



# Mental Health and Physical Activity Toolkit

## Guide 3:

Involving people  
with lived experience  
of mental health  
problems in the  
design and delivery  
of your work





# About this guide

We've put this guide together to help you involve people with lived experience of mental health problems in your work. We explain how to involve people in the design, development and delivery of new and existing physical activity projects and services for people experiencing mental health problems.

## Who is this guide for?

Anyone working or volunteering in sport, physical activity and/or mental health.

## Language we use

**People with lived experience:** this includes people who experience mental health problems directly, people who support a family member or friend who experience mental health problems or those who work to support or care for them.

## What does this guide include?

Click on the headings below to go straight to the information you're looking for.

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# What is lived experience involvement?

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# What is lived experience involvement?

At Mind, we define lived experience involvement as:

“The development and promotion of opportunities in order that a diverse range of people, with lived experience of a mental health problem, influence and participate in our work.”

This definition recognises that people want to take part in a variety of different ways and it's not 'one size fits all'.

We work hard to understand the needs of people experiencing mental health problems. This drives everything we do. We actively seek opportunities for people with lived experience of mental health problems to get involved with and influence our work wherever we can.

## Lived experience involvement in physical activity

Involving people with lived experience in physical activity can take many forms including:

- **Setting or delivering strategic objectives** – if you want to focus on supporting more people experiencing mental health problems to be active, or target a new audience.
- **Advisory/Steering Group** – making decisions together. You may invite people with lived experience to bring a new perspective to your plans.

- **Event planning and delivery** – conferences and events where you want to reach out to people experiencing mental health problems.
- **Service delivery** – people with lived experience leading or coaching the sessions or facilitating peer support.
- **Sharing personal experiences** – people talking about their experiences at events, in webinars and during training courses.
- **Reviewing resources** – developing a mental health awareness guide such as [The FA's mental health guide for coaches](#)



## Case study

### Lived experience involvement - Mind's physical activity work

Our Physical Activity team involves people with lived experience of mental health problems in all our work including programme design, event planning and delivery and reviewing resources.

We have a Physical Activity Advisory Group, which includes people with a variety of lived experiences. They support, influence and drive what we do. The team also work alongside an influence and participation coach to guide our work and ensure we're listening to the needs of our communities.

**“Being part of the group motivated me to be more active. I do more walking and running now. It has also given me more confidence to speak in a group setting and share my ideas and opinions.”**

James (a member of Mind's Physical Activity Advisory Group)

Mind's Physical Activity Advisory Group share their experiences of mental health problems and engaging in physical activity in the following video.



## Levels of lived experience involvement

It is important to consider what level of influence the people with lived experience may have on the project in question.

This graphic shows different levels of lived experience involvement alongside physical activity examples. It will help you identify what support you need when involving people with lived experience in your work.

|  | Level  | Example  |
|--|--|--|
| Increasing level of participation through to Influence | <b>Level 5</b><br><b>Leading</b><br>Leading projects and making decisions independently.               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sessions are designed, developed and run by people with lived experience on an ongoing basis.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Level 4</b><br><b>Deciding together</b><br>Working as partners and contributing to decision making. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A steering group comprised of key stakeholders, which includes people with lived experience. All members have equal responsibility to make decisions about what happens with the project.</li> </ul>  |
|  | <b>Level 3</b><br><b>Doing together</b><br>Working together towards common objectives.                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advisory groups or meetings with service users to understand what they need and want from the service. Decision making is shared as much as possible, though overall responsibility remains with the lead organisation.</li> <li>People with lived experience working alongside coaches and instructors to deliver sport and physical activity sessions.</li> </ul> |
|  | <b>Level 2</b><br><b>Working together</b><br>Contributing within fixed roles and boundaries.           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteering roles, e.g. activity buddy or peer mentor volunteer.</li> <li>Supporting the delivery of specific parts of a session, e.g. warm-up activities.</li> <li>Service user meetings – A forum where feedback is given in order to make improvements to groups. e.g. types of sports delivered, times when sessions are delivered.</li> </ul>                 |
|  | <b>Level 1</b><br><b>Consultation</b><br>Giving feedback within fixed boundaries.                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short feedback questionnaires after sessions.</li> <li>Online surveys.</li> </ul>   |

## Case study

# Mind's Physical Activity and Mental Health Regional Networks

Mind's Physical Activity and Mental Health Regional Networks involve people with lived experience at all levels including:

## 1. Level 4 Deciding Together

**Advisory Groups:** some of the Regional Networks established advisory or steering groups at the start of the programme to design and develop their work. The advisory and steering groups recruited people with lived experience to influence the work of the Network.

