



## ***THINK Volunteer Opportunities***

### **Steering Group Member**

The key role of the THINK Steering Group is to make decisions with the mandate of the THINK Members and to direct the activities and performance of THINK. This involves:

- deciding what areas of health and social care THINK can have the most impact on;
- deciding how to spend the money that THINK has, to bring about the changes that are needed;
- listening to what service users and carers tell us about their experience and ideas;
- representing patients and users on decision making groups across a wide range of areas and organisations e.g. Tower Hamlets NHS, Health Scrutiny Panel, the Local Authority, local hospitals and the Tower Hamlets Partnership;
- visiting places where services are being provided e.g. health centres, hospitals, care homes, dentists to talk to patients and identify any problems or areas for improvement;
- And providing input and comment on reports going from THINK to service providers.

There are 20 positions:

- ten for local residents of Tower Hamlets;
- five for groups representing the users of health and social care services;
- and five for voluntary and community groups working in the health and social care area in Tower Hamlets

#### **What are the skills needed?**

- Good communication skills for meetings and talking to Tower Hamlets residents about their health and social care experience
- Organisational skills in order to read documents in advance before steering group meetings
- Analytical skills in order to scrutinise the work of THINK and health providers

#### **What is the time commitment?**

- The minimum involvement we would expect from Steering Group members would be to attend a monthly Steering Group meeting and a monthly meeting of a subcommittee.
- You would be expected to contribute to discussions on strategic documents around health and social care. Full support will always be given and training is available.

- Steering Group members are encouraged to attend other relevant decision making panels and user groups to represent THINK.
- Members can also become 'authorised representatives' for the purpose of undertaking visits to service providers' premises e.g. hospitals and care homes.

#### **What are the benefits for volunteers?**

- Represent Tower Hamlets residents in deciding how THINK should work
- Represent patients and users on major decision making groups across a wide range of organisations
- Learn more about health and social care services in Tower Hamlets and the newest developments
- Gain skills in board membership/trustee
- Access to training relevant to the role

#### **How to become a THINK Steering Group Member?**

- Steering Group members are generally nominated and elected at THINK's annual AGM/Event, in May/June. However THINK is currently recruiting new Steering group members, so if you are interested please speak to a member of staff.

### **Task Group Member**

As a THINK Task Group member one will engage directly in the issues that are of interest to them and undertake more detailed work to take forward the Action Plan priorities set by the group.

#### **Currently there 3 task groups:**

- Mental Health Task Group
- GP and Hospital Services Task Group
- Young People's Task Group

#### **Key responsibilities specific to the role:**

1. A keen interest in the task group agenda
2. To attend task group meetings as set by the group
3. To follow up task group action plan priorities identified by the group
4. To make a positive and informed contribution to group discussions

**Skills required:**

- Keen interest in task group area
- Willingness to share knowledge and information
- Be able and willing to research priority topic areas
- Ability to communicate to all members of group as equals

**Commitment**

- Attend bi-monthly meetings

**What are the benefits of becoming a Task Group member?**

- Discuss and highlight health issues relevant to your interest area
- A platform to ask service providers questions on your health interest area and also to request information
- Meet local service providers /commissioners
- Be able to contribute to service redesign/ commissioning

**THINK Champion: (1 x volunteer in each LAP in Tower Hamlets)**

The role of the THINK Champions is to be THINKs representative in each LAP (Local Area Partnership) in the borough and act as THINK 'eyes and ears' in the local settings. THINK champions would help to gather comments from the local community about their health and social care experience using various methods and feed back the comments to THINK staff and by also uploading comments to THINK Database. THINK Champions will also aspire to increase THINK membership (Representative) and promote THINK meetings, surveys and events to residents within their respective LAP.

**Key responsibilities specific to the role:**

- Speak to different community members (different settings) in the LAP to get their views/comments.
- Report back any community health and social care issues that THINK needs to review and monitor.
- Attend relevant meetings in your LAP
- Carry out outreach in GP's
- To network and build close relationships with service providers in your LAP.
- Attend health events in your LAP
- Organise THINK promotion events Bi Monthly in GP surgeries and Idea Stores.
- Liaise with stakeholders in the community to organise group discussions and furthermore provide support with group facilitations.
- Visit health and social care services locally and report back (Mystery Shopper Role)
- Feedback comments to THINK Staff
- Upload comments to THINK database

**Skills relevant for post:**

- Good organisational skills
- Good Communication skills
- Ability to network and build partnerships
- Good IT skills

**Commitment:**

- Meet with THINK Staff once a month to give feedback.

**What are the benefits of becoming a THINK Champion?**

- Ability to highlight key health issues/challenges relevant to the area you live
- Represent your local area in key health/community stakeholder settings
- Networking capacity
- Help shape THINK's work priorities for the year
- Contribute to improving local health and social care services
- Potential to develop substantial transferable skills relevant for future employment
- Training opportunities
- Future employment reference

### **THINK Community Outreach Worker**

The role of the Outreach Workers will be to undertake outreach in the different settings of the community to meet, listen to and record the experiences of local people regarding health and social care issues and feed back the comments to THINK.

**Key responsibilities specific to the role:**

1. To represent THINK in local voluntary and community sector events and meetings.
2. To carry out outreach in GP surgery's, Idea store and children's centre.
3. To gather health and social care comments and experiences from various/mixed range of people from the community.
4. To input information/comments generated from the outreach work onto THINK database.
5. To promote THINK and identify prospective THINK Members from the community.

