



Headway North Cumbria

www.headwaynorthcumbria.org.uk

the brain injury association

HEADWAY NORTH CUMBRIA VOLUNTEER POLICY

INTRODUCTION

1. Headway North Cumbria recognises the value of volunteer participation in helping achieve its strategic aims and extend the delivery of services offered. Furthermore, it believes that volunteers enhance the credibility of the organisation. Headway North Cumbria understands that the interests, life experiences and diverse range of skills of volunteers can complement that of other team members and that volunteers can bring a different and fresh perspective to its work, often one that reflects the views of the local community. Headway North Cumbria is committed to making volunteering a worthwhile and enjoyable activity that benefits both the individual and the organisation.

AIM OF THE POLICY

2. This policy supports the mission, aims and objectives of Headway North Cumbria. It acknowledges the role of volunteers and describes the recruitment and selection process and the training and development opportunities for volunteers. It seeks to encourage and enable, rather than limit the involvement of volunteers.

DEFINITION

3. A volunteer is someone who commits time and energy for the benefit of others, who does so freely, through personal choice and without expectation of financial reward, except for payment of actual out-of-pocket expenses.

SCOPE

4. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and committee members of Headway North Cumbria.

RESPONSIBILITIES

5. Headway North Cumbria will provide volunteers with information, support, and training and development opportunities.

6. The Headway North Cumbria committee will monitor adherence of the policy and report findings to the committee and/or Regional Network Manager and/or Headway National as appropriate.
7. The lead volunteer and/or committee member assuming responsibility for the Day Centre, activity session, meeting or other headway related event will ensure that all staff and volunteers have access to and are aware of this policy
8. Volunteers are expected to:
 - a. adhere to this policy and seek the guidance/advice from the Headway North Cumbria committee, Regional Network Manager or Headway National.
 - b. read and comply with the Volunteer Code of Conduct and sign a declaration to that effect.
 - c. read and comply with the Confidentiality Policy and sign the Confidentiality Agreement¹ to confirm they have done so.
 - d. read and comply with all other relevant Policies, Procedures, and sign to confirm that they have done so. This will be recorded on file.
 - e. participate in volunteer reviews and training where appropriate for their role.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

9. Headway North Cumbria will ensure recruitment and selection of volunteers is carried out fairly. To this end:
 - a. Volunteers will be provided with information about Headway North Cumbria, the role and training expectations prior to commencement. This will allow volunteers to make an informed choice about the suitability of this volunteering role.
 - b. Volunteer interviews will be informal and conducted by the lead volunteer, committee member or other appropriate person.
 - c. Two character references will be sought within the first 6 weeks of starting work with Headway North Cumbria.

¹ The Confidentiality Agreement is part of the Volunteer Code of Conduct Declaration.

- d. The role and relationship between Headway North Cumbria and the volunteer will be by mutual agreement.
- e. Disclosure and Barring (DBS) clearance at an appropriate level will be required for volunteers. This will be sought following the outcome of the volunteer's 6 week review. Volunteers will be unable to work unsupervised until this clearance is obtained.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

11. Volunteers are valued members of the team and as such, Headway North Cumbria takes their training and development seriously and will ensure:

- a. that all volunteers have access to training and development opportunities relevant to their roles to comply with legislation and internal policies and procedures; in particular Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Confidentiality.
- b. Volunteers receive an Induction within 12 weeks of starting and as part of the Induction read and discuss the key Headway North Cumbria Policies. Information about the 'Effects of Brain Injury' should also be provided.

12. Volunteers are encouraged to attend staff and volunteer meetings. The dates of these meetings are arranged in advance and the day of the meeting is varied.

13. Volunteers should have the opportunity to have review meetings

PERSONAL INFORMATION

14. Volunteers will be required to provide only relevant personal information and will be told why it is needed. The information will be kept in a secure and responsible manner in accordance with the Data Protection Policy; no information will be given to anyone else without permission. Volunteers will have the right to access their personal information held by Headway North Cumbria in line with our confidentiality policy.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

15. Headway seeks to challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity in its policy and practice. Headway North Cumbria will seek to foster a culture that respects and values others' differences and sees these differences as an asset to the charity. Volunteers are expected to demonstrate equality and diversity values and working practice.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – CAR INSURANCE

16. As of August 2011, most insurance providers abandoned the practice of being informed of voluntary work and signed up to a new commitment promising volunteer motorists that they would not be charged extra premiums. At the time the commitment covered 54 insurers making up over 85% of the motor insurance market and was drawn up on the back of the government's 'big society' initiative. Major insurers that signed up to the commitment include Allianz, Admiral, AA, Aviva, Ageas, Churchill, Direct Line, Esure and Swiftcover. If your insurer has signed up to the commitment you should not see any premium uplift. Current details on the scheme and a listing of Insurers involved in the scheme can be found at the Association of British Insurers (ABI) website.

<https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/choosing-the-right-insurance/motor-insurance/volunteer-drivers/>

17. Some insurance companies however did not sign up to the commitment and state that any undisclosed volunteer work - even if it did not involve a car - may void a policy. It is recommended, therefore, that all volunteers contact their car insurance company to inform them of their volunteering role even if their role does not involve driving.