

Healthwatch Southwark Engagement & Signposting Officer

Job Description & Person Specification

Job Title:	Healthwatch Southwark Engagement & Signposting Officer
Salary:	£29,059 per annum
Hours of work:	35 per week (including occasional evenings and weekends)
Contract:	Fixed term until 31 March 2022 (this applies to all current Healthwatch staff). We are currently renegotiating the Healthwatch Contract with the Local Authority for the next 4 years and we are confident that the contract for this role will be renewed until 31 st March 2026.
Responsible to:	Healthwatch Southwark Manager
Location:	1 Addington Square, Camberwell, London, SE5 0HF. Some travel will be required.
Please note:	The postholder may be required to work from home depending on Covid-19 guidelines and regulations. Also, we are likely to relocate to a different office in Southwark from 1 st April 2022.
Benefits:	30 days holiday (exclusive of public/bank holidays) per annum, Flexible working, Pension-Employer contribution: 5%, Cycle to Work Scheme, 2 Volunteering Days per annum.
Closing Date:	15 th October 2021 (23.59pm)

Background

Healthwatch Southwark gathers and champions the views of local users of health and social care services, in order to identify opportunities for improvement and to influence how providers deliver health and care services. Created by the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, Healthwatch Southwark, and other local Healthwatch around the country, are required to deliver 6 functions to fulfil our duty as the local consumer champion of health and social care. These functions are:

1. Obtain the views of people about their needs for and experience of local health and social care services and make those views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services
2. Make reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved
3. Promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.
4. Provide information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and choice in relation to those services.
5. Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England helping it to carry out its role as national champion.
6. Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern

To find out more about Healthwatch Southwark please visit: www.healthwatchsouthwark.org

Healthwatch Southwark is hosted by Community Southwark: www.communitysouthwark.org

Purpose of the Role

- To build awareness and trust of Healthwatch Southwark (HWS) among diverse residents of Southwark, developing a solid base for the gathering of feedback and intelligence about people's experiences of health and social care.
- To work with volunteers and with local voluntary and community organisations in order to reach more people and to highlight inequalities.
- To lead on the provision of signposting and information on local health and care services to local people
- To coordinate and engage local people in projects and events to investigate a wide range of different areas of health and social care, drawing out their views and experiences, and to lead on events and Enter and View visits.
- To promote and support the involvement of patients and service users in the design, provision and scrutiny of local health and care services.
- As part of the HWS team, to act as critical friend to commissioners and providers of services to help bring about improvements.

Duties & Responsibilities

Engagement and Outreach

- Lead on the recruitment, development, and retention of HWS volunteers, deploying them effectively to maximise our engagement and signposting reach.
- Build awareness of HWS and gather intelligence on the views and concerns of a broad range of Southwark people by proactively reaching out to them, using methods such as stalls, community group visits, signposting sessions, and presentations. This will include a focus on seldom heard and disadvantaged groups.
- Map and draw on a local 'network of networks' for public involvement, building relationships and communication (with e.g. voluntary and community organisations, Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), and more). Work with Community Southwark colleagues, such as the social action team, to do this.

- Work with the Community Southwark communications team to engage the public using printed and online materials and build a strong HWS brand. This will include contributing copy appropriate to different audiences across HWS communication channels, structuring and uploading website content, and helping to develop and deliver digital and print engagement.
- Accurately maintain and improve the HWS membership database, enabling effective targeted outreach.

Information and Signposting

- Alongside the rest of the team, react to requests for information on health and social care services from all sections of the local population, signposting people to support to access services and resolve difficulties, and supporting them to make informed choices.
- Respond to referrals from Age UK's SAIL project, listening to older people's feedback about services and signposting them as necessary.
- Develop the signposting directory and materials, including through building relationships with and knowledge of other local services and organisations.
- On occasion, comment on public communications from commissioners and providers, promoting clarity and usefulness.

Project-Based Engagement

- Support the Research & Intelligence Officer to design project-based engagement activities (surveys, interviews, focus groups etc.) in line with the needs and experiences of the relevant group(s) of people (supplementary role).
- Recruit appropriate local people, patients and service users to contribute their views to engagement projects. Build appropriate collaborations with voluntary and community groups in order to expand project reach.
- With the Research & Intelligence Officer, deliver effective project engagement activities (e.g. surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- Lead/support on Enter and View visits, working with HWS volunteers.
- With the support of the team, lead on promoting and coordinating public events both to gather public opinion and to make known the views of service users to decision makers, sometimes in partnership with other organisations.

Engagement Promotion

- Comment on commissioners' and providers' engagement plans and achievements, supporting meaningful involvement of the public in service design, improvement and monitoring. This will include by representing HWS at a limited number of engagement committees and liaison meetings, working with the SE London Healthwatch Director (joint representative to the CCG), and occasionally presenting HWS findings.
- On occasion, attend external public events to support the user voice, raise HWS's profile and stay informed.

