

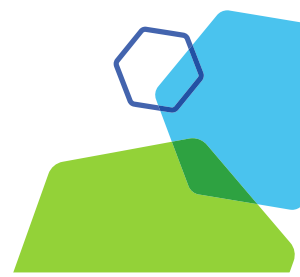
# Volunteer Agreement

## Greater Manchester Cancer Voices Community

Version 2.0 – January 2024

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## 1. Introduction

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is committed to putting people affected by cancer at the heart of improving cancer services for the population of Greater Manchester and East Cheshire.

The Greater Manchester Cancer Voices Community (GM Cancer Voices Community) has existed since 2014 and was previously known as the Greater Manchester Cancer User Involvement Programme. Our volunteers who are members of the Cancer Voices Community are referred to as Patient and Carer Representatives.

All Patient and Carer Representatives have experienced a cancer diagnosis and/or treatment, or have cared for somebody with a cancer diagnosis. This could be a past or present experience. All Patient or Carer Representatives will have received treatment (or cared for someone who has received treatment) within Greater Manchester, regardless of if they live within or outside of the region.

Patient and Carer Representatives play a vital role in helping us to better understand patient needs, so the Alliance can make positive changes and shape the future of care for cancer patients.

This volunteer agreement sets out what Patient and Carer Representatives can expect from Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance and what Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance can expect from them in return. These expectations are intended to set the foundation for a good volunteer and staff experience when undertaking Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE).

There is no minimum length of involvement or time commitment for Patient and Carer Representatives. The Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance recognises that circumstances can change, and Patient and Carer Representatives can choose to leave the GM Cancer Voices Community at any time by informing the PPIE team.

This volunteer agreement has been developed with Patient and Carer Representatives and staff and has taken into account the previous charter developed in 2016.

Please note that this volunteer agreement is subject to change and will be reviewed on an annual basis. Any changes will be clearly communicated to all Patient and Carer Representatives and staff.



## 2. Values

The Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance has co-produced the following values with and for the GM Cancer Voices Community to act as guiding principles and to positively influence how we act. The term 'we' in the following values refers to the collective group of Patient and Carer Representatives and staff members within the Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance.

Value	Explanation of value
<b>Collective Voice</b>	We work together with staff and Patient and Carer Representatives, treating one another with compassion and respect.
<b>Representative</b>	We aspire to be diverse and inclusive and work alongside community sector organisations to achieve this. This ensures we are representative of a wide range of patient and carer voices across Greater Manchester.
<b>Passion for change</b>	We aim to empower one another and are committed to using our voice effectively to make a difference, to improve outcomes and experiences for patients diagnosed with cancer and the carers that support them.
<b>Trust</b>	We share our lived experience in a safe and confidential space and trust that we will be involved in relevant projects in the most appropriate way.

All staff and members of our Greater Manchester Cancer Voices Community are expected to commit to these values.

## 3. Training and Support

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is expected to:

- Offer a comprehensive induction for any new Patient and Carer Representatives to provide foundational knowledge of the programme and their role
- Support Patient and Carer Representatives to help them make a valuable contribution and work with them to understand the types of training and support they require
- Accommodate and support any additional needs and requirements that Patient and Carer Representatives inform the PPIE team of
- Develop an impactful and meaningful training package which allows for development of both soft skills and role specific skills, to ultimately empower and upskill Patient and Carer Representatives
- Ensure all training provided is relevant and accessible, with clear intended objectives and outcomes
- Collect feedback to continually improve the training offer and provide follow-up support as required
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the training offer



- Invite Patient and Carer Representatives to an informal introductory meeting with the relevant staff members whenever they express their interest in, and are selected for, recurrent opportunities (e.g. taking part in a meeting/event/task more than once).
- Offer ad-hoc support to all patient and carer representatives as required via email at [gmcancer.voices@nhs.net](mailto:gmcancer.voices@nhs.net), via phone, and in-person
- Provide training to staff members to enable them to work effectively with patient and carer representatives

Patient and Carer Representatives are expected to:

