



**Groundswell**  
Out of homelessness

# Out of Pain: Out of Homelessness Volunteer Peer Researcher Recruitment Information

**Volunteer Role Title:** Volunteer Peer Researcher

**Main Functions:**

- To conduct research interviews with people who are homeless.
- To contribute to the design of the research.
- To be involved in the analysis of the information collected.

**Overview:** We are looking for 6 volunteer Peer Researchers who have experience of homelessness to research the issue of physical pain with people who are currently homeless. As a peer Researcher you will visit homelessness services across London to speak to homeless people about their experiences to understand the scale of the issue, what the causes are and help develop solutions.

## Who are Groundswell?

*Groundswell is a registered charity that exists to enable people who are homeless to create solutions and move themselves out of homelessness – for benefit of our whole society*

*Our work is based on a set of core beliefs that see homeless people at the heart of solutions to tackling homelessness. Our largest area of work is around health and homelessness through our Homeless Health Peer Advocacy Service (HHPA). We also conduct research projects that are led by people who have personal experience of homelessness.*

## What is Peer Research?

Peer Research is conducted by people with lived experience of the issues that are being explored, in this case Homelessness. Peer Researchers are trained to develop research skills and work alongside professional researchers using personal experience to shape the way research is conducted.

We are looking for a team of 6 volunteer peer-researchers who can undertake interviews with people who have experienced homelessness and health issues. This is a short term project running through late July and August in which you will visit hostels and day centres across London to conduct one-to-one interviews. Peer Researchers must fully complete the 2 day training with Groundswell held at the Groundswell office in London.

## What will I be researching?

Among people who are homeless there are high numbers of people that are suffering from physical pain and this is having a significant impact on quality of life. For example, we believe as many as 70% of rough sleepers are currently suffering from some sort of physical pain. In the wider homeless population, 41% of homeless people are currently suffering from physical pain. 54% have suffered from physical pain somewhere in their body since they have been homeless. For some people this can continue as people escape homelessness and can be damaging to individuals' recovery and resettlement. Working with the Peer Researchers on this project we will explore this issue to better understand and find practical solutions to the problem.

By conducting interviews with people experiencing homelessness we will try to better understand the realities of this health issue and the contributing factors to the problem. Crucially, it will also form the basis for Groundswell to work with service providers and policy makers to develop solutions and take action to improve people's health.

## Is this project for me?

### Qualities of a peer researcher

The ideal peer researcher will:

- Be a **good listener** who is interested in others and their opinions.
- Be **confident** to speak about other people's experiences.
- Treat others in a **non-judgemental** way and with **respect**.
- Be **committed and reliable**.
- Understand the importance of **boundaries and be comfortable to ask for support** when needed.
- Keen to **learn new skills**.

### Skills and experience needed in a Peer Researcher

The ideal peer researcher should:

- Have **good literacy skills** and be comfortable taking notes.
- Practice good **time keeping**.
- Have good **verbal communication** skills.
- Be **secure in recovery** if relevant.

### What do I get in return?

Participating in this project will give you the opportunity to:

- Learn new skills and gain experience which can add to your CV.
- Take part in training and get a certificate for taking part.
- Create new understandings about the health inequalities faced by homeless people which will be used to change the way services are run.
- Get to know Groundswell's work (especially if you are interested in becoming a Homeless Health Peer Advocate).
- All travel costs and other expenses involved in the project will be covered by Groundswell.



## Time commitment

- **The project will last 3 months**, there may be opportunities for continued involvement following this.
- Two days of training to be held at the Groundswell Office in Vauxhall on the **22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August**.
- **We ask that you can be available for three half days per week during September and October**.
- Peer Researchers will conduct interviews across London. Visits are likely to last half days and will include travel by public transport. Research visits will be arranged depending on your availability.
- Follow-up meetings will be held when the field work is complete to review findings and feed in to the final report.

## Groundswell's Core Beliefs

*Our work is based around a set of core beliefs that see homeless people at the heart of solutions to tackling homelessness.*

### Our Core Beliefs:

- 1. The whole community benefits when we effectively tackle homelessness and social exclusion.**
- 2. We believe in people!** People are society's most valuable resource, and everyone has the capacity to make a contribution.
- 3. There is no Them & Us – only Us!** Groundswell brings everyone together to create genuine solutions to homelessness.
- 4. Participation works!** Supporting homeless people to participate creates more effective services and policy - and crucially enables people to move **out of homelessness**.

## How do I apply?

If you are interested in becoming a Peer Researcher on the *Out of Pain: Out of Homelessness* project please fill in the application form answering the following questions:

- Why you are interested in this volunteer role?
- What experience do you have that makes you suitable for the role?

Please email (or ask a keyworker to send for you) to Martin Burrows at [martin.burrows@groundswell.org.uk](mailto:martin.burrows@groundswell.org.uk) we will then give you a call to have a quick chat about the project. **The deadline for applications is Monday 14<sup>th</sup> August.**

**If you have any questions about the role please contact Martin Burrows on 03000 039 600.**



What experience do you have that makes you suitable for the role?

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