



Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2020

What our volunteers tell us about volunteering with Health in Mind
February 2021



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1. Volunteering with Health in Mind

Health in Mind volunteers are vital in the support we provide and to our organisation as a whole. This was more evident than ever during 2020 as we continued to deliver services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is important to us that our volunteers are satisfied and fulfilled within their roles. Our annual Volunteer Satisfaction sits alongside day-to-day support and supervision as a way of ensuring this is the case.

In addition to Health in Mind Board of Directors, who are all volunteers, our volunteers fall into three main groups:

- Volunteers who come to us through our recruitment campaigns- some offering a regular commitment (for example, our Anxiety and Depression Peer Support Volunteers) and some offering a more irregular or one-off commitment (for example, our fundraising volunteers)
- Volunteers who are recruited specifically for their lived experience (for example, our peer volunteers in our befriending and connecting service)
- Volunteers who are using Health in Mind services and volunteering has been identified as part of their support plan (for example, some of our Midlothian Services volunteers)

We currently have a total of 146 volunteers, and over the year, 244 volunteers have been involved in the following Health in Mind services:

Service	Whole year	Current	Service	Whole year	Current
Edinburgh Community Mental Health and Wellbeing services	101	60	West Lothian Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Services	15	7
Midlothian Community Mental Health and Wellbeing services	68	61	Scottish Borders Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Services	15	8
Fundraising	39	5	Learning and Development Service	1	0 (on hold)
Trauma Support Befriending	2	2	Counselling	1	1
Online Information and Communication	2	2			
TOTAL				244	146

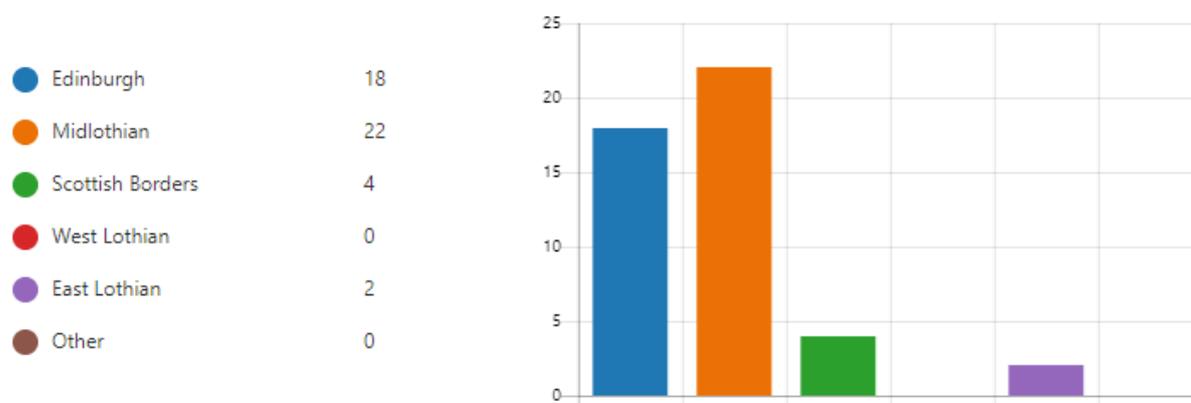
This was a reduction from 2019, when we involved 280 volunteers over the course of the year. This reduction is due to a changed service delivery model during COVID-19 protection levels, which have been in place for most of the year.

2. Results from Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2020

2.1. Response Rate

We received 43 replies to our survey, which is a 29% return rate. This compares to 37% in 2019. We understand the drop in the return rate is connected to COVID-19. We will continue to work to gather feedback from volunteers through support and supervision to ensure that we hear the voice of all volunteers within the organisation.

