



## **Mental Health Lived Experience Leadership Forum**

### **Independent Mental Health Network (IMHN) Opportunity Description**

#### **Welcome**

Thank you for your interest in the opportunity to get involved with the lived experience leadership forum. This pack contains an overview of the organisation, the role and information on how you can apply.

IMHN became constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in February 2017, following the development of a local Bristol group three years earlier. IMHN exists to represent those with lived experience of mental health, uniting voices for positive change in how mental health services are delivered. We work alongside our branches (In Greater Manchester, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire), and volunteers to develop a thriving and active organisation improving mental health services and empowering those with lived experience to have their voice heard.

The charity is young and now has a strategic plan in place that will embed our core objectives into everything that we do. It's an exciting time for us having undertaken many successful projects including:

- Leading on the local [Time to Change Bristol Hub](#), working with local partners to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination.
- Supporting the development of Bristol North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) CCG's mental health strategy.
- Playing an integral role in the COVID-19 response across BNSSG, ensuring those with lived experience are at the heart of decision-making.
- Working with partners to deliver a working with people and communities charter.

This is a fantastic opportunity to take on an essential role in a developing and growing charity committed to changing lives and we look forward to receiving your expression of interest.

#### **Our Belief, Vision & Values**

##### **Our Belief**

We believe that with one in four people being affected by mental health problems each year, it is vital that services are providing the best possible care and access for patients.

We also believe that there needs to be more parity of esteem between mental and physical health, and that stigma surrounding mental illness must be challenged.

## **Our Vision**

To have excellent and improved mental health services that listen to everyone who has used; is using or intending to use mental health services.

## **Our Values**

- **Inclusive** – Being open to all people with lived experience of mental health, regardless of their age, gender, race, sexuality, ability or religion.
- **Brave** – Speaking out, sharing our experiences and making sure our voices are heard.
- **Respectful** – Listening to others’ mental health experiences without holding any judgement.
- **Determined** – Ensuring mental health services meet the needs of users, and worthwhile change is created in Bristol and beyond.
- **Innovative** – Creating lasting solutions for improving access to mental health services across the area.

## **The Opportunity**

We are looking for people to join the mental health lived experience leadership forum that will bring representatives together across the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester (GM), on behalf of the Independent Mental Health Network (IMHN).

The aim of the role is to ensure that the lived experience voice is represented from the grassroots community level to then be represented at a Greater Manchester level, which will be essential to influencing change across the GM mental health network.

These views will be forefront in informing commissioners and service providers of the wider views of those accessing mental health services. This will include influencing the direction the mental health strategy and working closely with commissioners and service providers across the region.

The forum will meet on a monthly basis (12 times a year) and will include representation from all GM boroughs:

1. Bury
2. Bolton
3. Manchester
4. Oldham
5. Rochdale
6. Salford
7. Stockport
8. Tameside
9. Trafford
10. Wigan

We want to build an inclusive network that represents all the diverse communities in Greater Manchester. We particularly want to encourage applications from communities who are under-represented in positions of influence and power. Please get in touch if you would like to discuss this further or would like any assistance with your application.

## **Governance**

The forum will be supported by the GM IMHN team, where issues, concerns and ideas surrounding mental health in the community can be voiced. Members of the forum will be supported to get involved with wider projects and priority areas, including:

- Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)
- Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)
- Liaison MH – Core 24
- Out-of-Area Placements
- Physical Health of people with severe mental illness (SMI)
- Personality Disorders
- Suicide Prevention
- Individual Placement Support (IPS)
- Older Adults

The forum will work collaboratively to identify speakers to attend the meetings and priority areas of focus. This will include working with the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership to influence mental health support across the region and providing updates to the overall programme board.

## **What is expected of forum members**

- provide the perspectives of people who use the services in the mental health services within the boroughs of Greater Manchester
- provide advice and scrutiny from a wider patient perspective
- use any personal experience as a patient of the current services in a constructive and objective way to ensure views are as representative as possible
- be available to attend meetings which will take place during the day (dates, timings of meetings and papers will always be provided a minimum of one week in advance to all representatives)
- prepare for meetings by reading the meeting agendas, minutes and other associated papers which, at times, may be complex and specialist in nature
- understand that they may be asked to respect the confidentiality of items discussed
- contribute feedback on presentations given at the meetings, some of which will be made by people who are currently using, or have used mental health services.

- feedback to IMHN on matters discussed at the meetings and gather views from the network and other people with lived experience; support will be provided to deliver this.
- to work with people from a range of diverse communities to ensure services being developed are informed by the needs of the communities they intend to serve.

## **Experience, knowledge and skills**

- Whether you have used the service or not, representatives will undertake work to inform themselves to the best of their ability about opinions of those using the service/s themselves. This includes where the service is one the forum member is not using.
- The ability to be objective and able to separate your own experiences as a user of the service from the need to provide a broader user perspective on the service.
- Membership of, or involvement with, a patient group which would enable your contribution to be informed by the views of other users and carers.
- Ability to demonstrate listening, negotiating and influencing skills, with a personal style that is challenging, but not confrontational.
- Ability to be solution focused, and to act as a critical friend to the programme.
- Ability to work with others in a team, and demonstrate a commitment to non-discriminatory principles and values.
- The ability to represent the perspective of people from disadvantaged backgrounds who use services, including those whose voices are seldom heard.
- An understanding of equality and diversity, and the ways diverse groups that use mental health services can be impacted by them.

### **Desirable attributes that we are keen to see (these are desirable and NOT essential):**

- Personal experience of someone using the services covered by the priority areas highlighted in this opportunity description.
- Experience of working on, and with, multi professional groups e.g. NHS Trust Boards; School Governors; Private Sector Business; charity, community, cultural or faith groups.

### **Support provided by IMHN (including expenses)**

- For those attending as an individual (not on behalf of an organisation in a paid capacity), a payment of £25 will be made for attendance at the monthly forum meeting.
- In accordance with our involvement policy, reasonable out-of-pocket travel expenses will be reimbursed. Any expenses for taxis are to be agreed, in advance, with one of the IMHN Staff team. Meetings will be online initially due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Support to carry out your role from IMHN, including mentoring and supervision as required.



### **How to apply:**

As part of your application we would like you to write a short statement, of no more than 400 words, about why you want to be a lived-experience representative with IMHN and what experience and skills you can bring to the role. This includes:

- Why do you want to be involved with IMHN as a lived-experience representative?
- How have you worked together with other people to bring about change in mental health or another area?
- What organisations, communities or interest-groups are you involved with and how would this benefit your role?

If you would like to apply, please complete the [online form here](#) and submit it by **5pm on Thursday 30 July**.

**If you would like any further information, have any questions, or would prefer to complete a paper application, then please contact Elham Afzal and Rob Hemingway at [greatermanchester@imhn.org](mailto:greatermanchester@imhn.org)**

We look forward to receiving your application.