



Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2021

What our volunteers tell us about volunteering with Health in Mind
April 2022



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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. Volunteers have remained at the heart of Health in Mind throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and we could not have responded to the pandemic in the way that we did without their input.

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 our 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 Communications volunteers) and some offering a more irregular or one-off commitment (for example, some of our fundraising volunteers)
- Volunteers who are recruited specifically for their lived experience (for example, our peer volunteers in our Peer 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	74	59	West Lothian Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Services	14	6
Midlothian Community Mental Health and Wellbeing services	42	32	Scottish Borders Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Services	12	10
Fundraising	35	10	Online Information and Communication	3	2
TOTAL				180	119

This was a decrease from 2020, when we involved 244 volunteers over the course of the year. This represents a trend as the number of volunteers involved in 2020 had reduced from those involved in 2019. We understand that this reduction is due to changes in the way we are delivering services in Midlothian and an overall changed service delivery model during COVID-19 protection levels, which have been in place

since March 2020. We recruited a Volunteering Coordinator in 2021 to support the involvement of volunteers within the organisation.

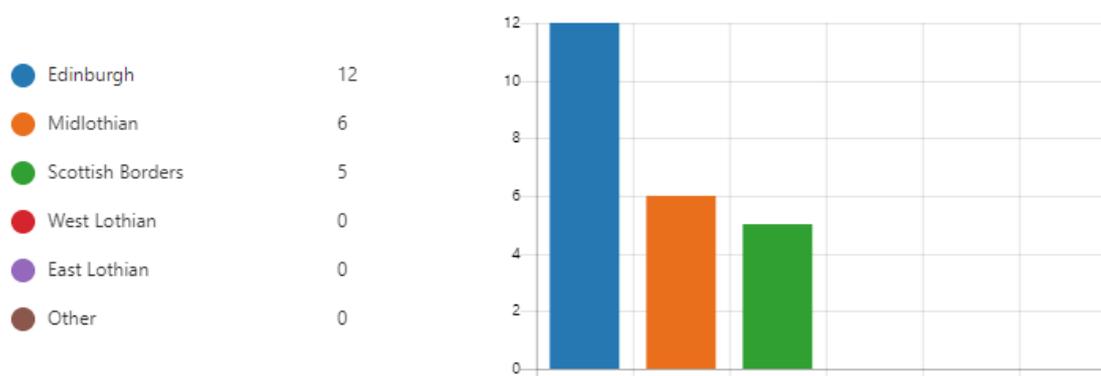
2. Results from Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2021

2.1. Response Rate

We received 23 replies to our survey which is a 13% return rate. This compares to 29% return rate in 2020. We believe the drop in the return rate is connected to COVID-19. We will continue to work hard to gather feedback from volunteers through support and supervision to ensure that we hear the voice of all volunteers within the organisation.

We will also work to increase the response rate to our 2022 survey.

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:

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Health in Mind member of staff	4%	21%	18%	9%	25%
Volunteer Centre/Volunteer Scotland Website	17%	5%	5%	7%	20%
I use Health in Mind services	26%	21%	21%	36%	15%
Word of Mouth	9%	14%	7%	14%	2.5%
Volunteer Centre	4%	5%	9%	10%	7.5%
Health in Mind Website	17%	9%	13%	10%	17.5%
Volunteer Recruitment Event (e.g., volunteer fairs)	4%	2%	7%	8%	12.5%
Information leaflet	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%

University/ College	0%	2%	11%	3%	NA
Workplace	0%	2%	2%	-	-
Other (see below)	17%	19%			

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

- Another voluntary sector/ community organisation
- Previously used Health in Mind services

Results reflect the restrictions that have been in place during 2021, for example, the reduced number of volunteer recruitment events. It is good to see that recruiting volunteers through Health in Mind website has increased as this was a recommendation in our 2020 report.

Recommendation

1. Continue to use numerous and varied channels to recruit new volunteers

2.3. Volunteer Commitments

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

	2021	2020	2019	2018		2017
Occasional/ monthly basis	14%	12%	16%	23%		NA
1-2 hours per week	62%	44%	39%	26%		67%
3-4 hours per week	10%	23%	22%	20%		15%
5-6 hours per week	13%	5%	13%	15%	5-10 hours per week	14%
7-10 hours per week	0%	9%	3%	9%		
Over 10 hours per week	0%	2%	7%	7%		4%
Other	1%	5%				

One person noted that they were waiting to begin volunteering with us.