Volunteers were based in the following areas:



2.2. Volunteer Recruitment

When asked how they first heard about our need for volunteers, our volunteers told us:

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Health in Mind member of staff	21%	18%	9%	25%	19%
Volunteer Centre/Volunteer Scotland Website	5%	5%	7%	20%	22%
I use Health in Mind services	21%	21%	36%	15%	20%
Word of Mouth	14%	7%	14%	2.5%	11%
Volunteer Centre	5%	9%	10%	7.5%	13%
Health in Mind Website	9%	13%	10%	17.5%	11%
Volunteer Recruitment Event (e.g., volunteer fairs)	2%	7%	8%	12.5%	4%
Local newspaper	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Radio	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Poster	0%	5%	3%	0%	2%
Information leaflet	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
University/ College	2%	11%	3%	NA	NA
Workplace	2%	2%	-	-	-
Other (see below)	19%				

Volunteers also told us they heard about our need for volunteering through:

- Another voluntary sector organisation (3)
- Approached to volunteer
- Social media (3)
- Wellbeing College - a Health in Mind service

Results reflect the restrictions that have been in place during 2020, for example, the reduced number of volunteer recruitment events. It is also good to see that recruiting volunteers through social media has resulted in at least three new volunteers joining Health in Mind.

Recommendation

1. **Continue to ensure that the volunteering section on Health in Mind website is kept up to date; further promote volunteer opportunities through social media**

2.3. Volunteer Commitments

When asked how many hours per week they volunteer with us, our volunteers told us:

	2020	2019	2018		2017	2016
Occasional/ monthly basis	12%	16%	23%		NA	NA
1-2 hours per week	44%	39%	26%		67%	52%
3-4 hours per week	23%	22%	20%		15%	20%
5-6 hours per week	5%	13%	15%	5-10 hours per week	14%	18%
7-10 hours per week	9%	3%	9%			
Over 10 hours per week	2%	7%	7%		4%	10%
Other	5%					

One person noted that the number of hours they volunteer depends on when groups are running and that this can range from 2 – 6 hours per week.

The increase in people volunteering fewer hours each week corresponds with a change in our delivery model during COVID-19 restrictions. For example, a change in befriending volunteers meeting with people using our services to take part in activities together, to offering telephone support.

In addition, we have seen an increase in the number of hours some volunteers are involved due to a change in their personal circumstances, e.g., being placed on furlough and having more time and also people offering more of their time to support people during the pandemic.

When asked how long they have volunteered with us, our volunteers told us:

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Less than 3 months	5%	13%	9%	9%	13%
3-6 months	7%	13%	14%	31%	12%
7-11 months	19%	11%	12%	8%	8%
1-2 years	20%	26%	23%	21%	13%
2-3 years	19%	13%	9%	6%	18%
More than 3 years	30%	23%	33%	17%	35%

It's great to see that volunteers are staying with the organisation, often supporting more than one person or getting involved in a number of various activities.

Results show us that fewer people have started to volunteer with us in the last three months, reflecting the landscape in which we are working. This follows an initial increase in offers of volunteer support in the early stages of the pandemic.

Recommendation

2. Continue to offer a range of volunteer opportunities with different demands on people's time both on a weekly and ongoing basis.

2.4. Volunteer Satisfaction

Overall, how satisfied are you with your volunteering experience at Health in Mind?

100% of respondents said they were satisfied with their volunteering experience with Health in Mind, with 86% of respondents reporting they were very satisfied. This compares to 75% in 2019.

Some of the comments given

'I'm especially grateful for the faith and support I have received from my supervisor. I appreciate the opportunities I'm given by Health in Mind and looking forward to building on these experiences in the future.'

'From the minute I set foot in Health In Mind I felt at home. This gave me the confidence to relax and thrive within the role of volunteer.'

'I've found the volunteering experience to be very nourishing, particularly with good quality supervision and opportunities for growth through training and volunteer gatherings (during the Covid Era).'

'Volunteering for me, is therapeutic. It is an extremely supportive environment in which to be a volunteer. My mental health is very variable but I am supported and encouraged to do what feels right for me at any time.'

'I'm very happy to be involved in fundraising with Health in Mind, as they were very helpful to me when I was a service user there.'

