

Versus Arthritis

Volunteer Role Description

- Role title:** Patient Voice Volunteer.
- Staff contact:** Professional Engagement Manager.
- Location:** Patient Voice activities are mainly delivered via online platforms e.g. Zoom, MS Teams. However, face-to-face opportunities will be available.
- Time commitment:** This is a flexible role. Volunteers can choose which activities they engage with, how much time they contribute and when they are active.
- The average Patient Voice session (in an education context) will last 45mins - 1hour, and at most will be on a weekly basis. There may be repeat asks with the same partner but different groups of participants during a term. The average ask (in a PPI/QI context) varies according to need, for example, you may be asked to provide commentary on communications to patients, or share your experience of a VA service or an information session, to patients on a waiting list.

How you will make a difference

At Versus Arthritis, we envisage a future free from Arthritis. We won't rest until everyone with arthritis has access to the treatments and support, they need to live the life they choose.

Patient Voice Volunteers contribute to the quality of musculoskeletal (MSK) and chronic pain care delivered by the current and next generations of healthcare professionals. You will support healthcare professionals (in training and in practice) to understand and empathise with what is to have

and live with a musculoskeletal (MSK) condition and/or chronic pain, and ultimately improve the service they provide to patients in GP practice.

You are asked to represent yourself as an expert in the impact of your own condition and your resulting experiences. Where applicable you are also asked to provide your experience of Versus Arthritis services (e.g. self-management training courses) and the benefits in participating.

We are looking for someone who

- Is aware of arthritis and the impact it has on people's lives.
- Exercises self-awareness (provide the level of input you are comfortable with and appropriate to situation/time restriction).
- Has effective communication skills.
- Is able to maintain professional boundaries.
- Is willing to complete feedback on sessions.
- Has the ability to use video/virtual technology (Zoom, MS Teams etc.).
- Is caring, sensitive and empathetic to all people regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, faith and culture.
- Is confident, positive and enthusiastic.

What you will be doing

You will be communicating your experience of living with your condition(s) with the following audiences:

- University students from a range of year groups and disciplines (e.g., Medicine, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy).
- Newly qualified and experienced healthcare professionals e.g. GPs in last year of specialism ('ST3s').
- Patients attending Health and Social Care Trust co-hosted waiting list information Events (where you have experience of and can highlight the benefits of participating in Versus Arthritis services).
- Health and Social Care Trust, and Regional Quality Improvement groups requiring patient input about service improvement.

Examples of discussion areas/lived experience that can inform all elements of the role:

- Discussing your Musculoskeletal (MSK) condition.
- When it started and your history with the condition.
- How it affects your life - pain, mobility, daily functions.
- Any help you may need.
- Treatments.
- Psychological impacts.
- How it affects family and relationships.

What we ask of you

- Follow Versus Arthritis' Volunteering and Involvement, Confidentiality and Data Protection policies and act within our values and behaviours.
- You will need access to a telephone and a device with access to the internet and an email account.
- Uphold Versus Arthritis reputation as a partner in healthcare professional training and maintain professional boundaries – we cannot directly criticise professions or individual professionals.
- Keep in regular contact with staff for support and guidance and to address any concerns.
- Participate in the evaluation of the service.

Practicalities

- You will speak to a staff contact to talk through the role and agree if this is the role for you.
- This role will bring you into contact with vulnerable adults and is subject to safer recruitment practices. Therefore, we will ask you to provide the names of two people, one of which must have known you for at least two years, who can offer a reference for you; this could be a colleague or a friend but not a family member.

Before you begin

- You will be required to complete the organisation induction and all mandatory training for the role.

What you will get in return

- Induction into your role.
- Knowledge that you are contributing to research that informs the development of better Musculoskeletal (MSK) and chronic pain care.
- Ongoing support and supervision from a named member of staff who will support you with practical guidance and help you to deliver a successful activity.
- Training, resources and support to confidently understand and report safeguarding issues.
- Reimbursement for reasonable out of pocket expenses (see the expenses policy).

Safeguarding and Criminal Record Check

Versus Arthritis is committed to keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe from harm. During the recruitment process we will undertake safer recruitment practices and relevant checks to ensure applicants are suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This role DOES NOT require a Criminal Record check.

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