**Skills relevant for post:**

- Good organisational skills
- Good Communication skills
- Ability to network and build partnerships
- Good IT skills

**Commitment:**

- Meet with THINK Staff once a month to give feedback.

**What are the benefits of becoming a THINK Outreach Worker?**

- Support THINK in identifying key health and service issues relevant to people in the community.
- Help shape THINK's work priorities for the year
- Contribute to improving local health and social care services
- Training opportunities
- Transferable employment skills
- Future employment reference

**THINK Mystery Shopper**

The role of the mystery shopper will involve making random visits to health and social care services in the Borough and to report back the experience and comments of that service.

**Key responsibilities specific to the role:**

1. Be willing to make random visits to health and social care services across Tower Hamlets.
2. Assess and monitor health and social care services by speaking to patients and public about the service visited.
3. To make notes of the whole experience of the service visited with a specific focus on services received by patients i.e. behaviour and attitudes of staff towards patient, etc.
4. To provide feedback about the visit to THINK staffs.
5. To input comments /experiences onto the THINK Database.

**Skills Required:**

- Ability to make observations
- Good communication skills
- Ability to ask the relevant questions to providers (guidance will be provided by THINK )

**Commitment:**

- Be prepared to be a mystery shopper as and when required.
- Inform THINK of any personal health related appointments that could be part of mystery shopper scheme.

**What are the benefits of becoming a THINK Mystery Shopper**

- Contribute to highlighting positives and negatives of a service provision
- Improve services

## **THINK Authorised Members (Enter and View)**

### **What is an authorised member and what do they do?**

Authorised members enter health and social care premises to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the views of the people using those services. This enables ongoing service improvement and validates evidence already collected from THINK members.

The following organisations can be visited:

- Barts and the London NHS Trust
- East London NHS Foundation Trust
- Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- GPs
- dentists
- opticians
- community pharmacists

### **Which skills are needed?**

- ability to listen
- sensitive to people's feelings
- observant, patient and unobtrusive
- responsible
- treat people with respect at all times
- ability to cooperate with requests from staff and be guided by staff

### **How do I become an authorised member?**

- All registered THINK members can become authorised members
- Authorised members must have a Criminal Records Bureau check, which THINK will administer. They need to be renewed every 2 years.
- Training will be provided.

### **Commitment:**

- Be willing to undertake enter and view visits as and when required (advance notice will be provided)

### **What are the benefits of becoming a THINK Authorised Members (Enter and View)?**

- Help monitor and assess health and social care services in Tower Hamlets.
- Contribute towards service improvements and highlighting issues relevant for patients/public

## **Marketing/Media Volunteer (Creative Graphic Designer)**

Marketing is really important for the success of THINK, because we are a membership based organisation, which means that we are only as good as our members! Therefore, we want as many members as possible, who represent the diversity of Tower Hamlets and most importantly, we want active members who are willing to give us their comments on healthcare services.

We do a range of marketing, both print and digital. We are launching our rebranded website in November 2010 ([www.thinknetwork.org.uk](http://www.thinknetwork.org.uk)), which will be more responsive to our members and allow them to leave their comments and feedback on health services online. Our website is also a great way of keeping our membership base informed and up to date about the latest THINK activities and events.

In terms of print media, we produce leaflets that include membership forms and give an introduction to the work of THINK. These are ideal for giving out at events and in community organisations so that we can collect members when we do outreach work. We also print posters to be put up in community organisation, at our events, or health provider's premises, for example a GP practice. We also publish monthly e-newsletters and quarterly hard copy newsletters.

### **Key responsibilities specific to the role:**

- Print media-designing publicity materials for organisation
- Designing e-newsletters and quarterly newsletters

### **What are the skills needed?**

- Creative, with an interest in design
- Knowledge of design packages (Adobe Indesign/Photoshop)
- Good writing skills
- An interest in website management and design
- Ability to communicate well with a diverse range of people

### **Commitment:**

- Flexible arrangements that meets volunteers and THINK's needs.

### **What are the benefits of becoming a THINK Marketing/Media Volunteer?**

- Gain valuable work experience
- Capacity to build your design portfolio
- Future employment reference

## *Research Volunteers*

### **What research does THINK undertake?**

Research is crucial to THINK, because we give our evidence to health service providers in order to get services changed and make important improvements.

- Surveys – both online and paper version
- Focus groups
- Discovery interviews
- Consultation Events/workshops

### **What does a research volunteer do?**

Research is an exciting part of THINK and we welcome volunteers with or without previous research experience.

- Facilitating group interviews
- Conducting discovery interviews
- Translation services
- Surveys
- Individual research project

### **Which skills are needed?**

- An interest in research
- Good communication skills
- Enjoy interacting with people and meeting new people
- Objectivity
- Good written skills

### **What is the time commitment?**

- One off project – for example course requirement
- Long term basis – 1 day a week
- Casual – facilitation or translation services when needed

### **What are the benefits for volunteers?**

- Gain research experience
- Help get vital information to improve health services
- Fulfil your course requirements
- Conduct your own research project in line with THINK's needs and with our assistance and contacts
- Meet new people
- Training opportunities

**For further information on the volunteering opportunities or if you would like to volunteer with THINK please contact Shamsur Choudhury. Email: [Shamsur.choudhury@thinknetwork.org.uk](mailto:Shamsur.choudhury@thinknetwork.org.uk)  
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