

Volunteering Week

Volunteers' Week is an annual celebration of the contribution millions of people make across the UK through volunteering in their communities.

The Healthwatch network is supported by many volunteers who help make a difference to health and social care across Kent and Medway.

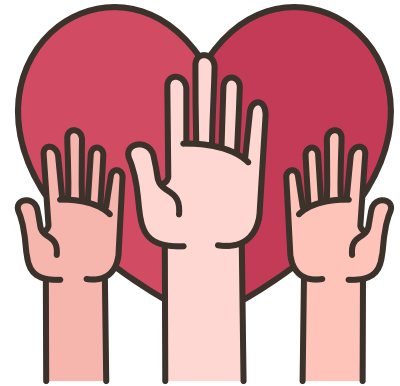
Volunteers' Week is a chance to celebrate and say thank you for the fantastic contribution our volunteers make.

WHY IS VOLUNTEERING IMPORTANT?

As well as helping others, volunteering has been shown to improve volunteers' wellbeing too. It's human nature to feel good after helping someone out.

Volunteering can also help you gain valuable new skills and experiences, and boost your confidence.

If you're interested in volunteering, here's [how to get started](#)



Our volunteers are our lifeblood

They help us with every aspect of Healthwatch from making decisions about our priorities, listening to patients and ensuring peoples' voices are heard.

People volunteer with us for a whole range of reasons and we strive to create roles for them which are meaningful as well as enjoyable. Top of the list is ensuring that they know how valuable and valued they are.

"It is clear that both the NHS and their patients trust Healthwatch to be fair, accurate and passionate. I love being part of that because it really matters."



"I can't ignore the feeling of pride that being a Healthwatch volunteer gives me"



"It makes me feel good that I am helping people"



"I'd worked most of my life in 'people' focussed work and still wanted to make meaningful 'social' contributions in my 'retirement'. Healthwatch hit the spot"



Maybe you'd like to be a volunteer and help us improve services for people like you?

Drop us a line at volunteer@healthwatchkent.co.uk



Some volunteering stories to inspire you.

Penny



Kelly

Harrison



Lynn and John

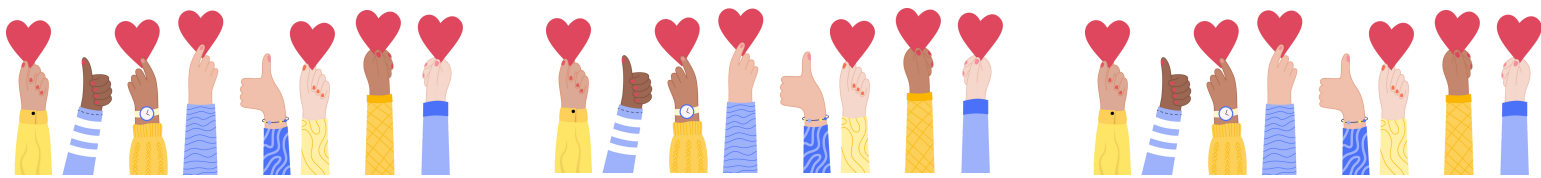
Healthwatch Heroes of the month

Nic and Pam

Nic and Pam are our volunteer heroes, helping us by inputting data to our system from the experiences and feedback we receive from clients.

Their invaluable support helps the SIRS (Signposting and Information) team immensely as it frees up our time so that we can respond to other client enquiries.

Lynn Perryman
Signposting, Insight & Research
Healthwatch Kent



Jean

Jean supported me on a stakeholder engagement initiative visit to a local hospital. Whilst there, she confidently engaged with members of the public to gather feedback for the hospital and its' services.

Thanks to Jean, we collected a considerable amount of feedback that was shared directly with QEQM and east Kent stakeholders. This feedback will help shape the future of the service.

James Woolcott
Outcomes Officer



Here are just some of the ways you can get involved as a volunteer:



Help people in your community have their say on health and social care

Our volunteers play a vital role speaking to local people about their experiences and giving them opportunities to share their views and ideas for how services can improve. Many of our volunteers spend time in our community finding out what people think of local services.



Report on local health and care services

We train some of our volunteers to visit health and social care services and report on people's experiences. You might be observing the service, gathering the views of patients, residents and staff, and contributing to reports which highlight your findings.



Help raise awareness of Healthwatch

As a volunteer, you could be attending community events to raise awareness of Healthwatch and encourage people to share their feedback on health and social care in our community.



Develop your professional skills in an office environment

Could you support us by sharing your professional skills? We're looking for volunteers to help us with design, marketing and communications work. This is a great way of developing your skills while helping ensure that people are able to shape the health and social care services they use.

Volunteering across Kent and Medway



[Healthwatch Kent – volunteering opportunity](#)

[Healthwatch Medway – volunteering opportunity](#)

Other volunteering opportunities and support:

[Volunteer Centre Ashford](#)

[Kent County Council Volunteering](#)

[Kent Volunteers](#)

[Kent Coast Volunteering](#)

[Kent Community Health Volunteering](#)

[Medway Council](#)

[Medway Voluntary Action](#)

[Volunteer Centre Medway](#)