

Role Description

Lived Experience Partner with National Voices

About our Lived Experience Partners

National Voices works closely with a team of people from a wide range of backgrounds, known as Lived Experience Partners. Our Lived Experience Partners are people with either:

- direct personal experience of living with long term physical or mental health conditions/disabilities and health inequalities; or,
- experience as an unpaid carer of a family member who is living with long term physical or mental health conditions/disabilities, and who experiences health inequalities.

Our Lived Experience Partners work with us to inform and influence National Voices' work, providing unique insight and expertise, and bringing a diverse variety of experiences and skills. They support us to deliver our work in a way that balances power with people with lived experience. This ensures our work is rooted in the reality and experiences of people on the ground using the health and care system.

Lived Experience Partners may share information with us about their personal stories and experiences to inform our work. The value they add in working with us is their deep understanding and experience of navigating the health and care system. Our Lived Experience Partners also hold strong knowledge in the theory and practice of meaningful participation. This may be knowledge developed through their own experiences of working collaboratively to influence change within the health and care system, or through the development of knowledge, skills and confidence when working with National Voices.

Lived Experience Partners can be invited to influence our work in a variety of ways, including:

- Informing and influencing our charity strategies and policies
- Inputting to our influencing work across the health and care system
- Acting as skilled advisors on our projects, co-designing and co-facilitating where possible
- Sitting on interview panels when we are recruiting new team members
- Attending regular Lived Experience Partner meetings
- Coaching system leaders through the [Voices For Improvement](#) programme

Some examples of recent work that Lived Experience Partners have done include:

- National Voices' Health Inequalities Unconference – 3 Lived Experience Partners worked with the event lead to design and develop the event, which included exploring the style and method for each session within the event, shortlisting applications for session topics and speakers, and attending and facilitating sessions at the event.
- Department for Health and Social Care's 10 Year Plan for Health – 2 Lived Experience Partners held places in 2 of the Vision Groups that developed the early priorities and strategic direction for the 10 Year Plan for Health.

- CQC's Health Inequalities Engagement Improvement Framework – 2 Lived Experience Partners held places in the Expert Advisory Group overseeing the design and development of the framework, which included working alongside the pilot Integrated Care Board sites through the testing phase.
- Lived Experience Partner Recruitment Materials - All Lived Experience Partners input into discussions about the people, experiences and abilities that we want to recruit into the Lived Experience Partner Team, and all Lived Experience Partners reviewed and fed back on the first draft of this Role Description. 2 Lived Experience Partners reviewed the final recruitment materials and co-created the questions that are asked of applicants.

Lived Experience Partners work with National Voices in a **voluntary** role, and are not contracted employees, or guaranteed any opportunities for involvement with us. When opportunities arise, Lived Experience Partners are carefully matched to opportunities and invited to take part by the National Voices' Lived Experience team. Lived Experience Partners are matched to opportunities through a consideration of experiences, expertise, interests, skills, strengths and capacity.

Working with us as a Lived Experience Partner

National Voices' Lived Experience Manager, [Robyn Chappell](#), works closely with our Lived Experience Partners, and is their primary point of contact. Most of our work with Lived Experience Partners is done online, with meetings held using Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Support to use digital platforms can be provided if needed, although Lived Experience Partners do need access to a digital device to get involved in our work.

Our regular Lived Experience Partner Meetings take place online every 4-6 weeks, and usually last 1.5-2 hours. Time commitments for other involvement opportunities varies depending on each piece of work and the expected commitments will be shared at the time of invitation. Pre-reading or preparation time ahead of meetings is kept as minimal as possible but is often required. Opportunities to get involved with our work are most held often during Monday to Friday and between 9am and 5pm.

We aim to bring Lived Experience Partners together in-person at least once a year and Lived Experience Partners may be invited to attend in-person meetings or events from time to time. All expenses for attending in-person events in National Voices' work are either covered or reimbursed, to ensure that Lived Experience Partners are not out of pocket from their involvement.

National Voices offers a recognition payment in acknowledgement of the time, input and experience that our Lived Experience Partners share with us. Recognition payments are paid electronically by BACS. Lived Experience Partners can choose to accept or decline a recognition payment.

Our Lived Experience Partner recognition payment includes preparation and pre-reading time. Our current payment rates are:

Opportunity	Up to 1 hour	Half day (1-4 hours)	Full day (4-8 hours)
Attending meetings, providing feedback, general inputting to our work	£50.00	£75.00	£150.00
Public speaking or presenting	-	£150.00	-
Facilitation or co-facilitation of events	-	£150.00	£300.00

Lived Experience Partners who choose to claim recognition payments are responsible for declaring all income from National Voices and for paying all tax due on the income. If a Lived Experience Partner receives benefits, accepting payment from National Voices may affect their entitlement or rates of benefit, and advice should be sought from the Citizen's Advice Bureau or other benefit advice organisations, before choosing to accept recognition payments.

National Voices is committed to the on-going development of our Lived Experience Partners, and offers opportunities for learning and development alongside their work with us. We strive for a reciprocal relationship, and one of the ways we do that is by supporting and investing in the personal growth of our Lived Experience Partners. We work with our Lived Experience Partners every year to identify useful areas of interest for training and development, and aim to provide 2 non-compulsory training opportunities a year. Attending these training opportunities is optional, and we do not currently offer payment for attending them. Any mandatory training that Lived Experience Partners are required to complete is paid at the same rate as the recognition payment for attending meetings.

Lived Experience Partner Attributes

Essential attributes for Lived Experience Partners:

- Direct personal experience of living with long term physical or mental health conditions/disabilities and health inequalities, OR experience as an unpaid family carer of a person living with long term physical or mental health conditions/disabilities who experiences health inequalities
- Dedication to equality, and to upholding our [vision, mission and values](#) and [commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression](#)
- A commitment to confidentiality and not disclosing shared information
- Enthusiasm to positively influence the health and care system for the benefit of all, and particularly for the benefit of people and communities who experience the greatest health inequalities
- Ability to work collaboratively and constructively with other Lived Experience Partners, the National Voices team and all external stakeholders
- Curiosity and willingness to explore, learn about and consider issues from different viewpoints and experiences
- Ability to place your own personal lived experience within the wider context of the whole health and care system, and work to influence strategically - across all conditions, inequalities and experiences

Desirable attributes for Lived Experience Partners:

- Knowledge of:
 - The health and care system
 - Health inequalities
 - The different ways that people with lived experience can be invited to influence the health and care system
- Skills and confidence to challenge constructively when required
- Ability to empathise with, and relate to, the experiences of other people, particularly when they may be different to your own experiences
- An understanding that influencing change within the health and care system takes time, and resilience to deal with the frustration that we can all experience from time to time
- Willingness to share personal experiences where comfortable and appropriate to do so.