

# Homeless Health Peer Advocacy

## Life on the Front Line



# What's the Problem?



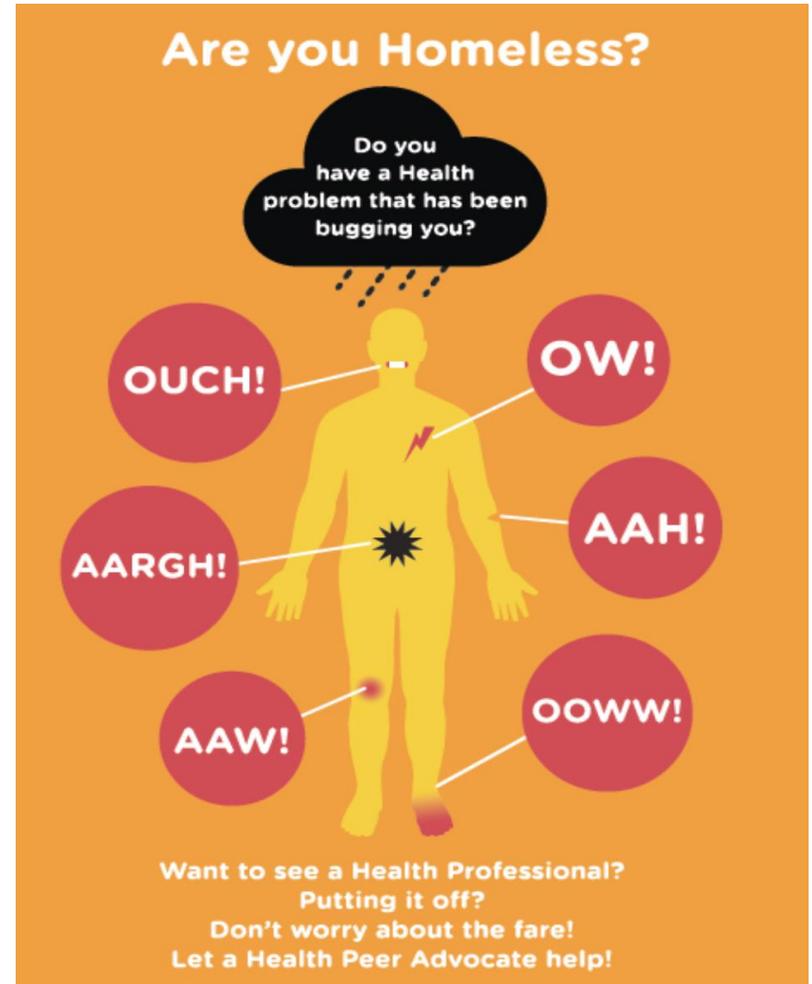
**“I guess as well the longer you’re on the streets the more you feel separated from health professionals. You don’t want to go to them. They’re part of the system and you’re so far away from that.” – Peer Advocate**

**“You don’t know where you are from day to day, where you are from moment to moment, really.” – HHPA Client**

**“... the language and communication barriers, not understanding what the doctors are saying. People don’t have the confidence to even ask to see someone.” – Peer Advocate**

**“...you put a lot of it down to just being on the streets, the cold and the drinking and drugs, so you don’t think about it, and you don’t want to know.” – Peer Advocate**

# Solution: Homeless Health Peer Advocacy



“... people think that if he can do it anyone can do it.” – Peer Advocate

# One-to-One Support

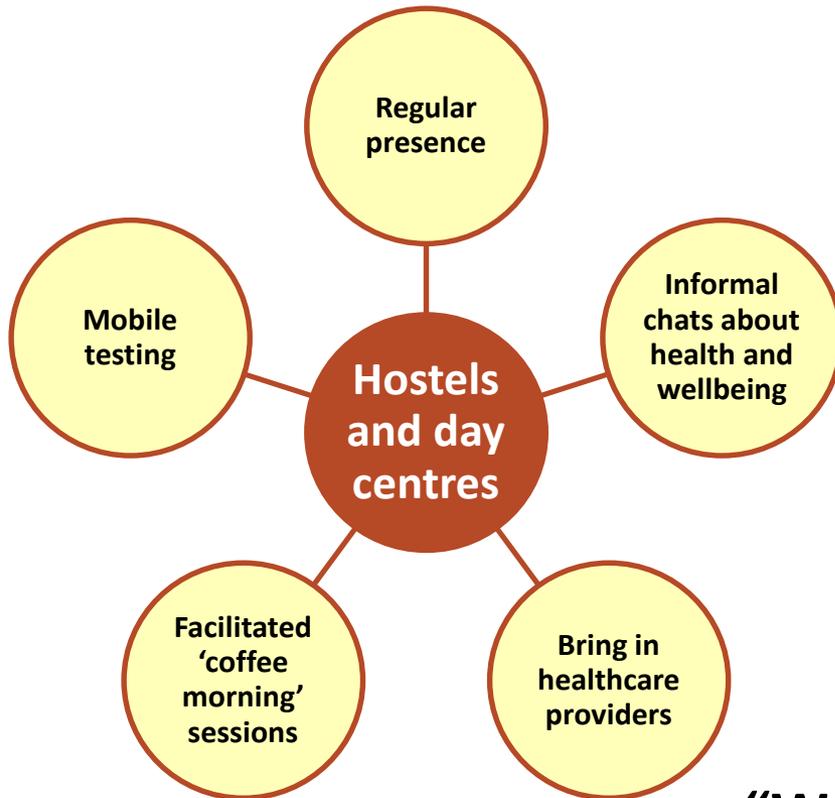
Peer Advocates will help you get your health problems sorted by:

- 1  Helping you make health appointments
- 2  Going with you to health appointments
- 3  Paying for your travel fares if needed
- 4  Staying in touch with you while you sort things out
- 5  Supporting you to have your say about the type of health care you get
- 6  Supporting you before, during and after appointments to understand your options



**"As a Peer you can share your experience and show there is a solution, then clients can find their own confidence and begin advocating for themselves."**

# Health In-Reach



**“We create a safe non-judgemental environment where people feel safe to discuss anything that is on their mind.”**

# Why Peers?

**“Well a lot of the Advocates have been there and done it. So they understand us a little bit better, and you can talk to them on a level and you can be honest with them.” – HHPA client**

**“I’ve been in the system all my life, it takes a lot for me to trust people, but straight away from the word go he explained that he’s had his troubles in the past and that really broke the ice, I felt quite comfortable.” – HHPA Client**



# It Works! Young Foundation Evaluation: Key Findings

## HHPA supports people experiencing homelessness to improved health

- Increased attendance at scheduled appointments; reduction in DNA rates to that of the general population
- Decreased reliance on secondary and unplanned care; 42% reduction in secondary care use
- Increased knowledge, confidence and motivation to manage health and engage with healthcare
- Increasingly independent healthcare related behaviours.



*“If it weren’t for you guys [Groundswell] coming and taking the time out and getting myself sorted out, I reckon I would have been dead now. That’s how much it made an impact in my life.” – HHPA Client*



*“It’s made me more confident in myself and I’m dealing with things now that I never would have dealt with. If no one was there with me I wouldn’t have dealt with it. So in the long run it’s going to help. It really is.” – Client*

# Case Study





## **Gerry Dickson**

[Gerry.Dickson@groundswell.org.uk](mailto:Gerry.Dickson@groundswell.org.uk)

[www.groundswell.org.uk](http://www.groundswell.org.uk)