

Community Ambassador - Frequently Asked Questions

What will Community Ambassadors for Diverse Ethnic Communities do?

There are lots of opportunities for you to get involved as a Community Ambassador.

You might be promoting health information to other people, either by talking about them to people you know, or by posting about them on social media. For example, you might help spread the word about the NHS 111 telephone service and encourage people to think about calling 111 when they have a non-urgent medical question.

You might help to tell people in your community about local social prescribers or local organisations which support carers. Or you might help people get in contact with healthy living services in your area.

You might get involved in projects which interest you because of certain skills, interests, or life experiences that you have. For example, if you have had experience of mental health conditions, you might attend groups which discuss how to improve mental health services in your area.

Or maybe you'd like to do some work at home... so you might help to read through materials like leaflets and posters before they are used by health care services, checking that the information is clear and easy to understand. You could give your feedback by email, over the phone or by post.

Why are there two different Community Ambassador roles?

We know that different people have different skills, interests, and backgrounds. So we've created two Community Ambassador for Diverse Ethnic Communities roles: Engagement and Strategic. We hope that people with all sorts of life experiences will want to become Community Ambassadors.

How will I be trained as a Community Ambassador?

All Community Ambassadors will attend two half day training events – called Learning Days. The dates of the Learning Days are outlined below:

- 10 – 2 pm on 8th September 2021 via Zoom.
- 10 – 2 pm on 15th September 2021 via Zoom.

There will also be some further training which you can do online in your own time. If you do not have access to a computer, or if you would like some support with this training, you will be able to come and do the online training at an NHS site on a specific day.

Once you have completed your training and started helping us as a Community Ambassador, we will offer you further training to develop your skills.

How will I be supported as a Community Ambassador?

You will have a key member of staff who you can contact if you have any problems. You will also be invited to attend one-to-one catch up meetings where you can talk about how you are getting on as a Community Ambassador.

You will be able to talk to someone before you start a particular activity as a Community Ambassador, so that you know what you are doing, and then when the activity has come to an end you will have another chance to talk things through.

When you start in your role as a Community Ambassador, you will be given a “buddy” – a more experienced Community Ambassador to help you settle in.

What is the difference between the two Community Ambassador roles?

Community Ambassadors (Engagement) work in their local communities, trying to make contact with people to talk to them about health and care services in the area and to find out their views. They come from and work with people from diverse ethnic communities.

Community Ambassadors (Strategic) do office-based work, giving advice and support to NHS programmes across Sussex, and helping to make decisions about health and care services.

Will I be refunded for any expenses I may have as a Community Ambassador?

We will make sure that any money you need to spend to do your Community Ambassador role will be refunded to you. However some expenses will need to be agreed ahead of time – so please check before.

You will be able to claim for travel expenses e.g. petrol paid per mile, bus or train tickets, and in some cases taxi fares.

If you are away from home at certain times, you may be able to claim a contribution towards your meals.

If you have had to pay a carer to look after someone so you can attend a Community Ambassador event, you may be able to claim those costs back if your child would not normally have been in childcare anyway, and you use a registered care agency.

If you need the support of a carer to help you carry out your Community Ambassador role, you will be able to claim their expenses and may be able to claim for your care costs if you are using a registered care provider.

You may also be able to claim a basic allowance to contribute towards costs such as printing, telephone, and internet.

Will I be paid for my time as a Community Ambassador?

Community Ambassadors are volunteers but we do appreciate the hard work you do. In some cases, you may be offered a recognition fee for your time and effort. You will be given more information on this when you sign up for an activity which offers a payment. However it is important that you understand that this does not make you an employee of the Sussex Health and Care Partnership.

How will being paid for my time as a Community Ambassador affect my benefits?

The current rules on doing volunteer work and claiming benefits can be found on the gov.uk website. Please check there for up-to-date information.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/volunteering-and-claiming-benefits#tell-your-benefits-office-about-your-volunteering>

Citizens Advice Bedford provide a confidential telephone helpline to support people receiving expenses and reward and recognition payments for work they do for certain NHS organisations. You can email them at contractsadmin@bedfordcab.org.uk or telephone them on 01234 330604 and tell them that you are volunteering for the NHS. If you have any problems with this, please tell us and we will help you contact them.

How will being paid for my time as a Community Ambassador affect my taxes?

The current rules on doing volunteer work and taxes can be found on the gov.uk website. Please check there for up-to-date information.

<https://www.gov.uk/volunteering/pay-and-expenses>

Citizens Advice Bedford provide a confidential telephone helpline to support people receiving expenses and reward and recognition payments for work they do for certain NHS organisations. You can email them at contractsadmin@bedfordcab.org.uk or telephone them on 01234 330604 and tell them that you are volunteering for the NHS. If you have any problems with this, please tell us and we will help you contact them.

What would a Community Ambassador for Diverse Ethnic Communities (Engagement) do?

Community Ambassadors (Engagement) use their own experience, knowledge and contacts to help the Health and Care Partnership communicate better with people who often do not have a say in local health and care services.

The role is varied, these are some of things you might get involved in:

- planning and organisation of events like Annual General Meetings. You might be involved in conversations about where events are held, what topics will be covered in events and how events will be run
- chatting to members of the public at events
- distributing surveys relating to health and care issues to people in your community e.g. on a one-to-one basis, by attending groups or on social media.
- helping to organise activities for people to get them talking about what matters to them about their local NHS e.g. helping out at a public meeting, at a stall at an event, run a focus group
- talking to people in your community about wider health and care services outside of the NHS, e.g. social prescribers, carer's support organisations, support groups, or healthy living projects

What would a Community Ambassador for Diverse Ethnic Communities (Strategic) do?

Community Ambassadors (Strategic) carry out office-based work during normal working hours. They work directly with Health and Care Partnership staff, giving them advice and support related to your community's needs on topics which affect the NHS across Sussex. You would be helping to make decisions about health and care services.

The role is varied, these are some of things you might get involved in:

- join a working group or a subcommittee, regularly attending formal meetings and getting involved in discussions
- act as an advocate for people from diverse ethnic communities who use health and care services
- work as an equal member of the group alongside medical professionals and managers from all parts of the health and care system.
- become a member of a planning board for a particular area, attending regular meetings, reading paperwork in preparation for those meetings and contributing to discussions to help shape, inform and evolve the health and care service in that area.

Who do I need to contact to find out more?

If you would like to know more the Community Ambassador roles, please use the contact details below:

WRITE TO: FREEPOST - RTUZ-ECYG-ERRK Attn: Public Involvement Team, NHS Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Brighton, BN3 4AH

WEBSITE: www.seshealthandcare.org.uk/get-involved/community-ambassadors

TELEPHONE: 0792 024 4988

EMAIL: sxccg.involvement@nhs.net