## 2. Level 2 Working Together

**Presenting at events and webinars:** Networks have also involved people with lived experience during events and webinars. This provides the opportunity for people to share their personal experiences of mental health problems and barriers they have faced to getting active. The Networks supported the presenters throughout the process, from developing a clear plan to checking-in regularly before, during and after the event.

For more guidance on planning lived experience involvement, please visit the [involvement section](#) in our Influence and Participation Toolkit.





# Why involve people with lived experience?

## **Guide 3:**

Involving people with lived experience of mental health problems in the design and delivery of your work

# Why involve people with lived experience?

Lived experience involvement can help you truly hear and understand people's needs and support you to design and deliver projects to meet them. It's a two-way process that benefits everyone.

**“When I applied for the role I had been unemployed for a long time. The role helped me link up with opportunities that acted as a springboard to my current job.”**

**Ellie** (a member of Mind's Physical Activity Advisory Group)

## Seven benefits for organisations

1. Achieve a clearer understanding of your audience's needs.
2. Help your workforce develop a better understanding of mental health.
3. Make projects and services meet the needs of a wide range of people more effectively.
4. Build more credibility with the public and funders.
5. Connect staff and volunteers more closely to the day-to-day experiences of people experiencing a mental health problem.
6. Promote your sessions to more of your target audience.
7. Your target audience are likely to attend your services for a longer period of time.

## Seven benefits for people with lived experience

1. Help people contribute and feel connected to their local communities and different kinds of work.
2. Feel valued and respected.
3. Sharing and talking helps people meet others with similar experiences.
4. Help develop key skills and improve confidence.
5. Support future employment and more opportunities to be involved with your services.
6. Develop people's motivation to take part in physical activity or set up their own events or groups.
7. Connect people with projects and services that want to meet their needs.

**Watch [Nikki's story](#) about how she befitted from being involved with Time to Change.**

For more information on the benefits of involving people with lived experience in your activities, please visit [Benefits for people and the organisation](#) in Mind's Influence and Participation Toolkit.



# Methods of lived experience involvement

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## There are many ways you can involve people with lived experience in your work.

The method you choose depends on time, level of involvement, support and budget. There are usually opportunities for the person or group to take part in different elements of lived experience involvement throughout your project.

We suggest recruiting more than one person with lived experience so people with different backgrounds and from a diverse range of communities can influence your work. It's best to recruit and engage people with lived experience from outside your organisation who have no previous connection with your project or programme, to add new perspectives and experiences.

### Short-term involvement

| Method  |                         | Overview                                    |  |
|---------|-------------------------|---|--|
| Level 1 | <b>Consultation</b>     | <a href="#">Questionnaires and surveys</a>  | An effective and simple way to gather feedback from a large group of people.   |
|         |                         | <a href="#">Interviews</a>                  | A useful method to gather more personal and in-depth responses that can be used as personal stories or case studies.   |
| Level 2 | <b>Working together</b> | <a href="#">Discussion and focus groups</a> | An effective way to engage a small group to get feedback on a specific topic. Focus groups are helpful in developing ideas, because the group can explore and reflect together.  |
| Level 3 | <b>Doing together</b>   | <a href="#">Formal groups</a>               | Useful when you need to gather views and influence the shape and direction of a particular project. For example, service user forums enable people to make decisions about the service they use or help guide the organisation that runs it. |

### Longer-term involvement

| Method  |                          | Overview                                    |  |
|---------|--------------------------|---|--|
| Level 4 | <b>Deciding together</b> | <a href="#">Working and steering groups</a> | Brings together people with specialist skills and expertise to a project including people with lived experience. It is their responsibility to identify and complete tasks, and make decisions.              |
|         |                          | <a href="#">Trustees</a>                    | Trustees who have lived experience can offer valuable input on strategy at local and national levels. They can use their specialist knowledge and skills to influence the organisation at a strategic level. |
|         |                          | <a href="#">Co-design</a>                   | Designing something together such as training materials, a new service or organisational policies. Decision-making is shared equally and everyone has an equal say.  |
|         |                          | <a href="#">Co-production</a>               | Developing and delivering something together. This approach allows an equal and mutually beneficial relationship between staff and people with lived experience.   |
|         |                          | <a href="#">Service design</a>              | A way to create new or improve existing services. We believe that people with lived experience should be a part of every stage of the service design process.  |

## Case study

### How we use lived experience in our physical activity work

When planning a new programme we use service and co-design. We approach members of our Physical Activity Advisory Group with experience or interest in the programme, or recruit people with the experiences or skills for the programme we're designing.