These figures represent a trend in an increase in people volunteering fewer hours each week. This corresponds with a change in our delivery model during COVID-19 restrictions, and changes in the way volunteers can get involved with

Health in Mind. For example, due to COVID-19 protection measures, volunteers supported people by phone and online rather than meeting in person.

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

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Less than 3 months	25%	5%	13%	9%	9%
3-6 months	13%	7%	13%	14%	31%
7-11 months	9%	19%	11%	12%	8%
1-2 years	26%	20%	26%	23%	21%
2-3 years	9%	19%	13%	9%	6%
More than 3 years	18%	30%	23%	33%	17%

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 we have had a significant increase in the number of people who have started to volunteer with us in the last three months, reflecting the landscape in which we are working. We are delighted that our volunteer roles continue to attract people to join us as volunteers.

Recommendation

2. Continue to offer a range of volunteer opportunities with different demands on people's time both on a weekly and ongoing basis.
3. Review our induction processes to ensure that volunteers joining us get the best possible experience.

2.4. Volunteer Satisfaction

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

We are delighted that for the second year in a row 100% of respondents said they were satisfied with their volunteering experience with Health in Mind, with 96% of respondents reporting they were very satisfied, this is up from 86% of volunteers in 2020.

Some of the comments given

'...my boss is amazing. Always so supportive, calm and not only listens to us actively but also tries out our ideas'

'...I have just completed the course and it was an amazing group and team and I can't wait to get started.'

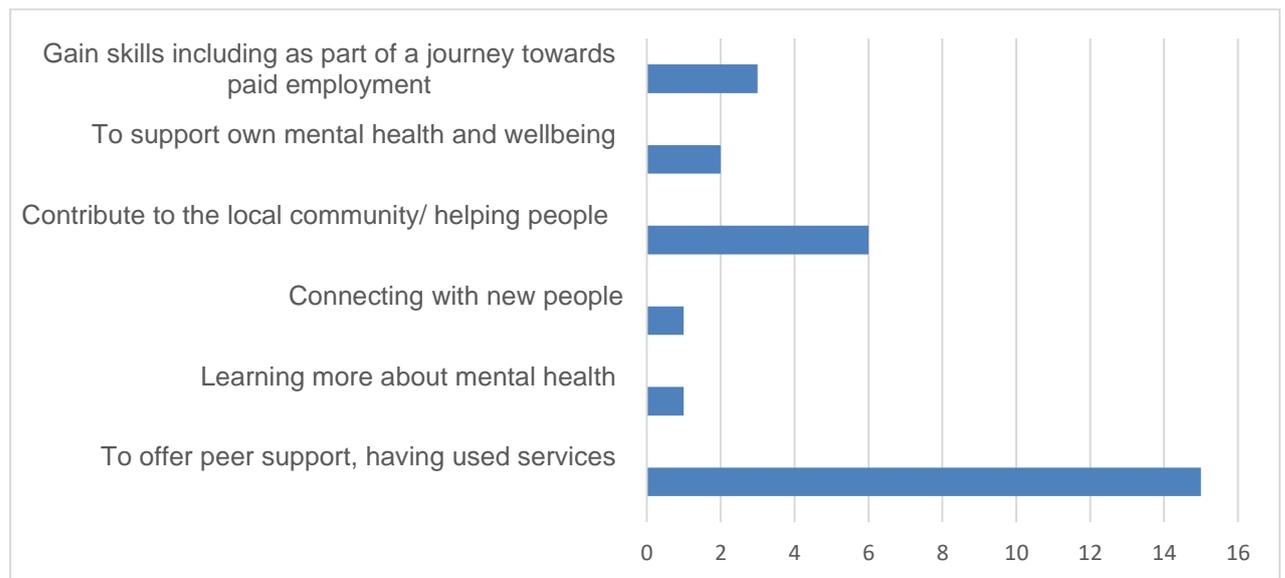
'...my supervisor is really fantastic. She really listens to us, scheduling regular team meetings, trainings and supervisions. She is totally committed to continually improving the services we offer which I love. My team are extremely supportive and reflective, I feel so lucky to be part of such a brilliant team.'

'Very well structured and professionally run.'

4. Develop new ways to seek feedback from volunteers who were unable to complete the volunteer survey to ensure all voices are heard.

2.5. Do We Meet Our Volunteers' Expectations?

We asked people to tell us why they chose to volunteer with Health in Mind.



'I wouldn't be where I am without Health in Mind and wanted to give back in a way that felt right for me'

'I've had some unbelievable help from Health in Mind and want to give something back not only for the help I received but so maybe more people can access the services.'

