

SANE Service User/Carer Volunteer Role Description



Title:	SANE Service User/Carer Volunteer
Supported by:	Volunteer Welfare Officer
Main purpose:	To support our Volunteer Training Programme; to contribute to the development of services, research projects, campaigning and media projects

Overview of role

This role can support our Volunteer Training Programme as well as contributing to the development of services, research projects, campaigning and media projects.

The specific form the role may take can vary according to need. However, there is a regular role for mental health service users and/or those who care, or have cared for, someone with mental illness, to support our training programme for Services Volunteers.

Sharing this kind of first hand experience can provide a very valuable insight into the circumstances and needs of those who live with mental illness. It is a vital part of the preparation for volunteers who will go on to work on our helpline, e-mail and online support forum services.

The experience of service users and carers can also provide valuable contributions to our social research projects and campaigning projects.

Responsibilities

To a large extent, this role is flexible according to how comfortable you feel in different contexts. If you feel comfortable talking to a group of people, then you might like to contribute to our training programmes and sessions.

On the other hand, if you prefer to interact more on a one-to-one basis, you might like to see how you can contribute to our research or campaign projects. In this case, you would typically be working with a member of the research or campaigning teams, testing out surveys or questionnaires, informing the structure or direction of a research or campaigning project based on your own experiences.

Skills and qualities

Confidence in talking to groups or individuals

Confidence and assurance in dealing with queries about your experiences and/or services

Willingness to share your experience with volunteers and/or staff

Training

No formal training is necessary for this role. However, you will receive full information about your role and appropriate support, eg if you are speaking to a group of trainees and/or staff. You will also be fully supported if you participate in other aspects of SANE's work, eg research and/or campaigning.

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Times and commitment

This role is very flexible. Training courses for volunteers are held at weekends, with the service user/carer session held on a Saturday afternoon. The likely time commitment is about an hour, which consists of your talk, and dealing with any queries or questions that arise. You will always be welcomed, introduced and supported by a member of the SANE Services training team.

Input into research and campaign projects tends to be more variable; however, this also allows flexibility to suit the availability of volunteers.