#### Service design: The FA's Mental Health Champions Scheme for referees

We worked with The FA to bring together a group to help design and deliver the scheme. Referees, Referee Development Officers and coaches with lived experience of mental health problems or professional mental health experience who had previously engaged in the development of [The FA's Mental Health Guidance for referees and those who support them](#) were invited to join this group.

They were involved from the initial planning stage all the way through to implementation. Every member of the group had an equal say in decision-making and the scheme continues to evolve through regular reflection and review meetings.

#### Co-design: Mind's Mental Health Awareness for Sport and Physical Activity eLearning

In 2016, we developed our Mental Health Awareness for Sport and Physical Activity training (face-to-face version). We co-designed the training with sports and physical activity providers and people with lived experience. This ensured their experiences shaped the course from the very beginning.

When the content for the course was created, we piloted the training with people with lived experience, and updated it based on their feedback. The training was also co-delivered by people with lived experience as part of our licensing agreement. This was a key recommendation from the co-design process.

In 2019, we developed an [eLearning version of the course](#). Once again people with lived experience were involved in co-designing the online course, and testing it before it went live.

For both of these opportunities, we outlined our expectations, timelines and how we would support the people involved. We advertised the opportunities through a variety of channels to ensure we recruited people with varying lived experiences and from a diverse range of communities. We paid a fee to people involved in the design, development and testing of these courses (see [Involvement fees and incentives](#)).





# Planning your lived experience involvement opportunity

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# Planning your lived experience involvement opportunity

Once you have chosen the level and type of involvement for the role, it's time to start planning your involvement opportunity.

**When involving people with lived experience in your work, it's important to think carefully about:**

- **how you want people to be involved**
- **timescales for involvement**
- **support available**
- **clear role descriptions**
- **people's first experiences. It may be the difference between them supporting one piece of work, and starting a long-standing relationship.**
- **benefits/incentives for the people involved (like training or development opportunities).**

The more well-planned your opportunity, the more meaningful and influential the lived experience involvement will be.

You may want to discuss your idea with a local organisation that works with people with lived experience – like a [local Mind](#).

If your involvement role is for a short time or a one-off opportunity, see the [guidance](#) at the bottom of this section.



## Tool for planning lived experience involvement

This tool will help you start planning your lived experience opportunity.  
Use the questions and considerations/ideas to fill in your responses in the table.

| Question  | Considerations/ideas  | Your response |
|---|---|---------------|
| <b>What outcome are you looking to achieve?</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Design a new physical activity service</li> <li>● Increase mental health knowledge</li> <li>● Make your organisation and sessions inclusive</li> <li>● Understand your audience needs</li> </ul>   |               |
| <b>Who is your target audience?</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● People with specific knowledge or interest in the area of work</li> <li>● People with previous experience of a similar role</li> </ul>   |               |
| <b>Where will you engage or recruit people from?</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A <a href="#">local Mind</a> or mental health organisation</li> <li>● A local physical activity session or provider</li> </ul>   |               |
| <b>What are the incentives/benefits for those involved?</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Will you offer travel expenses?</li> <li>● Could you provide vouchers or membership (like gym membership, vouchers for clothing/equipment)?</li> </ul>   |               |
| <b>Why would people want to apply for the opportunity?</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Are you offering training/development opportunities (like a coaching qualification)?</li> <li>● Are there opportunities to influence key health or sport and physical activity decision-makers?</li> </ul>   |               |
| <b>What skills and experience do people need?</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Should they already be involved in physical activity?</li> <li>● Are you looking for people with specific experiences of mental health problems and/or physical activity?</li> <li>● Does your opportunity require them to provide feedback or review guidance, or is it more in-depth like co-designing a service?</li> </ul> |               |

| Question  | Considerations/ideas  | Your response |
|---|---|---------------|
| <b>What does the role involve?</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What projects will they be involved in?</li> <li>● What is expected of them?</li> <li>● What will they not be expected to do?</li> <li>● Is there an opportunity to shape the project/activity?</li> <li>● What information do you need to give people to help them understand the work, and how taking part will influence this?<br/>For example: a project summary, timescales, flexibility, support available.</li> <li>● Is there a role description for the opportunity? Please see for an example of a Lived experience involvement role description.</li> </ul> |               |
| <b>How much time would the person be expected to spend in the role?</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is there flexibility in the role, so they can work around their day-to-day commitments?</li> <li>● Are there clear times and dates planned for involvement?</li> <li>● Have you addressed potential barriers to taking part?</li> </ul>  |               |
| <b>Do you have the right support in place to help people engage?</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Who will be the key contact for advice and support?</li> <li>● Are there resources the person can access? For example: an employee assistance programme, supervision from a staff member and <a href="#">Wellness Action Plans</a>.</li> <li>● Do you have information about your local mental health support services so you can signpost if necessary?</li> </ul>  |               |
| <b>When and where is the activity taking place?</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Location and date will affect whether people can take part. Do you need to support them to get there, provide clear directions to the venue or an event summary?</li> </ul>  |               |
| <b>Is the role voluntary or do people get an involvement fee?</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is the person going to spend a lot of time supporting the organisation? An involvement fee should be provided.</li> <li>● Is it a one-off opportunity? This could be voluntary.</li> </ul>   |               |