We went onto ask if we met our volunteer expectations.

91% of volunteers answered yes to this question. A number of volunteers said it was too soon on their volunteer journey to be able to say for sure. One person said it had partially met their expectations.

Recommendation

5. 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.



41% of volunteers described their experience as rewarding.

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. Suggestions included:

- Providing Lateral Flow tests for volunteers meeting with people in person
- Offering additional training such as counselling skills
- Opportunities to develop skills by taking on new volunteer roles
- Beginning to offer in person volunteer get togethers again/ more opportunities for peer support
- Providing recordings of training to help volunteers who are unable to attend due to other commitments

Volunteers told us how much they appreciated support and supervision they receive. One volunteer noted that they would have appreciate more opportunities to talk with their supervisor.

Volunteers also told us:

‘I’ve had amazing support and I know if I found it too much or a bad day I can always ask . This team is amazing.’

‘ I feel well supported. Maybe the biscuits could be more chocolatey!’

‘I’ve felt extremely supported and have been grateful for all the opportunities to connect with other volunteers and undertake training.’

Recommendations

6. Re-establish in person catch ups when safe to do so, continue Zoom catch-ups for all volunteers

7. Review volunteer training opportunities including recording sessions for those who couldn’t attend

8. Continue to offer support and supervision for volunteers, checking in to ensure the level of support offered meets volunteer’s needs

9. Explore how volunteers can further develop their skills in different roles in the organisation

2.8. Volunteering during a global pandemic

COVID-19 has brought many challenges. It has also brought opportunities for us to work differently together and to support people in new ways. Volunteers have been vital within our journey through COVID. We asked volunteers if there was anything they would like to share with us about their experience of volunteering through the pandemic. Volunteers told us:

‘I was in recovery during pandemic and was receiving 1 to 1 support but during the pandemic I found my calling and that meant I want to give the same support to someone else...’

‘I feel like ... has done an amazing job of juggling the constant changes in Covid regulations and checking in with us to make sure we feel safe and well supported.

‘Once everything moved online during the pandemic, I was delighted to be able to continue volunteering as a befriender and a peer support group facilitator. This seems to have opened up a wealth of opportunities for volunteers and people who used Health in Mind’s services.’

'I volunteered and was a service user during the pandemic and thought the service on offer was over and beyond my expectations given the situation. Although some things , like group meetings, where hit hard, Zoom certainly helped.'

'Volunteering during the pandemic has given me structure to the week and is helping get my confidence back with being in the community gradually through groups/training/meetings etc'

'I came across Health in Mind during that pandemic, when I needed the support. I appreciate the opportunity to now volunteer, give back and to support my peers.'

'Health in Mind's approach to adapting the ... service during the pandemic was extremely well-managed and I was grateful for all the opportunities to engage with the service digitally.'

'Volunteering with Health in Mind as a previous service user has given me direction and structure in the very uncertain time of the pandemic. It has been immeasurably important to my sense of coping and stability. I've grown in confidence and it has done wonders in addressing my negative self image.'

'I wasn't really able to volunteer as normal throughout the pandemic. And as I volunteer in Fundraising this was disappointing as I always want Health in Mind to gain more funding so they might help more people like they helped me!'

We recognise that not all volunteers were able to support people in the way they hoped to. This will change as we move to a new phase of Living with COVID and the protection measures put in place around our work change.

Recommendations

10. Continue to offer a range of volunteer roles within Health in Mind

11. Continue to deliver a range of support within Health in Mind

3. Summary of Recommendations

1. Continue to use numerous and varied channels to recruit new volunteers
2. Continue to offer a range of volunteer opportunities with different demands on people's time both on a weekly and ongoing basis.
3. Review our induction processes to ensure that volunteers joining us get the best possible experience.

4. Develop new ways to seek feedback from volunteers who were unable to complete the volunteer survey to ensure all voices are heard.
5. Continue to keep in touch with volunteers who are currently unable to be actively involved because of COVID-19
6. Re-establish in person catch ups when safe to do so, continue Zoom catch-ups for all volunteers
7. Review volunteer training opportunities including recording sessions for those who couldn't attend
8. Continue to offer support and supervision for volunteers, checking in to ensure the level of support offered meets volunteer's needs
9. Explore how volunteers can further develop their skills in different roles in the organisation
10. Continue to offer a range of volunteer roles within Health in Mind
11. Continue to deliver a range of support within Health in Mind

4. Developing our New Strategy

We are currently in the final year of our A Secure Base organisation strategy and have begun work to start developing our new strategy which will run from April 2023.