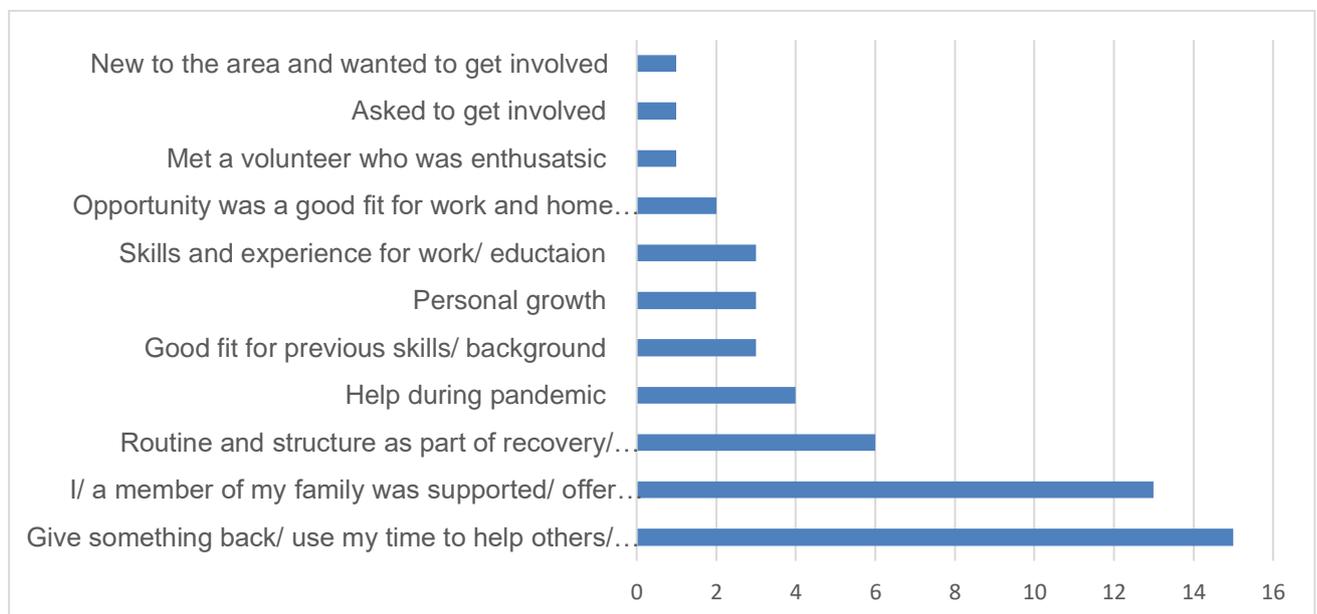
One volunteer noted that their experience was being affected by the pandemic. They noted that it 'wasn't to do with Health in Mind, rather with the fast change of restrictions.'

Another person noted that it can feel difficult to know that they are helping given the current challenges people are facing.

2.5. Do We Meet Our Volunteers'

Expectations?

We asked people to tell us why they chose to volunteer with Health in Mind. Answers were wide-ranging but could be grouped in the following ways:



We went onto ask if we met our volunteer expectations.

91% of volunteers answered yes to this question. One person said it had exceeded their expectations.

Some volunteers let us know that aspects of their role had been suspended because of COVID-19 restrictions.

One person said, 'Losing my job was detrimental to my mental health. At no time since then have I felt that my health remains stable enough to get back into paid employment. Volunteering with Health in Mind has given me a place where I can contribute to society without the fear of being dismissed because I take some time, or if I am less productive at some times than others. I am encouraged to do what feels right for me, without pressure disappointment or judgement.'

Another person said, 'Without the help I received from Health in Mind, I shudder to think where I'd be or think about what would have happened to me by now.'

