

# Paid/unpaid work/volunteering

## What is it?

People repeatedly report that being meaningfully engaged in either paid or unpaid work is critical to their self-esteem and self-worth. Many people with long term conditions either lose or struggle with their paid employment. Many report they would like help in finding paid or unpaid work. Those who are involved in volunteering report this as an invaluable experience in terms of psychological well-being

## Why?

- › Increases self-esteem and sense of self worth
- › Reduces isolation
- › Builds confidence



“ ‘There is a definite need to be using volunteers [to provide emotional support]... I think there are thousands of volunteers ready and willing to do this type of work  
‘I run a support group for one of my conditions. I would like to run a support group for the other’

(PIC Survey: Midlands and East, 2014)

## CASE STUDIES



### Tower Hamlets CCG

#### Maternity Mates

**Key aim:** Supporting socially isolated expectant mothers at high risk of experiencing poor pre-natal, birthing and post natal services, eg newly arrived migrants with no knowledge of healthcare system and limited English, lack of a partner and family support, drug users and victims of domestic violence.

**Delivery model:** Voluntary organisation (Women's Health and Family Service) commissioned to recruit and train volunteer mums from BME community to befriend and support vulnerable expectant mothers eg provide advice, attend appointments.

**Key outcomes:** 103 women offered support of a maternity mate and 83% of mums on programme initiated breast-feeding compared with national rate of 73.9%. Some of the most vulnerable expectant mums empowered to navigate their way through maternity services and decide on positive lifestyle choices.