



Sarah Vibert

Chief Executive

Neurological Alliance

Candidate Statement

Why I am putting myself forward

Growing up with a brother who had epilepsy and other complex care needs meant that from a young age I had a direct understanding of the importance of good care – and watched my parents fight to get the care my brother needed and deserved. While I didn't know the jargon until many years later – it instilled in me the importance of people being in control of their health and care – as well as an understanding of the detrimental impact of approaches that are not person centred.

It was this experience, in part, that has motivated me to spend the last 15 years mainly working in roles which aim to bring about improvements in the health and care service. This has included roles at Whizz-Kidz, the London Health Commission, and most recently Epilepsy Society and now the Neurological Alliance. As Chief Executive at the Neurological Alliance, I work to improve care for people with a broad range of health conditions – long term, life shortening, acute and chronic. The one thing all these conditions have in common is that person centred care improves the individual's experience of care and often improves their health outcomes. I am passionate about making person centred care a reality and would love to join the National Voices board to contribute to making this happen.

What I can bring to the Board

I have a detailed understanding of the evolving healthcare landscape and how voluntary organisations can seek to influence this. The way in which national policy translates into change on the ground in terms of people's experience of care and their health outcomes is more complex than ever before. I have a strong interest in how charities can support people to influence local and regional decision making bodies in the NHS, working on a number of projects in this area over the last five years. I also have a track record of achieving policy change at national level, as well as involving beneficiaries in policy activity.

I also have extensive experience of organisational development, most recently working as Head of Development, and then Director of Strategy and External Affairs, at Epilepsy Society. I was responsible for designing and delivering development projects, as well as supporting major change management within the organisation. My experience in strategic development also comes from Board level roles. I have previously been a trustee of Compact Voice – the organisation that represented the voluntary sector in relation to the Compact, which sets out the key principles of working between the voluntary sector and government. I have also been a school governor.

As Chief Executive of the Neurological Alliance, I understand the challenges that come with running a small charity – and also how to support small charities to have a voice in policy making working as part of a coalition. I am keen to bring my skills and knowledge to complement the breadth of experience on the National Voices board.