Recommendation

- 3. Continue to keep in touch with volunteers who are currently unable to be actively involved because of COVID-19**

2.6. The Volunteering Experience

We asked respondents to give three words that best describe their experience of volunteering with Health in Mind. The word cloud below illustrates the results, with the most frequently used words appearing larger.

development discovery
satisfying empowering
self-esteem heart-expanding
people challenge love humbling
positive compassionate helpful friendly stimulating
engaging therapeutic interesting safe
pleasant confidence motivating challenging enriching
supported attentive varied manageable
enjoy rewarding life-changing
acceptance valued supportive inspiring
affirming compassion easy friendship wonderful
fulfilling help heartwarming accepting happy
fun wellbeing mind-expanding well-being
uplifting good encouraging straightforward
inclusive precious well-organised
enjoyable open educational
meaningful
worthwhile

2.7. What Can We Do to Further Support Volunteers?

We asked an open-ended question about what we can do to support our volunteers further to meet their expectations of volunteering with Health in Mind.

Many people told us there was nothing more we could do, noting they have appreciated keeping in touch and meeting other volunteers over Zoom during the pandemic.

‘Keep trusting your volunteers and give them opportunities to develop and contribute.’

‘Nothing comes to mind ... keep up the good work.’

‘Just keep up what you’re doing in these trying times.’

‘I have received good support and communication, general happy.’

Others passed on the following suggestions:

‘Have one easy to access place for resources e.g., support groups or activities I could recommend to the person I am supporting.’

‘I feel really well supported. A couple of times my supervisors have left their jobs and there’s been a period with little/no supervision, but I haven’t needed much, so it hasn’t been a problem.’

Volunteer training has been disrupted because of COVID-19 restrictions, and volunteers let us know that they would appreciate more training opportunities.

Recommendations

- 4. Continue Zoom catch-ups for all volunteers**
- 5. Ensure there are no gaps in supervision when a staff member leaves**
- 6. Ensure volunteers know about and are supported to use iThrive, Midspace, Westspace, and Eastspace Information Websites**

2.8. Learning

We asked volunteers to tell us about the area of training they needed for their role. Volunteers told us about a range of training they had received, including:

- Interpersonal communication
- COVID-19 protocols
- Boundaries
- Risk assessment
- Good conversations
- Mental Health Peer Support PDA
- ASIST
- Trauma-informed approaches

Others told us about the training they would find useful but haven't received, including more facilitation skills, mental health awareness refresher, health and safety, first aid, how to manage difficult conversations and situations, more about Zoom and anxiety management

Volunteers told us that peer support sessions are helpful.

One volunteer noted that online training had been fantastic as they find it difficult to travel.

We asked volunteers if the training they received prepared them for their role.

83% answered yes, 3% responded no, and 14% answered other

Feedback from those answering no and other included:

- The volunteer knew a lot of what was covered in training because of their background
- The training was undertaken before the COVID-19 pandemic, which then changed the situation
- It gave me further depth to my understanding of the role
- One person noted that because every person we support is different, training cannot cover every eventuality

We asked volunteers if they would like to receive other training not directly related to their role. The majority of volunteers said they would not find this helpful, but others noted that they would be interested in group work training, information about making communications 'easy read', emotional distress, research and policy, mental health diagnosis such as bi-polar.

Recommendations

7. Continue online training opportunities
8. Continue peer support sessions for volunteers
9. Develop a training programme for volunteers for 2021 – 2022 based on survey and broader feedback from volunteers

2.9. Is there anything missing from your volunteer experience?

We asked if volunteers if they felt anything was missing from their volunteer experience. The majority of volunteers said no.

One person commented, 'I think this organisation excels at recognising and building on the personal assets of volunteers. Therefore, I think it would be useful to ask volunteers if they would consider working for Health in Mind in the future. Furthermore, I think creating awareness of the issues that gender and sexual minorities may face could help build more cohesive and resilient communities.'

Another person highlighted the needs of people living in rural areas and suggested more local support groups could be set up.

Furthermore, another volunteer noted they would be interested in becoming a Trustee of Health in Mind.

