



Volunteer Handbook



**Everything you need to know about volunteering
with Gloucestershire MNVP**



Welcome!

Hello and thank you for your interest in volunteering with Gloucestershire MNVP.

Gloucestershire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) exists to ensure that the voices of women, birthing people, babies and families are heard and used to improve local maternity and neonatal services.

Whether you are interested in sharing your own experiences, helping us gather feedback from families, supporting events, or contributing to service improvement projects, we are delighted that you are considering joining us.

Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. Your experiences, perspectives and time help us better understand what matters most to local families and help shape positive change across maternity and neonatal services.

We look forward to working with you.

Sadie Smy



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Introduction

Thank you for volunteering with Gloucestershire MNVP. Volunteers play a vital role in helping us ensure the voices of families are heard and used to improve maternity and neonatal services across Gloucestershire.

This handbook explains who we are, what we do, and the support, guidance and responsibilities that come with volunteering.

We are so pleased to have you join us!

About Gloucestershire MNVP

Gloucestershire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) brings together parents, families, professionals and NHS partners to improve local maternity and neonatal services.

We gather feedback from families through surveys, outreach, events and conversations, sharing what we hear to help shape improvements in care. We work to ensure all voices are heard, particularly those from underrepresented communities, and support volunteers to help make services safer, more inclusive and more responsive.



What we do

We:

- Listen to the experiences of families using maternity and neonatal services.
- Share feedback and insights with NHS teams and decision-makers.
- Work with partners to co-produce improvements in care.
- Engage with underrepresented communities and help ensure all voices are heard.
- Support volunteers to contribute their time, skills and lived experience.
- Promote positive change across maternity and neonatal services in Gloucestershire.

How we work

We work closely with local communities, NHS services and partner organisations to gather feedback and identify opportunities for improvement.

We use surveys, events, outreach activities, unit visits and community conversations to understand what matters most to families. We then bring together families and professionals to help shape positive change.

Why Volunteer With Gloucestershire MNVP?

Volunteering with Gloucestershire MNVP is an opportunity to help improve maternity and neonatal services for local families, share your experiences, develop new skills, meet like-minded people and be part of a supportive volunteer community.

Whether you have lived experience of maternity or neonatal services, professional expertise, or simply a passion for improving care, there are many ways to get involved.

Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. They bring valuable experiences, skills and perspectives that help us understand what matters most to families across Gloucestershire and support positive change in local services.

Volunteer Roles

There are a variety of ways to get involved, including:

- **Project Volunteers** – sharing lived experience to support projects and staff education initiatives.
- **15 Steps Volunteers** – taking part in visits to maternity services to help us see services through the eyes of families.
- **Feedback Volunteers** – reviewing leaflets, resources and communications to ensure they are clear and accessible.



- **Lived Experience Contributors** – supporting projects through storytelling, case studies or training activities.
- **Community Engagement Volunteers** – helping at events, outreach activities and engagement projects.
- **Survey and Insight Volunteers** – supporting surveys, gathering feedback and identifying key themes.
- **Volunteer Champions** – welcoming new volunteers and helping promote the work of Gloucestershire MNVP.

Our commitment to you

Your main point of contact will be Fouzia Qureshi, Volunteer & Engagement Officer, who will support you throughout your volunteering journey.

We want you to enjoy your volunteering experience and feel valued, supported and confident in your role. We will:

- Treat you with respect and appreciation.
- Offer relevant training.
- Provide ongoing support and guidance.
- Ensure volunteering is safe, inclusive and accessible.
- Keep you informed about the difference your contribution makes.

How we will support you





Induction

Before you begin volunteering, we will introduce you to Gloucestershire MNVP, explain your role and responsibilities, and provide information about relevant policies and procedures. There will be opportunities to ask questions and discuss any support or training needs.

Training

We offer training to help you feel confident in your role. Some volunteer opportunities may require specific or mandatory training, and additional learning opportunities may also be available.

Ongoing support

Support is available whenever you need it. This may include one-to-one conversations, informal check-ins, additional training opportunities or signposting to further support.

What we expect from you

To help ensure a positive experience for everyone, we ask that all volunteers:

- Treat staff, volunteers and families with respect and kindness.
- Represent Gloucestershire MNVP professionally.
- Act in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way.
- Give as much notice as possible if you are unable to attend an activity or no longer wish to volunteer.
- Ask for support or guidance whenever you need it.