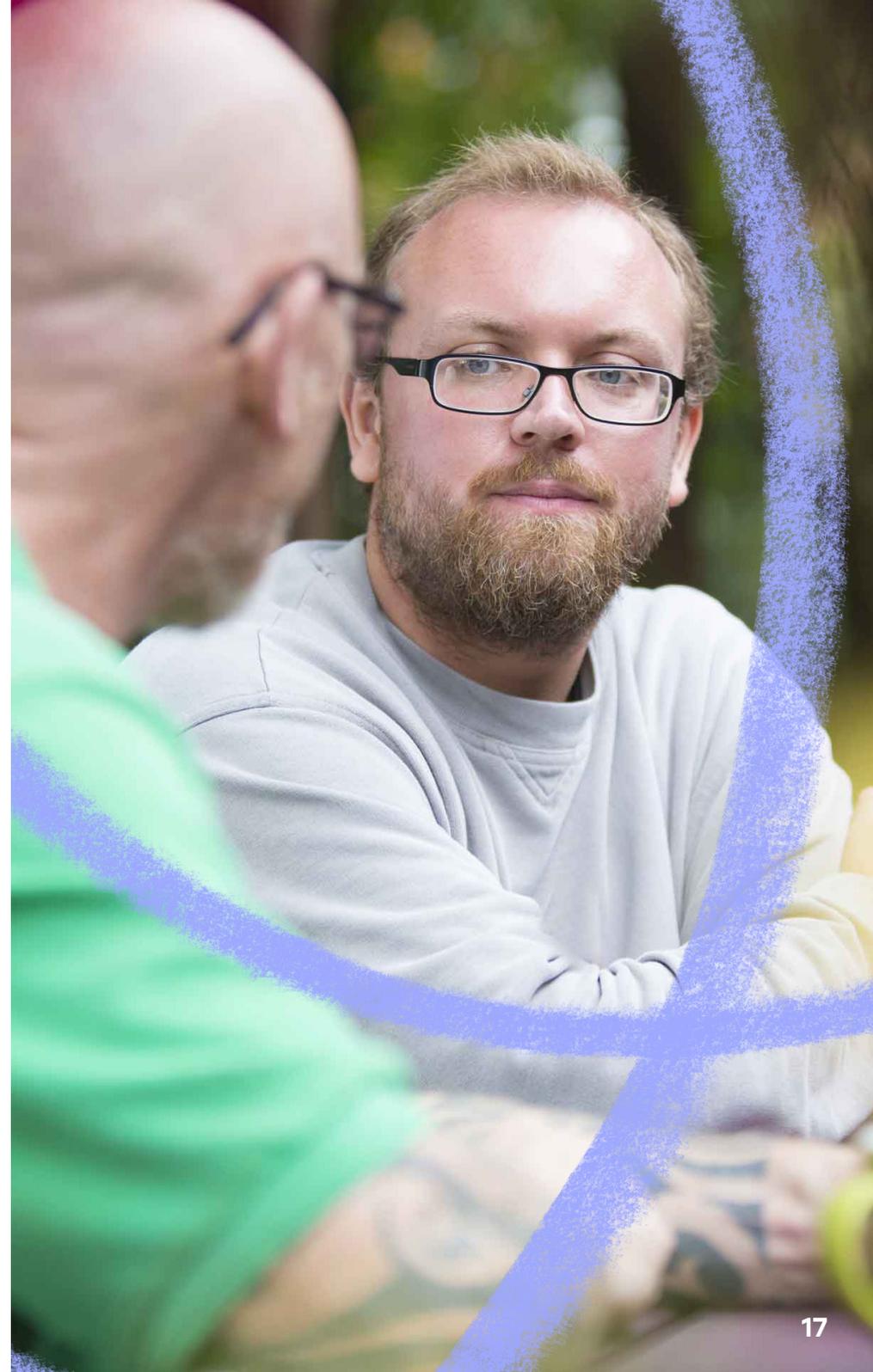
## Looking for short-term roles or one-off involvement?