- Share their training needs and areas of development with the PPIE team
- Understand that the PPIE team will be operating within set resources including budget and staff time, and therefore all requests for training have to be considered on a case-by-case basis
- Select and partake in the relevant training opportunities on offer where possible
- Understand that everyone has different strengths and development areas
- Reflect on any training undertaken and have the confidence to implement any learning gained in their role as Patient and Carer Representative

#### 4. Communication

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is expected to:

- Communicate with other staff members and patient and carer representatives with professionalism, respect and kindness
- Provide a named contact for Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement
- Produce accessible communications and in a variety of formats where possible (e.g. digital, written hard copy, audio, verbal)
- Develop communications which recognise the diversity of our community and are culturally sensitive
- Feedback to Patient and Carer Representatives about how their contribution has made a difference
- Introduce themselves when first meeting patient and carer representatives, including their name and job title/explanation of their role
- Use simple language/plain English when communicating with Patient and Carer Representatives
- Send meeting invites as far in advance as possible (at least a week before), and where possible, follow up with reminders closer to the event/meeting
- Provide a jargon buster as part of the induction process, and a more specific jargon buster if Patient and Carer Representatives join a small community or pathway board
- Send regular updates (e.g. via fortnightly newsletter) which include relevant information, news and opportunities related to cancer both locally in Greater Manchester and nationally
- Display all relevant internal and external opportunities that Patient and Carer Representatives can express their interest in using the 'Current Opportunities' board webpage and the GM Cancer Voices Newsletter



Patient and Carer Representatives are expected to:

- Communicate with other Patient and Carer Representatives and staff members with professionalism, respect and kindness
- Let the PPIE team know if they have any additional needs or requirements so that support can be put in place
- Communicate any concerns or issues as soon as possible to the PPIE team
- Understand that the PPIE team will respond as soon as possible to emails/phone calls, but may not be available immediately
- Bring their own unique perspective to discussions but also acknowledge and consider the experience and views that others in a similar position may have
- Make it known if anything needs clarifying or explaining
- Understand that professionals are often juggling multiple priorities and have limited time, and the impact that this may have on the programme's work
- Feedback to any other relevant groups of which they are members about the work happening within the Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance, and vice versa
- Let the PPIE team know if their personal circumstances change in a way that might affect their involvement, or if they wish to leave the GM Cancer Voices Community
- Respect the confidentiality and sensitivity of the discussions that they will be party to while involved in this work

## 5. Meeting and Event Etiquette

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is expected to:

- Be clear about the purpose of every meeting for the benefit of everyone in attendance
- Send meeting papers out via email in a timely manner (and sending hard copies where requested and able)
- Hold any in-person meetings and events in accessible venues and send clear directions to both the venue and the meeting room
- Ensure Patient and Carer Representatives have a voice and an appropriate opportunity to be heard within meetings and events
- Vary the times and locations of meetings and events according to the preferences of Patient and Carer Representatives, offering a hybrid approach (in person and virtual) where possible
- Ensure the staff member leading/organising meetings is available to check in with the Patient and Carer Representatives before or after meetings to offer support and clarity, where required and possible
- Provide guidance and training to support Patient and Carer Representatives to navigate meetings and events successfully
- Provide refreshments at in-person meeting where possible



Patient and Carer Representatives are expected to:

- Attend meetings and events that they have signed up to/are a member of as often as possible, and on time
- Factor in preparation time ahead of meetings to read any documents/papers and contact staff with any questions beforehand
- Consider the relevance of comments, taking into account the focus of the meeting, and the possible time constraints
- Contribute their views where possible and appropriate, and respect the views of others, even when these do not align with their own
- Challenge others in a professional, respectful manner
- Ensure any confidential or sensitive information is not discussed outside of the meeting or event
- Follow any meeting rules set out, such as the use of raising hands for questions or comments
- Inform staff in advance if they cannot attend any meetings or events where they are expected
- Reach out to staff before or after meetings if they require further support or clarification

## 6. Equality and Respect

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is expected to:

