



**WHO
CARES?**
SCOTLAND

EQUALITY | RESPECT | LOVE



Empowered Voices Programme Information Pack 2024

1. Opportunity

Thank you for your interest in our Empowered Voices Programme at Who Cares? Scotland.

This information pack will outline what the programme is and will offer you, what's needed of you and how you can apply for the next round of the programme.

The information below will help you, but if you need any more information that's not available in this pack, please contact the Policy and Public Affairs Team at policy@whocaresScotland.org.

We can't wait to hear from you!

2. Who are we?

Who Cares? Scotland is a national membership organisation for Care Experienced people, with over 4,300 members. Our aim is to achieve a lifetime of equality, respect and love for Care Experienced people. We support Care Experienced people to have their voices heard through providing high quality independent advocacy.

We provide fun and meaningful participation opportunities where members come together for belonging and connection, discuss their experiences, views and ideas for change. We make sure our members' voices are heard by campaigning for change and making recommendations to the Scottish Government, local authorities and other decision-makers (we call this influencing).

3. What is the Empowered Voices Programme?

Who Cares? Scotland has been at the centre of empowering Care Experienced people to use their voices since 1978. Throughout this time, we have grown, learnt, and understood how to campaign more effectively and what support for that looks like. Care Experienced people have always spoken up and campaigned for change. Across centuries this has taken many different forms, but one thing held true, the power of the voices of those with experience of care has driven change.

Last year, we brought back our training programme to empower Care Experienced people to use their voices for change. With 100% of our participants being involved in other aspects of our work such as being featured in the news, attending committee sessions at the Scottish Parliament, going to Bute House to speak with the First Minister, helping influence change by sharing their experiences and even speaking at the Love Rally. Whatever your goal is, whether you want to be better at public speaking or want to feel more confident phoning your GP, this training programme is designed to support you to feel more empowered.

The programme is a commitment from us to help the care community learn vital campaigning, activism, and public speaking skills. You will make connections with other influential Care Experienced people and have the opportunity to drive change together.

At the beginning of the programme, we will find out what skills you wish to develop, and that will help us design the programme to suit the group taking part. Training will take place over three weekends during the year (in September 2024, November 2024 and February/March 2025) with the opportunity for further learning in between, including opportunities to speak to the media, meet with decision-makers and influence policy.

Throughout any spokesperson opportunity, you will receive guidance and support from Who Cares? Scotland staff and volunteers. This will empower you to be able to speak on behalf of the care community and our membership.

We want to have spokespeople who represent a diversity of care backgrounds and protected characteristics.

4. Can I be a take part?

What qualities do I need?

- You will be 16 years old or older in September 2024. There is no upper age limit for this programme.
- You are a Care Experienced member of Who Cares? Scotland (or if you aren't already, are willing to become a member).
- You are able to bring your own personal views, and explore these for the benefit of the collective voice of the Care Experienced community. You will also be open to learning how to distinguish personal views from collective voice and minority views of the Care Experienced community, and relay views in a representative way.
- You are interested in gaining new skills, developing yourself and meeting new people.
- You are a team player and can work alongside and support your peers.
- You are reliable, enthusiastic, flexible and committed.

What will I need to do?

- You will commit to attending three weekend training sessions a year, and other opportunities in between.
- You will participate in training to the best of your ability.
- You will be offered opportunities to directly support our influencing work by speaking on behalf of the care community to the media and decision-makers.

What other behaviours are expected of me?

- Abide by the Code of Conduct at all times.
- Always respond to communications from us in good time.
- Make use of various communication channels to maintain dialogue with our members.
- Be confident in independently accessing travel to the venues for training weekends (e.g. getting on trains and busses). Who Cares? Scotland will cover the costs of all travel and accommodation.
- Always communicate with the Policy & Public Affairs team about any ideas or work you would like to pursue.
- Maintain a flexible approach to your involvement, try to make yourself available for meetings and other opportunities.
- Give apologies when unavailable with as much notice as possible.
- Always try to present a positive image of Who Cares? Scotland.

When will I be needed?

You will commit to attending three weekend training sessions a year, and other opportunities in between. These will provisionally be held in:

- 6th – 8th September 2024
- 22nd – 24th November 2024
- 7th – 9th February 2025 (tbc)

Opportunities beyond the training will be optional and could take up to 4 hours max of your time per week.

Location

The first training weekend will be held at Bonaly Scout Centre in Edinburgh. With the second and third weekends being held at Stirling Youth Hostel. All travel, accommodation and meals will be provided by Who Cares? Scotland.

What will I gain from the role?

- A sense of satisfaction in helping the voice of Care Experienced people be represented and heard
- Build confidence and self-esteem
- Skills and knowledge eg. public speaking, campaigning, activism, human rights, policy and public affairs
- Experience working with the media and decision-makers
- Practical experience of working with a varied group of people of all ages
- Experience to get back into the workplace or education
- Have fun and make friends!

What support will I be given?

- Role specific training & additional training opportunities
- Expenses – all out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed
- Support from a local Who Cares? Scotland staff member to attend as required
- Support from the Policy & Public Affairs team

5. How do I apply?

Simply fill out this [online form](#). It should only take around 10 minutes.

If you have any questions or problems with the form, you can ask for help from any member of staff at Who Cares? Scotland or from the Policy & Public Affairs team at policy@whocarescotland.org.