Reliability and Commitment

We understand that volunteering needs to fit around other commitments. If your availability changes, please let your Volunteer & Engagement Officer know as soon as possible so we can plan activities and opportunities effectively.

Key policies and procedures

As a volunteer, you'll be asked to follow Gloucestershire MNVP policies designed to keep everyone safe and supported. Full copies are available from your Volunteer & Engagement Officer. These include:

- Health & Safety
- Lone Working
- Safeguarding
- Data Protection & Confidentiality
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- Complaints & Whistleblowing



LONE WORKING & PERSONAL SAFETY AT A GLANCE

Your safety is our priority.

Before an activity:

- ✓ Make sure the Volunteer Officer knows where you are going
- ✓ Ensure someone knows when the activity should finish

During an activity:

- ✓ Trust your instincts
- ✓ Stay aware of your surroundings
- ✓ Meet people in appropriate public or agreed locations

After an activity:

- ✓ Check out with the designated contact
- ✓ Report any concerns, incidents or near misses

Remember: If you feel unsafe, leave immediately and contact the MNVP team.

SAFEGUARDING AT A GLANCE

If you are concerned that a child, baby or adult may be at risk:

- ✓ Listen carefully
- ✓ Record factual information
- ✓ Report your concern to a member of the Gloucestershire MNVP team as soon as possible
- X Do not investigate the situation yourself
- X Do not promise confidentiality

Remember: Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If someone is in immediate danger, contact the emergency services.



DATA PROTECTION & CONFIDENTIALITY AT A GLANCE

As a volunteer, you may hear or see personal information.

Do:

- ✓ Treat all information with respect
- ✓ Store information securely
- ✓ Ask for guidance if you are unsure

Don't:

- X Share personal information with friends or family
- X Save information on personal devices unless authorised
- X Discuss identifiable experiences in public places or on social media

Remember: Information shared with you through volunteering should be treated as confidential.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Gloucestershire MNVP is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive and respectful environment for everyone. We expect all volunteers to uphold our policies and treat others fairly regardless of background or circumstances.

Expenses & Insurance

We don't want volunteers to be out of pocket. Reasonable expenses incurred while volunteering can be claimed using an expenses claim form, with receipts where possible.

Please check with the Volunteer Officer before incurring significant expenses.

If you use your own vehicle for volunteering activities, you must ensure your insurer is aware. Gloucestershire MNVP does not provide vehicle insurance for volunteers.

Complaints and Whistleblowing

We welcome feedback and take concerns seriously.

If you have a concern about an activity, volunteer experience or the conduct of others, please speak to your Volunteer & Engagement Officer. Formal complaints and whistleblowing procedures are available where needed.



Moving on and references

You can end your volunteering with Gloucestershire MNVP at any time. Please let your Volunteer Officer know. We would like to have a chat with you about your reasons for leaving, although this is not mandatory.

If you have been a volunteer with us for more than six months, we can also provide references on request.



Volunteer Policy Library

As a volunteer, you will have access to the following documents:

Essential Policies

- Volunteer Involvement and Expenses Policy
- Volunteer Agreement
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- UK GDPR and Confidentiality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Worker Policy

Additional Policies

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Your Volunteer Officer can provide copies of these documents or direct you to where they are stored.



Stay Connected

Fouzia Qureshi

Volunteer & Engagement Officer

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Follow Gloucestershire MNVP



Website

evolvingcommunities.co.uk/gloucestershire-mnvp



Instagram

@glosmvp



Facebook

@glosmvp



About Us

Gloucestershire MNVP is hosted by **Evolving Communities**, a community interest company specialising in public engagement, research and service improvement. Evolving Communities supports MNVPs and Healthwatch organisations across England.

To find out more, visit the Evolving Communities [website](#).

Thank You

Thank you for volunteering with Gloucestershire MNVP.

Every conversation you have, every piece of feedback you help gather and every experience you share contributes to improving maternity and neonatal services for families across Gloucestershire.

We are grateful for your time, skills and commitment.

Together we can help create safer, kinder and more responsive services for everyone.