

# Healthwatch Southwark Research & Projects Officer

## Job Description & Person Specification

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| <b>Job Title:</b>        | Healthwatch Southwark Research & Projects Officer   |
| <b>Salary:</b>           | £26,780 per annum   |
| <b>Hours of work:</b>    | 35 per week (including occasional evenings and weekends)  |
| <b>Contract:</b>         | 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026 (Please note: all new staff are offered 1 year contract initially and then become permanent staff for duration of contract)   |
| <b>Responsible to:</b>   | Healthwatch Southwark Manager   |
| <b>Location:</b>         | 11 Market Place, Bermondsey, SE17 3UQ   |
| <b>Work Arrangement:</b> | This is a hybrid working post (currently), the postholder will be required to work from the office (on average 2-3 days per week) and work from home (on average 2-3 days per week). This working arrangement may be subject to change in the future. |
| <b>Benefits:</b>         | 30 days holiday (exclusive of public/bank holidays) per annum, Flexible working, Pension-Employer contribution: 5%, Cycle to Work Scheme, 2 Volunteering Days per annum.  |
| <b>Closing Date:</b>     | 30 <sup>th</sup> August 2022 (23.59pm)  |

## Background

Healthwatch Southwark gathers and champions the views of local users of health and social care services, in order to identify opportunities for improvement and to influence how providers deliver health and care services. Created by the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, Healthwatch Southwark, and other local Healthwatch around the country, are required to deliver 6 functions to fulfil our duty as the local consumer champion of health and social care. These functions are:

1. Obtain the views of people about their needs for and experience of local health and social care services and make those views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services

2. Make reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved
3. Promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.
4. Provide information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and choice in relation to those services.
5. Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England helping it to carry out its role as national champion.
6. Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern

To find out more about Healthwatch Southwark please visit: [www.healthwatchsouthwark.org](http://www.healthwatchsouthwark.org)

Healthwatch Southwark is hosted by Community Southwark: [www.communitysouthwark.org](http://www.communitysouthwark.org)

## Purpose of the Role

The postholder will be responsible for delivering Healthwatch Southwark's research and projects work, high quality data management, engagement design, analysis, and report-writing. They will help meaningfully investigate and clearly capture people's needs, experiences and opinion, so that HWS can effectively drive improvements to health and social care services.

The postholder will support the Engagement Officer with direct research/project engagement activities with the public, and work alongside the Manager to promote the patient voice and influence decision-makers using our evidence base. They will also help signpost the public to resolve challenges in accessing health and social care services.

## Duties & Responsibilities

### Research, Projects, and influence

- Plan and manage research/engagement projects that have been identified as key priority areas/concerns as highlighted by community and stakeholder insight.
- Lead on designing surveys, topic guides and interview schedules in line with desired intelligence outcomes and good research practice.
- Analyse and interpret data gathered from signposting and engagement work, including both qualitative and quantitative analysis.
- Manage database systems to manage data and intelligence gathered from a variety of sources (including HWS's signposting function). Lead on ensuring data quality and useful recording of intelligence.
- Lead on the production of quality evidence-based reports, presenting findings clearly and persuasively to broad audiences, and making recommendations for the improvement of health and care services.
- Represent HWS at appropriate meetings and committees with local providers and commissioners, deploying evidence-based, patient-focused insights to influence decisions. This will include occasional presentation of reports, and commentary on other organisations' engagement plans.

- Provide accurate evidence in response to intelligence requests (such as from the Care Quality Commission and to public consultations), and commentary on local services and decisions (including hospital trusts' annual Quality Accounts).

## Engagement and Outreach

- Support the Engagement and Signposting Officer to deliver effective community engagement and outreach activities i.e. facilitate workshops, focus groups, attend and organise community events, visit groups/organisations to gather user feedback, attend community feedback and signposting sessions and participate in Enter and View visits.
- Attend external public events/stakeholder meetings to stay informed of current health and social care developments, support the patient/resident voice, make known the views of users of services to decision makers and raise the profile of Healthwatch Southwark
- Contribute to all HWS communications channels i.e. upload information on website, undertake weekly social media activities and write/publish the monthly newsletter (shared role with Engagement and Signposting officer)

## Information and signposting

- Alongside the rest of the team, provide information on health and social care services to all sections of the local population, signposting people to support to access services and resolve difficulties.

## General

- Help to build positive and productive relationships with other organisations, including voluntary and community groups, decision makers, commissioners, and funders, Healthwatch England, other local Healthwatches, and the Care Quality Commission.
- Manage and support volunteers.
- Support the HWS Manager to work effectively with the HWS Advisory Group, including through occasional provision and presentation of papers and contribution to discussions.
- Help to scan the horizon for upcoming policy and service changes at national and local level, identifying opportunities and pressures. In particular, monitor the quality of local services as assessed by organisations such as the Care Quality Commission.
- Support the development of tenders and bids for consultancy and contracted work, and help deliver this work in a timely and professional way in line with the usual responsibilities of the post.
- Undertake other tasks from time to time and as appropriate, that may be required by management in line with the goals of the organisation.