Intelligence and Influence

- Clearly and accurately record data from signposting and engagement activities.
- Contribute to quality HWS reports (written by the Research & Intelligence Officer and Manager), for example helping to develop meaningful recommendations, and proofreading.
- Support on the production of quality evidence based HWS reports, presenting findings clearly and persuasively to broad audiences, and making recommendations for the improvement of health and care services.
- Represent HWS at appropriate meetings and committees with local providers and commissioners, deploying evidence-based, patient-focused insights to influence decisions. This will include occasional presentation of reports, and commentary on other organisation's engagement plans.

General

- Help to build positive and productive relationships with other organisations, including voluntary and community groups, decision makers, commissioners and funders, health and care providers, Healthwatch England, other local Healthwatches and the SE London Healthwatch Director, and the Care Quality Commission.
- Support the Manager to work effectively with the HWS Advisory Group, through occasional provision and presentation of papers and contribution to discussions.
- Help to scan the horizon for upcoming policy and service changes at national and local level, identifying opportunities and pressures.
- Support the development of tenders and bids for consultancy and contracted work, and help deliver this work in a timely and professional way in line with the usual responsibilities of the post.
- Undertake other tasks from time to time and as appropriate, that may be required by management in line with the goals of the organisation.

In common with all Community Southwark staff

- Plan and organise one's own work priorities to ensure the achievement of all necessary targets and deadlines.
- Participate in supervision and appraisal and undergo training as necessary, taking responsibility for one's professional development.
- Work as part of the HWS and wider Community Southwark teams by participating in meetings, working collaboratively with other staff, and communicating internally.
- Complete timely monitoring reports and contribute to Annual Reports as required.
- Provide input into strategic planning.
- Work within HWS's contract and legal and statutory duties, and all of Community Southwark's protocols and policies, including financial controls, administrative records, and the Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, and Data Protection policies.

- Help to ensure that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity are integral to the organisation's work.
- Support Community Southwark and HWS's values, vision and strategic objectives

Person Specification

This person specification seeks to define a person most likely to be suited to the role of Engagement and Signposting Officer. Candidates are required to meet all the essential criteria listed.

	Essential	Desirable
Skills and experience		
Strong track record of running, and recruiting members of the public for, a range of successful engagement activities (e.g. stalls, events, workshops, surveys, interviews, focus groups), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive involvement of diverse seldom-heard or vulnerable groups • Discussion of difficult and personal topics and/or complex pathways and experiences • Policy/service improvement-focused engagement • Experience of Enter and View activities with a Healthwatch 	x x	 x x x
Track record of smoothly coordinating high-impact public events, ideally including in partnership with other organisations	x	
Experience of recruiting, developing and retaining volunteers, using their skills effectively to achieve goals	x	
Experience of confidently and sensitively supporting people facing difficult circumstances	x	
Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to engage different audiences and interpret sometimes complex messages for a diverse public	x	
Networking skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated ability to build positive, professional relationships with a range of external individuals and organisations • Demonstrated ability to deliver constructive feedback appropriately (for example, to influence engagement plans) 	x	 x
Track record of rigorous data recording and management, ensuring accuracy and data quality		x
Competence in Word, Powerpoint and Excel and contributing to databases and websites	x	
Interests and knowledge		
Good knowledge of the health and care system, ideally locally, and how patients can best navigate it and seek support	x	
Passion for quality public health and care services and for involving patients, service users and the public at all stages of service design and improvement	x	
Appreciation for the challenges faced by disadvantaged people and those from diverse seldom heard communities, and commitment to tackling inequalities	x	
Personal qualities and work style		
Adaptable, willing to learn and with a strong work ethic	x	
Able to show initiative and constructively approach challenges	x	
Able to work flexibly and collaboratively as part of a small team	x	

Organised, with ability to work on a range of projects at once, and meet deadlines	x	
Ability to approach diverse members of the public in a friendly, confident way	x	
Reliable	x	
Be flexible to work evening and weekends	x	

Important Information:

Please ensure to **personalise your cover letter to this role.**

Use practical examples from your work to address how you meet the requirements outlined in the Person Specification', especially those marked as 'essential'.

Candidates submitting 'generic' cover letters are **highly unlikely to be accepted.**

Other Relevant Information

Probationary Period: The appointment will commence with a probation period of six months which may be terminated at a month's notice by either side during the period.

Cycle to work scheme: The scheme allows employees to get bikes and accessories tax-free. This is done through a salary sacrifice agreement signed for up to £1,000 to be paid in monthly instalments.

Volunteering Days: Employees are entitled to up to two days paid leave for undertaking voluntary activities

Other: Successful applicants will need to prove their entitlement to work in the UK and may be subject to DBS checks.

Hours of Business

	Office Hours	Flexitime	Core Hours
Monday to Friday	9.00am to 5.00pm	8.00am to 6.30pm	10.00am – 12.00pm 2.00pm – 4.00pm

A flexi-time scheme is in operation within Community Southwark (Healthwatch host organisation). The successful applicant must be willing to work within the flexi-time hours. The person appointed may be required to work outside these hours.

If you would like to know more about the role or have any questions, please email or phone Shamsur Choudhury (Healthwatch Southwark Manager):

Email: shamsur@healthwatchesouthwark.org

Tel: 020 7358 7256 (9-5pm)