

Telephone Call-back Service: guidance for volunteers

Thank you for supporting our telephone call-back service. Please read the following before making calls:

1. When we receive a request for a 'call-back' from a member of the public or an organisation, we will contact one of our call-back volunteers to check availability.
2. If you can make the call, we will provide you with contact details and any other relevant information in a secure way. Data confidentiality is important to us all and we ask that you delete/shred any confidential information once your call is completed.

Please **do not re-save** encrypted files. That way they are kept secure, even if they haven't been permanently deleted. To **delete files** from your computer:

- Right-click on document/email and select 'delete'
- Right-click on the 'recycle bin' or 'trash' on your desktop and select 'empty ...'

If you are **getting rid of your computer** and need to **permanently delete data** from the hard drive, please read this guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office: [Deleting your data](#)

3. As you will be calling from your own phone, we advise that you withhold your number:
 - **Landline (and some android phones):** dial 141 before dialling the contact number
 - **iPhone:** access phone settings to withhold your number

We will advise people to expect a call from a withheld number.

4. When you make a call on behalf of HWN, you will need to introduce yourself and ask some questions to provide structure to the conversation. **Please see overleaf for a guide to making HWN phone calls.**
5. If you pick up on anything you think needs more urgent follow-up, please let us know straight away.

If you have an **urgent safeguarding concern** please contact **Liz Prudhoe**, the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Adapt (NE):
t: **01434 600599** e: lizp@adapt-tyndale.org.uk

If you are unable to get in touch with Liz Prudhoe, please contact **OneCall**:
t: **01670 536400** e: onecall@northumbria-healthcare.nhs.uk

OneCall is one number of all adult social care, children's services and community health enquiries in Northumberland. If you are worried that someone is in **immediate danger**, you should call **999**.

6. Please submit the person's experience and demographic information using the dedicated Survey Monkey form: [HWN Telephone Feedback Form](#)
7. Please also complete an online volunteer recording form to document the time you have contributed: [HWN Volunteer Recording Form](#)
8. The cost of phone calls made during your volunteering will be reimbursed at a rate of 10p per minute. Please send completed HWN Volunteer Expense Forms to emmag@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk
9. Some phone calls may be difficult and/or you may need guidance on how best to proceed. If you are ever unsure, say that you will get back to the person (if necessary) and contact us for support and/or debrief: **03332 408468** or **07590 880016 (Derry)**



A guide to making HWN telephone calls

When you make your calls, please start by introducing yourself:

"Hello, my name is <first name>. I'm calling from Healthwatch Northumberland and I understand that you have an experience of health or social care that you would like to share with us."

Then follow up with:

"Before we begin, please can I check that this is a good time to talk and that the details I have for you are correct (check name and best contact number). It would also be useful to have the first part of your postcode, so that we can check that we're talking to people from all parts of Northumberland."

*"Just to let you know, I'll be taking some notes during our conversation so that I don't miss anything. A summary of our conversation will then be put onto our system, either anonymously or with your details, whichever you would prefer?**

"Please can you start by telling me a bit about your recent experience...."

If possible, try to capture:

When did it happen? Who experienced it? Which service was it? Were any other services involved?

Helpful questions to ask might be:

What went well? What could have been done better? How did you feel? What would you like to happen next?

At the end of the conversation, please try to capture some demographics:

"It would be really helpful to know a little bit more about you, so that we can make sure that we're reaching people from all communities – would this be OK?"

Demographic questions:

How old are you? What is your ethnicity? Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Are you a carer? Are you married/in a civil partnership? Do you have a religion or belief? What was your sex at birth? Which gender do you identify as? What is your sexuality?

***Did you get GDPR consent at the start of the conversation? If not, please remember to ask again!**

Closing the conversation

"I really appreciate you taking the time to speak to me today. By sharing your experience(s) you are helping to improve care for everyone."

Depending on the nature of the call, there may be several possible outcomes:

Feedback only

Let the person know that their feedback will be recorded on our system and on Healthwatch England's system. HWN produce a quarterly report based on the feedback received, and this is sent to a wide range of Northumberland service providers including Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust, Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group, Northumberland County Council, local voluntary sector organisations, Parish Councils etc.

Signposting (complaints)

If the person wishes to make a complaint, it may be appropriate to provide details for:

[Patient Advice & Liaison Service \(PALS\)](#)

or

[Independent Complaints Advocacy Northumberland \(ICAN\)](#)

HWN involvement

In some circumstances, we may wish to become involved with a specific issue – please contact a member of staff to discuss if you think this may be the case.

Signposting (general)

Depending on the the person's experience, you may wish to provide information about local services they might find useful.