## In common with all Community Southwark staff

- Plan and organise one's own work priorities to ensure the achievement of all necessary targets and deadlines.
- Participate in supervision and appraisal and undergo training as necessary, taking responsibility for one's professional development.

- Work as part of the HWS and wider Community Southwark teams by participating in meetings, working collaboratively with other staff, and communicating internally.
- Complete timely monitoring reports and contribute to Annual Reports as required.
- Provide input into strategic planning.
- Work within HWS's contract and legal and statutory duties, and all of Community Southwark's protocols and policies, including financial controls, administrative records, and the Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, and Data Protection policies.
- Help to ensure that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity are integral to the organisation's work.
- Support Community Southwark and HWS's values, vision and strategic objectives

## Person Specification

This person specification seeks to define a person most likely to be suited to the role of Research & Projects Officer. Candidates are required to meet all the essential criteria listed.

|  | Essential  | Desirable |
|--|------------|-----------|
| <b>Skills and experience</b>   |            |           |
| Strong performance at degree level, or equivalent qualifications or experience   | x          |           |
| Strong research, analysis skills and experience including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative research methods (e.g. survey, interview, focus group design), and practical experience using some of these methods sensitively with diverse groups</li> <li>• Qualitative and quantitative analysis</li> <li>• Policy/service improvement-focused research</li> </ul> | x<br><br>x | x         |
| Ability to analyse information efficiently and extract key relevant points   | x          |           |
| Demonstrable experience of managing projects   | x          |           |
| Track record of data management and ensuring data quality  | x          |           |
| Outstanding writing skills, including report writing and copy writing for a variety of audiences   | x          |           |
| Experience of making effective recommendations for policy or service improvement   |            | x         |
| Demonstrated ability to clearly and persuasively present findings and recommendations verbally to a variety of audiences   | x          |           |
| Networking and influencing skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated ability to build positive, professional relationships with a range of external individuals and organisations</li> <li>• Demonstrated ability to deliver constructive feedback appropriately and influence decisions</li> </ul>  | x          | x         |
| Experience of coordinating or supporting public events   |            | x         |
| Experience of, or demonstrated personal skills required for, sensitively supporting people facing difficult circumstances  | x          |           |
| Experience of managing and supporting volunteers   |            | x         |
| <b>Interests and knowledge</b>   |            |           |
| Passion for quality public health and care services and understanding of the role of patient voice in achieving this   | x          |           |
| Knowledge of health and social care systems and the challenges facing them   |            | x         |
| Appreciation for the challenges faced by disadvantaged people and those from diverse seldom heard communities, and commitment to tackling inequalities   | x          |           |
| <b>Personal qualities and work style</b>   |            |           |
| Able to show initiative and constructively approach challenges   | x          |           |

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|---|----------|--|
| Able to work flexibly and collaboratively as part of a small team                     | <b>x</b> |  |
| Organised, with ability to work on a range of projects at once, and meet deadlines    | <b>x</b> |  |
| Able to apply structured, critical thinking, attention to detail, accuracy and rigour | <b>x</b> |  |
| Reliable  | <b>x</b> |  |
| Be flexible to work evening and weekends  | <b>x</b> |  |

### Important Information:

Please ensure to **personalise your cover letter to this role.**

**Use practical examples** from your work to address how you meet the requirements outlined in the Person Specification', especially those marked as **'essential'**.

Candidates submitting 'generic' cover letters are **highly unlikely to be accepted.**

### Other Relevant Information

**Probationary Period:** The appointment will commence with a probation period of six months.

**Cycle to work scheme:** The scheme allows employees to purchase bikes and accessories tax-free. This is done through a salary sacrifice agreement signed for up to £1,000 to be paid in monthly instalments.

**Volunteering Days:** Employees are entitled to up to two days paid leave for undertaking voluntary activities (after successfully completing probationary period).

**Other:** Successful applicants will need to prove their entitlement to work in the UK and may be subject to DBS checks.

### Hours of Business

|                  | <b>Working Hours/<br/>Flexi-time</b> | <b>Core Hours</b>                    |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Monday to Friday | 8.00am to 6.00pm                     | 10.00am – 12.00pm<br>2.00pm – 4.00pm |

A flexi-time scheme is in operation within Community Southwark (Healthwatch's host organisation). The successful applicant must be willing to work within the flexi-time hours. The person appointed may be required to work outside these hours.

If you would like to know more about the role or have any questions, please email or phone Shamsur Choudhury (Healthwatch Southwark Manager):

Email: [shamsur@healthwatchsouthwark.org](mailto:shamsur@healthwatchsouthwark.org)

Tel: 07944 962820 (9.30-5.30pm)