

What successful peer research looks like

Give enough time – Quality research shouldn't be rushed. A typical peer research project with short report or presentation can take around 12 weeks to complete. This is due to those taking part doing so on an unpaid basis, fitting it in around work or other responsibilities

Give enough notice – Our researchers will need at least 6 weeks' notice before undertaking a project, to allow time to recruit the right people and plan their time.

Respect the views – The people carrying out your research will have faced challenging circumstances in life - work with us on learning from people's experiences.

Take it on board - The recommendations given in your research will have been carefully considered. If you're

A researcher's thoughts

"The attraction to the research was it was around something very close to my heart, recovery and employment, so I wanted to be involved in the hope it will help make the pathway easier for others in the future."

not going to use or implement them then those who have contributed will want to know that and understand why.

Close the cycle – What happens to the research once it's done? The end results should be fed back to those who have contributed to it, so they can see their efforts have value and made a difference.



Looking for quality research grounded in reality?

Use the Peer Research Network in Newcastle and Gateshead to get the very best from those who understand multiple and complex needs issues

Are you looking for insight into how well your services are working? Do you want to hear from those who have lived experience of using them?

Members of our Peer Research Network have all undertaken an accredited research skills training course and are keen to support you in your research.

Find out more

To find out more about the Peer Research Network and commission our services please visit our website:

www.fulfillinglives-ng.org.uk



What is the Peer Research Network?

Fulfilling Lives Newcastle Gateshead (FLNG) is a lottery funded programme based in Newcastle and Gateshead helping the workforce create a community that understands and welcomes people experiencing homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health and offending, and together, develops ways their voices can be heard, their views valued and actively influence and shape the services, policies and practice that exist to support them.

Each volunteer has come through a six-week training course and wants to help with research projects which can shape the future for how systems and services work in Newcastle and Gateshead. Their backgrounds and reach into communities mean they can give any research project a greater depth and insight into their areas of experience.

The researchers have been on a OCN accredited Level 2 NVQ training course in Peer Research Skills. Upon completing it they join our Peer Research Network, ready to begin work on new or existing research projects.

The researchers can go out into the community on your behalf and, being a trusted source, can consult and engage with your target audience more freely than an agency often can. They are all dedicated to effecting change across the systems they have been through.

Benefits of using the network

- Access to a pool of researchers with varying life experiences directly relevant to your services
- Qualified researchers with an OCN accredited Level 2 NVQ module in Peer Research Skills
- Support from FLNG staff in establishing and carrying out your research project
- Confidence in the knowledge any recommendations made are fully grounded in those with lived experience
- Greater reach into communities due to the trust and contacts built up by our researchers

How it works

- We start work with you to explore your research question and that peer research is the right approach to take
- You identify a lead within your service to act as point of contact for peer researchers
- We will broker involvement from the Peer Research Network, or work with you to identify and train researchers within your service
- Peer researchers lead on all aspects of the project with support from FLNG
- Together we develop a project plan and explore resources needed (expenses, room booking etc.) and outputs required



Case study: Healthwatch & mental health services

Healthwatch Newcastle and Healthwatch Gateshead chose mental health as one its priority areas to look at. They decided to concentrate on gathering the views and experiences of groups or communities who have not been or only had limited involvement in the ongoing review of local mental health services.

They commissioned our Peer Research Network to explore how people who are homeless or living in insecure housing experience local mental health services, uncovering the many barriers they face.

Using 1:1 semi-structured interviews and focus groups the peer researchers also explored with people what first class mental health service would look like, and concluded with a series of recommendations.

Read the final report at www.fulfillinglives-ng.org.uk/