



self help uk

CANDIDATE PACK

February 2026

Self Help UK (SHUK) History and Future Direction

March 2026

History

1. Self-Help Nottingham was a spin-out charity from Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service (NCVS) approximately 40 years ago, following a small project supporting peer support/self-help groups (ie. groups of people with shared experiences providing support to each other)
2. The charity was extended to create a national infrastructure for peer support groups nationally and was rebranded as SHUK in 2008, adding training and consultancy to the development of peer support directories and resources.
3. Over the following decade, SHUK created a number of projects that centred on peer support principles in a number of different areas, employment and skills, social prescribing, Work based peer groups for people with MSK conditions, Diabetes support to the Black and Asian community etc, and most impactfully, our partnership with Macmillan to create the Beyond Diagnosis Service and the Deaf Cancer Support Project.

Where SHUK is now

1. Over time, the direction of SHUK has pivoted away from infrastructure support for peer support groups towards actual service delivery within the long-term condition space, creating a range of projects and peer-led approaches, supporting people facing health inequalities, especially those affected by cancer. Current services provided by SHUK include:
 - a) Prevention/early diagnosis of long-term health issues, reducing hospital demand
 - b) Empowerment of individuals through helping them to navigate the support available, including digital access
 - c) Locating and supporting under-served communities and instances of health inequalities (including Deaf projects)
2. Geographic reach: Nationally – Deaf Cancer Support and Awareness projects. Locally – Generic Cancer Support projects.

Describing SHUK in a sentence

SHUK provides holistic support and knowledge via close interaction with local communities, peer groups and volunteers to:

- a) prevent long-term health conditions
- b) help those with existing conditions to feel more confident, informed and supported in navigating their health journey in a way that works best for them.



Integrated Long Term Condition (LTC) Community Support Targeting Health Inequity and Patient Empowerment



Current focus: Cancer, however, the model can be applied to most LTCs

PREVENTION

Health
Literacy
Training

Health
Roadshows

Awareness
Training

EARLY DIAGNOSIS

Screening
Uptake
Community
Development

PCN
Screening
Support

Signs &
Symptoms
Training

EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT

Beyond
Medicine Care
Planning
eHNAs/Care
Reviews

Signposting

Peer Support

Empowerment
& Self
Management

ADVOCACY AND COPRODUCTION

Advocacy
Support

Treatment
Literacy
Awareness

Care Pathway
Co-production

Service Model

Specialist Teams

← Volunteers / Peers / Staff →

Early Diagnosis ★ Beyond Diagnosis ★ Deaf Cancer Support Project

PCN Cancer Care Coordinator ★ Prehab Link Worker ★ CLEAR Team

Holistic

Community Connected

Patient Centred

Useful links

- [Self Help UK - Impact Report 2024-2025](#)
- [Self Help UK website](#)

Please note that the above links provide previous descriptions of the charity and its impact, which are in the process of being updated (see slides 1-3 of this pack for the most up-to-date descriptions of Self Help UK).

We are including the above links here in order to provide context around the charity's history and to show examples of the impact it has made to the community.