



Nova VCSE Advocate Vacancy

Role Description For:

Wakefield Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board

The Wakefield Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board works to improve the health and wellbeing of all adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism in Wakefield District.

Bringing together service users and carers, officers from Wakefield Council, Health and other organisations, the board is responsible for improving social care services that people with learning disabilities and/or autism, and their families and carers, receive. The board influences and oversees decision making, ensuring health and social care services are planned and developed so that they meet local needs.

In partnership and facilitated by Nova, the Wakefield Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board is recruiting a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector Advocate.

Overview of the role

The VCSE Sector Advocate will attend board meetings and champion the sector. They will provide knowledge and insight about the needs of VCSE groups and the diverse communities they serve, sharing information from and to the sector. The role is not to lobby for an individual organisation or viewpoint but to advocate for the collective sector, promoting collaborative working.

The Advocate will have expert understanding of the needs of adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism with an up-to-date working knowledge of the relevant services offered in the

district. They will have experience working with VCSE services who provide support for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism.

The Advocate will have nuanced awareness of how learning disability and autism support services connect at key transition points to support young people into adulthood. They will have a strong knowledge of the needs of and support required by carers and families and will have lived experience or be connected to the voices of people with lived experience.

The Wakefield Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board will meet four times a year. There will be at least one person with learning disabilities and/or autism as co-chair. We ask that interested applicants commit themselves to these meetings.

If you would like to see the Terms of Reference for Wakefield Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board, please request using the contact details below.

Who we are looking for

You will be a leader from the VCSE sector with an excellent understanding of the Wakefield District VCSE sector and ability to effectively communicate critical issues and influence decision making and policy. Please note that you do not have to be a CEO to apply for this role: you may be a volunteer, board member, or work in front-line service delivery. We encourage a range of VCSE leaders with different leadership experience to apply.

We encourage people with learning disabilities and or autism to apply.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Advocate for and where possible, represent the VCSE sector during the Wakefield Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board, drawing upon knowledge of the broader sector beyond your own organisation
- Provide key insight about services and support offered across the VCSE sector in Wakefield and broadcast information, views and updates from multiple VCSE organisations working with adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism
- Advocate for the voices and opinions of adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism in Wakefield District

- Share learning and best practice to build collaborative, integrated services
- Commit to attend all relevant board meetings or give sufficient notice if you are unable to attend
- Commit to Board meeting preparation time, including reading relevant papers and preparing presentations where required
- Maintain regular contact with Nova for ongoing support and feedback
- Communicate information and insight from board meetings back into the sector and to peers. This may include providing short vlog updates about meetings
- Attend VCSE Voices meetings and offer peer support and development to other VCSE Advocates

Skills and Experience

- Strong understanding and working knowledge of the Wakefield District VCSE sector
- Strong working knowledge of multi-agency services and offers available for adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism in Wakefield District
- Understanding of the needs of adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism and the needs of their families and or carers.
- Experience working directly with/delivering services for adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism within a VCSE setting
- Experience planning and designing support and services that respond to the voices of adults and young people aged 16 to 17 with learning disabilities and/or autism
- Experience recommending change and improvement
- Ability to advocate for the sector, champion success and recommend support needed
- Experience of developing and influencing policy
- Effective communication and active listening skills, with experience of public speaking
- Ability to think strategically and solve problems
- Ability to work collaboratively to develop and achieve successful outcomes

Additional Information

A range of support is available for Advocates – when and if needed – to enable successful participation in board meetings and decision making processes. Support will consist of a full induction to the role with tailored training, secretariat support, briefing and peer support.

A cohort of VCSE Advocates attend 20 boards, and together they form a wider VCSE Voices Network. The Network meets regularly for peer support, discussion and to develop the role of Advocates, providing a central hub of VCSE knowledge and expertise.

Nova value the expertise and time commitment needed to fulfil the role of VCSE Advocate. As such, Advocates will be paid backfill: the successful applicant will be paid at a rate of £24.89 per hour, which will apply to both preparation time and meeting time. Hourly payment is inclusive of incurred travel expenses. However, for advocates with disabilities, additional expenses will be paid.

How to apply

You can apply by sending a short-written statement or a video explaining your experience and relevant skills, and why you would like to get involved to vcsevoices@nova-wd.org.uk

We want as many people to be involved as possible. If you are considering the opportunity but would like a more detailed discussion about the role, the support available and commitment, or if you need support with your application, please contact VCSEVoices@nova-wd.org.uk

Applications will be reviewed by current VCSE Advocates, and there will be informal interview process with a view to the successful Advocate assuming their role in as soon as possible.