- Ensure the privacy of Patient and Carer Representatives is respected and that any information shared remains confidential unless consent is explicitly provided
- Treat all Patient and Carer Representatives with respect, ensuring they feel welcomed and valued for volunteering their time to influence and improve cancer services in Greater Manchester
- Put reasonable adjustments in place to allow Patient and Carer Representatives to make an equal contribution
- Take a non-judgemental approach, treating all Patient and Carer Representatives as individuals with unique lived experience
- Strive to continually improve the diversity and inclusivity of the GM Cancer Voices Community, and work with other groups and organisations to represent the wider patient and carer voice
- Monitor the conduct of Patient and Carer Representatives and staff members, and address any issues as they arise

Patient and Carer Representatives are expected to:

- Treat all other Patient and Carer Representatives and staff members with respect at all times



- Value the contributions of all Patient and Carer Representatives, regardless of any difference of opinion or experience
- Provide informal peer support to other Patient and Carer Representatives during meetings and other Alliance events as required

## 7. Policies and Procedures

Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is expected to:

- Encourage Patient and Carer Representatives to get involved in a flexible way that works for them, with no minimum time commitment in place
- Have procedures in place to monitor and safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of all Patient and Carer Representatives
- Reimburse any reasonable expenses incurred by Patient and Carer Representatives in travelling to take part in meetings and events
- Follow The Christie NHS Foundation Trust's policies (e.g. safeguarding, information governance etc) as the Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance is hosted by this employer
- Hold all Patient and Carer Representative data on a secure platform in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Connect and collaborate with the PPIE team within the NHS National Cancer Programme and other cancer alliances, sharing relevant information as appropriate

Patient and Carer Representatives are expected to:

- Provide some basic personal information in order to register to be a member of the GM Cancer Voices Community, and update this information on a regular basis, either when requested or when information changes
- Submit any expense claims incurred from travelling to take part in meetings and events within three months of incurring the expenses
- Inform the PPIE team if they no longer wish to be a member of the GM Cancer Voices Community

## 8. Ensuring that our shared values are upheld

We expect all staff and members of our Greater Manchester Cancer Voices Community to commit to the shared values set out in this document, to support us in creating a productive environment for us to work together to improve the outcomes and experiences of people affected by cancer.

With this in mind, it is important for us to set out a transparent process to address concerns and the steps we may take should it be brought to our attention that any person is acting in a way that is not in line with the values and agreement set out above.

These steps are laid out as follows:



Step	Action
<b>1. Informal conversation with member of PPIE team</b>	<p>If any concerns are raised, a member of our PPIE team (PPIE Manager or User Involvement Manager) will speak to staff or community members to understand if there has been any miscommunication or if there are any issues we are currently unaware of that may affect their involvement.</p> <p>We will actively ask if there is any extra support or training that we can offer to help them.</p>
<b>2. Meeting with Communications and Engagement Lead and Senior Clinical Lead</b>	<p>If repeated concerns are raised, these will be considered by the Communications and Engagement Lead along with a Senior Clinical Lead.</p> <p>They will then discuss these with the staff or Cancer Voices Community member to understand any context and other issues that may require support.</p> <p>In some circumstances, when continued involvement in the programme is inappropriate, we may ask staff or community members to step down from the GM Cancer Voices Community.</p>
<b>Serious matters of misconduct</b>	<p>In case of any <b>serious matters of misconduct</b>, staff will be managed according to local behaviour policies, and Patient and Carer Representatives may be asked to leave the programme with immediate effect.</p> <p>Concerns may be raised with the PPIE team via <a href="mailto:gmcancer.voices@nhs.net">gmcancer.voices@nhs.net</a> or directly with the Programme Lead Anna Perkins – <a href="mailto:anna.perkins4@nhs.net">anna.perkins4@nhs.net</a> where concerns will be escalated to the designated Senior Clinical Lead accordingly.</p>

Whilst we know that our community is a supportive environment to work in, committed to delivering the best for future patients, we hope by laying out a clear process for managing concerns above that you are reassured that we are committed to protecting our values and maintaining a safe environment for you to volunteer within.

## 9. Declaration

As a Patient and Carer Representative, I understand and agree to adhere to the values set out in this volunteer agreement. I accept that my membership of the Greater Manchester Cancer Voices Community will be reconsidered if I do not follow the expectations listed in this volunteer agreement.