It might not be necessary to design a role description or recruit formally. However, it's still important to provide a clear overview of the role, timescales and support available so people know what to expect. See [this link](#) for a short involvement template to help you promote your opportunity.

### Top tool

The [Developing your opportunity tool](#) from our Influence and Participation Toolkit can help you create and communicate a clear opportunity to people.

More information on [planning involvement](#) can be found in our Influence and Participation Toolkit.





# Approaching organisations for support

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# Approaching organisations for support

**It's a good idea to build relationships with local mental health organisations.**

They can help you contact people with lived experience, as well as ensuring you have the right support in place for them and other members of your team. This partnership should be a two-way process – so it's best to offer support in return for their help.

First, identify your [local Mind's](#) or local mental health organisation's aims and objectives, and where they match yours. There may be elements of your work they can also use in their services (for example, training, resources and partnerships).

If the organisation is interested in the services you provide, offer to run some taster sessions for them and their participants.

## **Example: Mid-Cheshire Mind and Active Cheshire partnership**

Mid-Cheshire Mind formed a partnership with Active Cheshire. They were able to promote the services they offer to a new audience at the same time as upskilling the sports sector. Both organisations benefited from the relationship, which may result in more work in the future.

## **Organisations who may be able to provide support**

Before approaching a local mental health organisation consider what they offer, and if they need the services you offer.

For example, a [local Mind](#) with a physical activity service is more likely to have participants with lived experience who could support your work. In return they might be interested in working together on a new service.

The following services may not be able to offer direct support, but could point you in the right direction.

| Organisation  | Overview  |
|---|---|
| <a href="#">Local Minds</a>                           | A network of around 120 local Minds providing mental health services in local communities across England and Wales. |
| <a href="#">Rethink Mental Illness support groups</a> | 140 support groups meeting across the country each offering different services.                                     |
| <a href="#">Charity Choice</a>                        | A directory of local organisations offering mental health services.   |
| <a href="#">Hub of Hope</a>                           | A website which can help you identify local services.   |

## Case study

### Springfield Mind and Think Active's joint post

As part of [Get Set to Go](#) funding, [Springfield Mind](#) and [Think Active](#) set up a joint staff post.

“I was working part-time for Springfield Mind, and part-time for Think Active,” says Hayley Noel who took on the joint post to coordinate a physical activity programme for people experiencing mental health problems.

“By working for both organisations there was a direct way to share learning and opportunities. So Springfield Mind had a wealth of experience of mental health and Think Active had a wealth of experience on physical activity.”

For example, Springfield Mind supported Hayley to take a Mental Health First Aid course and learn more about mental health. Hayley then took that learning back to Think Active to inform their programmes. Plus, with her experience in sports development, Hayley helped Springfield Mind staff see the value of physical activity first-hand.

Being based in both offices also benefited this joint approach. Hayley says she could naturally absorb conversations around sport and mental health and see how the two organisations could work together on new opportunities.

But it could be a challenge too. “Wearing both hats” meant that recognising the boundaries of both organisations was sometimes hard. So was staying on top of two inboxes, one for each organisation.

By bringing the two organisations closer together Hayley was able to act quickly when funding opportunities appeared. For example, a charity organisation secured funding to deliver a five-year men’s mental health programme. Think Active were able to bring together this organisation and Springfield Mind to work together. This made it easier for referrers to signpost service users to the correct programme.

**“Hayley working at Springfield Mind and Think Active has been a brilliant link between the mental health and physical activity sectors, perfectly mirroring how mental and physical health go hand in hand. Ultimately this partnership has helped both organisations in reaching their goals of better support for those living with mental health issues in the community.”**

**Mel Campbell**, Services Manager at Springfield Mind





# Recruiting people with lived experience

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# Recruiting people with lived experience

**Spend time thinking about the skills and experiences participants will need, or you could end up asking a group of people who know little about the subject to make decisions. This can lead to people feeling out of their depth, and have a negative effect on their mental health.**

If your opportunity is short term or a 'one-off', choose four to five skills or ideal experiences you would like people to have.

## **Examples include:**

- experience of public speaking
- experience of the topic (like experience of attending physical activity services or taking part in physical activity to support their mental health)
- an interest in the topic area
- ability to participate where or when needed
- experience of attending meetings or discussion groups.