Our new strategy will build on the progress we have made over the last two years, and we want to engage with all our stakeholders including our staff and volunteer colleagues, people who use our services and key partners to help us develop our new strategy.

In addition to the questions noted above, we also used this survey as an opportunity to ask volunteers to input into the development of our strategic priorities. We have also invited our volunteers to join us in a series of engagement sessions. It's clear to us that our volunteers' knowledge, skills and experience are vital in helping us develop our new strategy and we look forward to hearing different views at our sessions which will run from June to December 2022.

5. Update on Recommendations from the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey in 2020

Recommendation	What we did
Ensure our online presence is active and up to date with volunteering opportunities.	We have ensured that our online presence is active and up to date. We will be able to do even more work around this in 2022 following the recruitment of a new Volunteering Coordinator.
Continue to ensure that the volunteering section on Health in Mind website is kept up to date; further promote volunteer opportunities through social media	We have worked hard to keep the volunteer section of the Health in Mind website up to date. We are in the process of updating our website and will seek input from volunteers about what to include on the site going forward. We were delighted to see an increase in the number of people who found out about volunteering with us through our website.
Continue to offer a range of volunteer opportunities with different demands on people's time both on a weekly and ongoing basis	We have continued to offer a range of volunteer roles and have introduced a number of new roles over 2021.
Continue Zoom catch-ups for all volunteers	We have continued to use Zoom and other online platforms to keep in touch with our volunteers. We will continue to seek out opportunities for volunteers to come together across teams and the organisation as a whole.
Ensure there are no gaps in supervision when a staff member leaves	We have worked to ensure there are no gaps in volunteer supervision when a staff member leaves.
Recommendation	What we did
Ensure volunteers know about and are supported to use iThrive, Midspace, Westspace, and Eastspace Information Websites	We continue to highlight our Information websites to volunteers

Continue online training opportunities	Online training opportunities have continued within teams involving volunteers.
Continue peer support sessions for volunteers	We continued to offer peer support sessions for volunteers. In 2022, we will review the opportunities we provide for volunteers to come together across the organisation. We will consider introducing additional peer support sessions as part of this work
Develop a training programme for volunteers for 2021 – 2022 based on survey and broader feedback from volunteers.	Opportunities for training continued to be impacted by the pandemic in 2021. We have recruited a new Volunteering Coordinator who will have responsibility for developing a Learning and Development Programme for volunteers.
Ensure all volunteers are aware of Health in Mind job opportunities	All of our roles are advertised on our website and through our social media. We continue to seek ways to highlight those roles directly to our volunteer team.
Ensure volunteers are aware of Trustee vacancies when they arise	We are currently recruiting for Trustees and all volunteers have been notified of the opportunity.
Continue to develop services in rural areas.	We developed new services in the Scottish Borders during 2021. We were able to reach more people living in more rural areas through online and telephone support.

6. 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:

‘Volunteers bring not only their skills and knowledge, or ability to speak another language, but also their own, often vulnerable life experiences, their opened and humbled hearts, their compassion and positivity about the future, that they share with me and people who they support.’

‘The groups I look after are peer support spaces. By involving peer volunteers, the life experiences, ideas and skills that can be offered by the team is so much more than I would ever be able to do alone. The groups wouldn’t be what they are without the volunteers leading them.’

‘Our volunteers bring a huge range of experience and knowledge to our service, which enriches the support we can offer. On a personal level, I love the enthusiasm and passion that our volunteers bring and learning with them is one of the best parts of my job.’

‘It’s such a joy and a privilege to work alongside volunteers. We’re a small team and we really value the skills, knowledge, and life experiences our volunteers bring. Our volunteers can sometimes be our biggest cheerleaders, helping to raise awareness of the work that we do in their communities as well as highlighting fundraising opportunities.’

7. A Final Word from our Volunteers

We’ll leave the final word in this report to our volunteers. In addition to the quotes used throughout the report, volunteers also told us:

‘I was attracted to Health in Mind because of the extensive volunteering training and it did not disappoint. Supervisors who ran the training sessions were excellent and made me feel very welcomed, and I learned a lot. Great experience.’

‘It has been a very satisfying experience to meet and connect with others who are having difficulties with their mental health. It is a privilege to provide some support for them on their journey.’

‘I have nothing but praise for everyone at Health in Mind and have never not received the support I need as a volunteer so I couldn’t suggest anything that would improve what is already on offer for volunteers.’

**'Best thing I did was join
Health in Mind as a
volunteer'**



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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