

SUPPORT, ADVOCACY AND DEVELOPMENT WORKER – Complex Needs

Job Description

Responsible to: Hereford County Manager Hours of Work: 37 hours per week

Responsible for: N/A

Base: Hereford Salary: WMWA Band 5 Point 13 £25,088.45 pa

Objective of the Post:

1. To develop and provide advocacy and support to individuals affected by domestic abuse in securing services that are appropriate to meet the needs of those with complex needs. In particular those with poor mental health and/or problematic substance use.
2. Liaise with mental health, primary care, drug and alcohol services to ensure that the needs of residents with complex challenges are appropriately met by other specialist services.
3. Contribute to the professional development of colleagues and professionals in partner agencies through the provision of training.

Key Outcomes: An increase in the capacity of adults affected by domestic abuse with complex needs to access appropriate support in a timely way. Greater awareness and understanding of their needs and available support is understood by WMWA staff and partner agencies.

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| Support and Advocacy Delivery | * Develop and – where appropriate – deliver individual support to, and advocacy for service users living temporarily in refuge and in safe temporary (‘satellite’) accommodation who have poor mental health and/or have problematic substance use * Use appropriate tools to assess the mental health needs of women accessing WMWA accommodation services * Work effectively in partnership with other agencies in securing a cohesive package of co-ordinated support for service users with this complexity of need * Ensure that the temporary accommodation arrangements in which service users are placed, is sufficient to meet their individual needs * Support move-on to suitable permanent accommodation |
| Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults | * Ensure that all those working in partnership with Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Service (DAS) to deliver support, and Herefordshire DAS itself, prioritise the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults in line with local policies and procedures |
| Joint Working | * Work closely with other support workers in the organisation to ensure that service users whose needs are regarded as complex have access to the full range of services provided by Herefordshire DAS * Manage the process to secure the engagement of WMWA service users with therapeutic counselling services provided by partner agencies, including where this service has been commissioned by WMWA either independently, or as part of a wider project. * Liaise with mental health, primary care, drug and alcohol services to ensure that the needs of residents with complex challenges are appropriately met by other specialist services * Advocate on behalf of clients in accessing other such services * Work in collaboration with other agencies and to facilitate joint working on behalf of service users where appropriate * Raise awareness of Herefordshire DAS’s provision with key stakeholders, promoting an understanding of the expanded range of accommodation options for those for whom traditional ‘communal’ refuge provision is regarded as less suitable * Act as a mentor to WMWA staff in support of their engagement with complex needs * Contribute to the professional development of colleagues and professionals in partner agencies through the provision of training |
| Service User Involvement | * Promote and facilitate service user consultation * Promote service user participation through the WMWA Survivor Network |
| Out of Hours | * Provide a maximum of 4 sessions of out-of-hours cover per month as part of a rota for all support staff at WMWA, and for which an additional allowance is paid. |
| General Duties | * To maintain accurate records and monitoring and evaluation information * To attend supervision sessions and staff meetings * To undertake training as agreed at supervision sessions * To take active steps to work within a framework of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice * To undertake all other reasonable duties as required by Service Managers in furtherance of the objectives of this post |

SUPPORT, ADVOCACY AND DEVELOPMENT WORKER

Person Specification

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| Qualifications | * Professional qualification in a relevant field * Minimum of A-level standard of general education or equivalent |
| Experience | * At least 3 years’ experience of advocacy and support work with vulnerable people * At least 12 months’ experience of supporting people with complex needs, in particular mental health and problematic substance use. * Experience of taking a lead role in advocating successfully on behalf of vulnerable clients to access appropriate support. * Experience delivering training sessions to colleagues and other professionals. |
| Skills and Abilities | * Evidence of the skills and ability in working co-operatively with other practitioners, singly and in interagency contexts, on behalf of individuals whose needs are complex * Ability to organise workload and respond to unplanned demands * Ability to work as part of a support team, providing a cohesive and comprehensive service to users with a wide range of needs * Ability to work with minimal supervision on a day-to-day basis, within agreed schedules and guidelines * Excellent active listening skills * Good verbal and written communication skills, including completion of electronic forms and recording of data * Good IT skills * Ability to deal with conflict and secure a positive outcome |
| Knowledge and Understanding | * Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the issues facing those with complex needs including poor mental health and/or substance misuse * Good knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse issues and the needs of those affected by it * Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding – in articular of the processes and of good practice in the safeguarding of children * Working knowledge of the welfare benefits and legal assistance available to women seeking freedom from domestic abuse, including housing, civil law and criminal justice processes |
| Essential Attitudes | * Understanding of and commitment to anti-discriminatory working practices * Commitment to the empowerment of those affected by domestic abuse * Knowledge of and agreement with Women’s Aid aims and principles |
| General Requirements | * Willingness to work evenings and weekend hours on a rota basis * Car user with daily access to a vehicle |