## **If the opportunity is longer term (for example six to 12 months), you may want to add some extra skills such as:**

- experience of contributing to an advisory or steering group
- experience in a similar role
- knowledge of relevant services

## **Effective recruitment**

When promoting the opportunity, clearly explain the benefits people will get in return. People with lived experience will want to know what support they will be able to access as part of the role.

The way you communicate your opportunity can be the difference in receiving lots of applications or little interest.

## **These tips can help:**

- Use clear and plain language (try to sound like a person, not a corporation).
- Avoid using jargon or acronyms that people may not understand.
- Less is more: keep the information short and concise.
- Be responsive and connect with people on a human level.

## Promoting your opportunity

Use different ways to promote your opportunity to reach a wider audience. People may not have access to the internet so they'll miss out if you only use websites and social media.

### You could use:

- Notice boards in community centres or local services.
- Word of mouth – present the opportunity to a local service. Visiting your local service/community centre (or wherever your target audience feels most at home) shows you want to truly engage with the community. This could boost the level of meaningful engagement.
- Local print media – like a newsletter or newspaper.

Also consider how you'll ask people to apply, as not everyone can access software like Microsoft Word. You could ask people to send information by email, or to contact you by phone or post.

Our Influence and Participation Toolkit provides more tips on [recruitment](#) and [communication](#).





# Supporting people in the role

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# Supporting people in the role

**Sharing lived experience can sometimes bring up bad experiences, also known as triggering. Encourage participants to really think about whether they are ready to share their experiences, and what they are comfortable with.**

It's important you have support people can access before, during and after your lived experience opportunity. But also be clear about the support you can't provide.

## **Examples of support you could offer include:**

- Develop a group agreement to build respect and trust between everyone involved in the group.
- Being clear that people can leave or take some time out of your webinar or event if they feel it's triggering.
- Offering a personal contact to listen and direct people to further support.
- Providing access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) if you have one.
- Inviting people to complete a [Wellness Action Plan](#) so you can support them in their role.
- Providing an introduction to your organisation or team including activities for the group to get to know you and each other.

- Inviting people to be part of your team meetings or team bonding activities. Feeling better connected to members of staff will help encourage a higher quality of engagement and a better experience overall.
- Providing a warm and empathetic environment. Make people aware of possible triggering elements at the start of sessions.

Building a partnership with your [local Mind](#) or another mental health organisation can help to ensure you have support in place to help people taking part in your lived experience involvement opportunity.

Our [support page](#) provides more information on what to put in place.

## How to manage expectations of your lived experience involvement opportunity

Lived experience involvement is a two-way process. So it's important to be clear on everyone's expectations from the start so you all understand the objectives. Be prepared to support one another and be open to compromise.

### Examples of managing expectations:

- Establish the best ways of working (flexible working, how to communicate, face to face or telephone meetings).
- Decide how best to feedback about the experience. Provide opportunities for everyone to feedback and work together to make changes if necessary.
- Set boundaries for communication – be clear about everyone's roles.

It's important to regularly review ways of working and your expectations. Working together effectively requires listening, understanding, negotiating and compromising.

Where there are clear boundaries or things that aren't negotiable – share them. Keep an open mind, and be curious about where it can take you.

You can find more information on [managing expectations](#) in our Influence and Participation Toolkit.

### Top tools

- Find out how not to do lived experience involvement in this video showing [Will and Nikki's experiences](#).
- Activity Alliance's [engagement ladder](#) has been adapted from the Ladder of Citizen Participation – it can help you consider lived experience involvement for different projects and programmes.



## Lived experience involvement fees and incentives

When recruiting for your lived experience involvement role, consider your deadlines and the amount of time the person or group may need to spend on supporting your work. You may want to offer an incentive to reward people for their involvement. If the person in the role is spending a significant amount of time (more than a couple of hours a week) on the project/programme, it is good practice to include a fee or incentive.

At Mind, we pay a lived experience involvement fee to people who share their time and expertise to influence our plans or contribute to the work we deliver. This is good practice if it fits with your policies and budget.

### **If you don't have the budget, there are other ways to reward people for their time like:**

- Training opportunities (like coaching qualifications, or offering courses).
- Free memberships (to a gym for example).
- Equipment (offering equipment that will support their role or hobby).
- Vouchers.

## Difference between voluntary and 'paid' roles

It's important to be clear if the role is voluntary, or whether it's paid for with an involvement fee or incentive.

### **Examples of a voluntary role:**

- event assistant
- speaking at an event
- Trustee or Board of directors role
- peer mentor.

### **Examples of a paid role:**

- regular member of a steering group
- reviewing resources
- co-designing a programme.

