changes to health services are proposed.**

The NHS has a duty to involve local communities when health changes are being considered and the training provides the knowledge and skills needed to carry out engagement and consultation work on behalf of the NHS locally.

#### **What is consultation?**

Consultation is the formal process of asking the public their views on any proposals to change the way a service is provided and delivered.

#### **What is engagement?**

Engagement is an ongoing dialogue with the local population which seeks to build up a positive and meaningful relationship.

### **Who can be a Community Voice?**

Community Voices are from local voluntary or community organisations, have strong links to their community and enjoy listening and talking to people. Because their role is to talk to local communities about changes to local health services, it is important they have an interest in health issues.

## What's involved?

The mandatory training is spread over 1 full day and 2 half day sessions and has 5 elements, including a practical task:

- 1 Understanding how the NHS Works
- 2 Legal and Statutory Duties of the NHS
- 3 Methods and Approaches to Engagement and Consultation
- 4 A Practical Task
- 5 Equalities, safeguarding and review and evaluation

## What are the benefits?

Once the training has been completed Community Voices are:-

- Offered opportunities to carry out surveys or run focus groups
- Able to earn money for their local voluntary or community organisation for each survey completed
- Invited to local events where they can meet with the people and organisations involved in shaping local health services

On completion of the training Community Voices receive a certificate valid for 12 months. It's easily renewed by taking part in an annual refresher session.

To gain your certificate you must attend all the sessions and successfully complete the practical task.

## The role of voluntary and community organisations

Because Community Voices must have links to a local voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) organisation, that organisation must confirm it meets certain standards. This is to make sure that the organisation can deliver any engagement or consultation activities safely and competently.

## Want to find out more?

For more information, please contact **Sarah Dawson, Engagement Administrator** on **01422 431094** or email **sarah.dawson@cvac.org.uk**



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