Recommendations

10. Ensure all volunteers are aware of Health in Mind job opportunities
11. Ensure volunteers are aware of Trustee vacancies when they arise
12. Continue to develop services in rural areas

3. Summary of Recommendations

- 1. Continue to ensure that the volunteering section on Health in Mind website is kept up to date; further promote volunteer opportunities through social media**
- 2. Continue to offer a range of volunteer opportunities with different demands on people's time both on a weekly and ongoing basis**
- 3. Continue to keep in touch with volunteers who are currently unable to be actively involved because of COVID-19**
- 4. Continue Zoom catch-ups for all volunteers**
- 5. Ensure there are no gaps in supervision when a staff member leaves**
- 6. Ensure volunteers know about and are supported to use iThrive, Midspace, Westspace, and Eastspace Information Websites**
- 7. Continue online training opportunities**
- 8. Continue peer support sessions for volunteers**
- 9. Develop a training programme for volunteers for 2021 – 2022 based on survey and broader feedback from volunteers.**
- 10. Ensure all volunteers are aware of Health in Mind job opportunities**
- 11. Ensure volunteers are aware of Trustee vacancies when they arise**
- 12. Continue to develop services in rural areas.**

4. Volunteering during COVID-19

As we have observed throughout this report, life in 2020 has felt very different and has brought many challenges as COVID-19 spread worldwide. We asked volunteers to share what it has been like volunteering through the pandemic.

Some volunteering has had to stop due to protection measures put in place. Other volunteering has moved online, and some have been offered in a blended way offering support both online/ by phone and in person through socially distanced walks.

Feedback from volunteers is clear that volunteering has not only supported people using our services during this time but has also provided a great deal of support for our volunteers.

'When Covid first struck, I found it an extremely lonely time. Very quickly, Health in Mind started Zoom group for volunteers. It meant such a lot to me that we weren't forgotten about even if our usual role wasn't needed at that time. The message received from this, by me, was that we were important enough to the organisation, to be remembered. In my peer support role, the CLEAR project got up and running via Zoom too. Again, I valued the opportunity to be able to participate and offer my time to people who are struggling through this time. I could offer telephone support to people who were isolated.'

'I think webcam / zoom has been beneficial to create an atmosphere where people will more readily talk and get involved with sessions.'

'Volunteering has been a very rewarding experience for me through Covid-19. Even though we can only connect from a distance, I believe my match is going really well. I'm thankful that this service is available throughout the pandemic and we are able to provide this support.'

'Although it's been very difficult during this horrible year, having regular video calls and seeing familiar faces kept the seriousness of the need to stay connected.'

'We have managed v v well I feel.'

'It's been brilliant. Everything is happening - with remarkable ease - online, and the volunteer gatherings we've had have been fantastic - a chance to meet other volunteers and work together. When we've faced challenges, we've worked on them together. It's been a year of learning, for sure!'

There have been challenges too with volunteers recognising that building connections with people when not in person can be difficult.

Volunteers also noted that they had learned new skills - using Zoom and offering support by phone in addition to learning more about their resilience and ability to adapt.

We can't thank our volunteers enough for the continued support they have provided during COVID-19 through Fundraising, supporting people, support staff teams, and keeping information on our websites up to date. We could not have done it without our volunteers' passion, dedication, skills, experience, and knowledge.

5. Investing in Volunteers

In 2020, our Investing in Volunteers accreditation was renewed following an assessment process. This process included interviews with our volunteers in addition to an organisational self-assessment and development plan.

This is the third time we have renewed our Investing in Volunteers accreditation, and we were delighted to be able to do so.



