

HOMELESS HEALTH PEER ADVOCACY



OVERVIEW

- Homeless Health Peer Advocacy (HHPA) is an award-winning service supporting homeless people to access healthcare, delivered by volunteers with personal experience of homelessness
- In addition to providing practical support such as accompaniment to appointments, our Peer Advocates build the skills and confidence of clients to access health services independently.
- A low cost, simple model, reducing missed appointments, A and E usage and unplanned admissions. Created in Westminster in 2010, and adapted and expanded in response to demand to now deliver in eight London boroughs.
- Last year, we delivered 2,428 engagements; including 1,447 one-to-one engagements; and 981 health promotion activities at homeless service providers. We also won first prize at the Andy Ludlow Homelessness Awards.

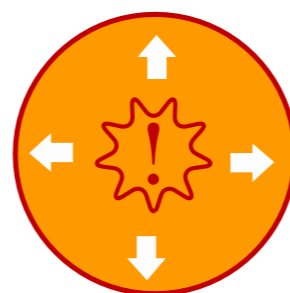


IMPACT ON PATIENTS

Health is a serious unmet need for homeless people. Groundswell's HHPA enables people to **overcome the practical, personal and systemic barriers** which prevent them from addressing their health needs

We go with people to appointments, pay travel, negotiate with security and reception staff, **advocate with health staff**, explain treatment options and support people throughout treatment.

"Homeless people feel judged, that causes a lot of anxiety. A Peer Advocate can help, having someone by your side who won't judge you, someone who has been there as well" Volunteer



IMPACT ON HOMELESS SERVICES

Groundswell's HHPA significantly **reduces staffing pressures** on homeless services

The peer approach has proven effective in **tackling previously unaddressed health needs**, enabling a client to address other issues with their key worker such as substance misuse, housing and training and employment

"Groundswell achieves not just a massive increase in access to health services but also fosters an atmosphere where clients know change is possible" Service Provider



IMPACT ON NHS

We help staff to **communicate with chaotic, vulnerable patients**; supporting health services to work more effectively with homeless people

Our Insight & Action project **collects & shares our insight** into issues faced by our clients; developing achievable solutions to reduce health inequalities

"Groundswell's HHPA reduces use of A&E, missed appointments and unplanned admissions; resulting in improved health and a 42% reduction in NHS costs" Young Foundation HHPA Evaluation 2014



IMPACT ON VOLUNTEERS

Our Volunteer Progression Programme provides **person-centred training, support and coaching** that builds self-reliance and self-determination

Last year we supported 50 volunteers; with **12 gaining paid employment**, 2 in the NHS

"Volunteering at Groundswell has given me the confidence to get my life back on track and start working again. I get such a buzz from helping my clients to sort their health out" Volunteer

FIND OUT MORE:

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