It's important to be clear about the incentives available, as well as any expenses you're able to cover. You need to make people aware that it's their responsibility to declare their income if they receive benefits.

Find out more about [payments and benefits](#).

Our [Participation Policy](#) provides more detail on lived experience involvement fees and incentives.



# Successful lived experience involvement

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# Successful lived experience involvement

**Effective lived experience involvement is about taking interest, and listening to the individual/group from your first interaction to the last.**

**“The first time we met, we went for a coffee. It was great to chat about interests, both in work, and personally. It really helped break down barriers, and understand how we could work together. Most of all it was enjoyable, and did not feel corporate at all.”**

Regional Network Advisory group member.

Taking a person-centred approach (see [Guide 4: Making physical activities inclusive for people experiencing mental health problems](#)) can help you understand each other and match your interests, capacity, support required and best ways to communicate throughout the role.

## Top tips

- Meeting for a coffee and a chat first (virtually or in person) provides the opportunity to discuss common interests, be open and honest and allow everyone to ask questions.
- Invite the individual/group to observe a session first so they can get up to speed or better understand the programme without any expectations.

- Keep in regular contact – agree that you’ll check in or send reminders by text message, email or phone. Be honest, open and approachable.
- Develop a handbook that includes an overview of the project, timescales and where people can get support. Allow the person/group to offer feedback and be open-minded and respectful.
- Offer to meet or check-in with people before or after an event or meeting. Take into account your personal capacity and ability to offer support.
- Book and pay for travel in advance if cost is a barrier to taking part.
- Discuss and offer relevant training or development opportunities (for longer-term involvement).

## Top tools

- [Activity Alliance: Effective Engagement](#)  
This provides tips on how to be more effective when engaging with disabled people.
- See [here](#) for a checklist on how to end a lived experience involvement opportunity.

## Case study

The following case studies share best practice, learning and challenges from organisations who have involved people with lived experience in their work.

| Case Study   | Overview   |
|--|--|
| <a href="#"><u>Merseyside Sport Foundation's Team Talk recording as part of the Mind's North West Regional Network</u></a> | Sharing personal experiences of people with lived experience who take part in regular physical activity to support their mental health.  |
| <a href="#"><u>Lived experience involvement in a local mental health strategy</u></a>                                      | Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) discuss how they involved people with lived experience into the development of their new ten-year mental health strategy. |
| <a href="#"><u>The Qur'an and Emotional Health project</u></a>   | Engaging with lived experience participants from Muslim communities.   |
| <a href="#"><u>Lived experience involvement in Norwich</u></a>   | Paola talks about how working with people with lived experience of mental health has contributed to the work of Norfolk and Waveney Mind.  |
| <a href="#"><u>Overcoming challenges in lived experience involvement</u></a>   | Will and Nikki's experience of the challenges they faced during their lived experience involvement.  |
| <a href="#"><u>Mind's Physical Activity Advisory Group film</u></a>  | Members of Mind's Physical Activity Advisory Group share their experiences of mental health problems and physical activity.  |





# Appendices

## **Guide 3:**

Involving people with lived experience of mental health problems in the design and delivery of your work



## Appendix 1 – Lived experience involvement role description example

**Background: The background should outline the aims and purpose of the programme, to help applicants understand the scope of the role including:**

- what they’ll be asked to do
- your vision for mental health in your organisation
- why the organisation needs the role
- how you intend to achieve your vision
- contact details (email and telephone number) through which people can ask questions before submitting an application.

| Question   | Example  |
|--|--|
| <b>Who are we looking for?</b>                                   | <p>We are looking for a broad range of people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are currently taking part in sport and physical activity to support their own mental health and wellbeing OR aren’t currently active or have never taken part in sport and physical activity</li> <li>• and are willing and confident to share their views, thoughts and comments</li> <li>• and are willing to prepare for meetings (for example: reading information provided beforehand).</li> </ul>                                  |
| <b>How much time will you be expected to commit to the role?</b> | <p>The [insert name of the opportunity] will run until [insert date] and you will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commit to meeting [insert frequency] a year (face-to-face or online)</li> <li>• [insert hours/days] a week/month.</li> </ul> <p>The first meeting will take place on [insert date, time and location of the meeting].</p>  |
| <b>What are the benefits of the role?</b>                        | <p>If successful, you will receive the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an engagement fee of [insert fee amount] (if applicable)</li> <li>• vouchers/equipment to the value of [insert voucher amount] (if applicable)</li> <li>• training on [insert training topics]</li> <li>• reasonable travel expenses</li> <li>• a dedicated point of contact with regular check-ins</li> <li>• access to our Employee Assistance Programme (if applicable)</li> <li>• skills and knowledge to enhance your CV.</li> </ul> |