6. Update on Recommendations from the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey in 2019

Recommendation	What we did
1. Continue to ensure that the volunteering section on Health in Mind website is kept up to date.	We undertook work to do this, and in addition, we created a COVID-19 specific information area on our website.
2. Ensure our online presence is active and up to date with volunteering opportunities.	We continued to actively use social media to share information about volunteering in Health in Mind. The number of volunteers who came to us through learning about our opportunities through social media increased as a result.
3. Continue to develop face-to-face opportunities to recruit volunteers, such as at recruitment fairs and College and University talks.	Unfortunately, this was put on hold due to COVID-19 protection measures, but we will pick it up again this year.
4. Annual reviews to continue to be completed for volunteers who have been with the organisation for more than a year.	Volunteers Managers worked together to review the annual review, and changes have been implemented across the organisation.
5. Ensure volunteers know the difference they are making. Each team will discuss and agree on actions around this.	We have shared more information about the impact volunteers have, through blogs and information we shared during Volunteers Week and through our monthly volunteer update.
6. Spend time with volunteers to better understand their motivations and expectations for volunteering, including introducing a goal planner and review for those who would find this helpful.	Following further feedback, we did not introduce a goal planner but ask volunteers about their goals for volunteering within supervision and support sessions.
7. Services to review supervision frequency.	Services have reviewed the frequency of supervision. There has been some disruption to this due to COVID-19, but we will continue to ensure volunteers receive supervision in line with service procedures, and volunteer needs.
8. Volunteers Managers to explore further opportunities for volunteers to get together.	As a result of COVID-19, we introduced and will keep up, regular Tea and Chat sessions bringing

	together volunteers from across the organisation to share their experiences and connect socially.
9. Ensure all volunteers receive information about Health in Mind job opportunities.	Volunteers should receive information about Health in Mind vacancies as they arise. We note from feedback in this year's survey that we will need to ensure that this is consistently happening.
10. Further promote training opportunities to ensure volunteers are aware of training available to them; review training opportunities offered to volunteers.	Training provision has been disrupted during COVID-19 protection measures. We have reviewed all training opportunities and have formed a short life working group to plan volunteer training for 2021- 2022.
11. Availability of volunteers and suggestions of courses to be passed on to the Learning and Development Coordinator.	See above.
12. Consider suggestions to strengthen the volunteer voice.	We have reviewed our Service User Involvement Policy, and this has developed into an Involvement Policy recognising the need to include volunteers within all aspects of our organisation. Work will be undertaken in 2021 – 2022 to strengthen the volunteer voice further.

7. Some Feedback from our Staff

In addition to asking our volunteers for feedback, we asked key Health in Mind staff about volunteering in Health in Mind.

When asked the benefits of involving volunteers, staff told us:

'When I think about the community of Health in Mind, such a large part of that is our volunteers, they really are the soul of Health in Mind and are what make our support unique. By getting involved and being open to sharing their experiences to support other people, something magical really happens.'

'The two volunteers who help co-facilitate our group are fabulous! Each week they bring their energy and enthusiasm, sharing their skills and helping the group evolve and develop. I look forward to seeing them each week, having a chat, and lifting each other's spirits.'

'I am very proud of the volunteers for the great work they have done to support people during these difficult times. I have had amazing feedback from people we support who have greatly benefited from regular phone calls and peer support

group meetings via zoom. Many have expressed that the support has been a lifeline for them.'

'Volunteers are the heart of Health in Mind – we can only do what we do, we can only support the people we do, thanks to the wonderful volunteers who give so much of their time, compassion, and enthusiasm. They help us every day to be there for people when we're needed. Huge thanks.'

8.A Final Word from our Volunteers



Volunteers gave volunteering with Health in Mind 4.72 stars out of 5

'Thank you for providing community-based support to people in need and fighting for social equality.'

'My volunteering has made a big difference to my life .I'm doing something I love and the staff support is just wonderfully throughout.'

'This has genuinely changed my life.'

'I can't thank Health in Mind enough for all it has offered me.'

'Being able to volunteer with Health in Mind has given me some purpose. I'm really happy that the work I do in Fundraising, helps people to become new service users.'

'I would highly recommend volunteering with Health in Mind to colleagues and friends.'

'Support I get from staff .they are so caring and nothing is too much trouble if you need them.'







Get in touch

For further information on Health in Mind services, volunteering, employment opportunities, feedback/complaints procedures, or for information about how you can support our work, please contact us at:

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