| Question                                       | Example   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>What will my role be?</b></p>            | <p>You will be involved in the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● attending the programme and providing feedback on its development</li> <li>● reviewing and providing feedback on resources that encourage people experiencing mental health problems to be more active</li> <li>● supporting events and conference planning, with speaking opportunities for any member who would like to share their experiences</li> <li>● helping shape and support delivery of <a href="#">[insert name of the opportunity]</a>.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>What is the application process?</b></p> | <p>If you are interested in applying to be part of <a href="#">[insert name of the opportunity]</a>, please email or call <a href="#">[insert contact details]</a> by <a href="#">[insert date]</a>.</p> <p>Please email us with answers to the questions below, or call us to discuss them.<br/>[providing questions in advance will allow the person/group time to prepare]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why would you like to be involved in <a href="#">[insert name of the opportunity]</a>?</li> <li>2. What current experiences or skills would you feel you can contribute to <a href="#">[insert role]</a>, for example:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Experience of organising or speaking at events.</li> <li>b. Using physical activity to support my mental health.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Do you have personal experience of a mental health problem? You can disclose as much or as little information as you feel comfortable with.</li> </ol> <p>We will review all of the applications and let you know if your application has been successful by <a href="#">[insert date]</a>.</p> |

**How we will process the information you provide:**

**GDPR processes and policies:** Include information that is compliant with your own processes and policies. For example: we take your privacy seriously and will keep your data confidential. You can change your mind at any time. Find out more about how we look after your details by reading our Privacy Policy [\[insert link if applicable\]](#).

## Appendix 2 – Short-term or one-off lived experience involvement opportunity promotion template

### Leaflet or email template

#### Clear title for the opportunity

**For example:** Is physical activity hard to access in your community?

#### Overview of project and role

##### Include the following:

- a clear overview of the project and what you are hoping to achieve
- who you are looking for (for example: people with experiences of, or interest in, the project aims)
- some prompting questions (for example: have you had problems in accessing sport and physical activity in your local community?)
- a welcoming closing statement (for example: if you would like to support us shape this work then please get in touch).

#### Contact telephone and email address

It's best to keep these details general (for example: info@xxx.com), so enquires can be picked up when the lead contact isn't there.

### Using video advertisements

Promoting your opportunity via a video can complement a leaflet or website advertisement. It allows people to become more familiar with the person recruiting for the role. Video advertisements also provide the opportunity to show a more personal or passionate approach which isn't often possible through a written advertisement.

**For example:** Hayley Jarvis (Head of Physical Activity at Mind) produced a [video advertisement](#) for a one-off lived experience involvement opportunity.

## Appendix 3 – ending a lived experience involvement opportunity checklist

It's important to be clear on how long people's involvement will last and when the project will end.

The way you end the lived experience involvement is as important as the opportunity itself.

| Action  | Considerations  | Completed |
|---|---|-----------|
| <b>Be clear about the process</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Let them know what is happening and why.</li> <li>● Explain why any changes are necessary.</li> <li>● Provide plenty of notice so people can prepare.</li> <li>● Let people know you are available to discuss any concerns they may have.</li> </ul> |           |
| <b>Host a closing meeting/event</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Celebrate achievements over the course of the opportunity.</li> <li>● Provide the chance for everyone to come together at the end of the opportunity.</li> </ul>   |           |
| <b>Provide feedback and reflect</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrate the impact the person/group has had.</li> <li>● 'You said, we did' – show the changes and developments that have been made as a result of their contribution.</li> </ul>   |           |
| <b>Evaluate the role</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow the person/group involved in the role to feedback on their experiences.</li> <li>● Provide feedback on how you will change the process in future (if necessary).</li> </ul>  |           |
| <b>Signpost to support/ alternative opportunities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicate what support is available to help them through the transition period (for example, an Employee Assistance Programme if you have one).</li> <li>● Are there any other opportunities for the person/group to be involved?</li> </ul>       |           |
| <b>Preparing for the future</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Find out how people want to take their experience forward into other areas.</li> <li>● How can you support them to do this? For example, offering to give a reference.</li> </ul>  |           |



## Have a question or would like more information?

You can find more information at [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk).  
Or why not take a look at the other guides in our  
[Mental Health and Physical Activity Toolkit](#).

If you have any further questions, please contact  
our Physical Activity team at [sport@mind.org.uk](mailto:sport@mind.org.uk).

Produced with support from



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