

Carer Support Worker (short breaks)

POST	Carer Support Worker (Short breaks)
EMPLOYER	VOCAL – Voice of Carers Across Lothian
SALARY	£27,000 - £29,500 (pro rata) VOCAL will match up to 6% pension contribution
HOURS	28 hours per week with some evening and weekend work 28 days paid leave plus 10 public holidays (pro rata)
LOCATION	The postholder will be based at VOCAL's Carers Centre at 30/1 Hardengreen Estate, Dalhousie Road, Dalkeith with some outreach work across Midlothian

Purpose of the post

The postholder will support VOCAL to deliver person-centred, asset-based and outcomes focused support to carers in Midlothian with a specific focus on supporting carers who are seeking a break from their caring role.

Improved Outcomes for Carers

The postholder will contribute to VOCAL Midlothian's 10 carer outcomes and undertake carer evaluations to ensure carers report:

- Improved Health and Wellbeing
- A Life of their own
- Improved relationships
- Feeling financially secure
- Choices in caring
- Feeling informed/equipped and safe
- Feeling confident and able to continue caring
- Feeling actively involved in shaping support
- Quality of life for the person they care for
- Plans for the future care of the person they care for

VOCAL's approach to carer support

VOCAL supports carers using person-centred approaches and conversational techniques. An asset based approach supports carers to identify and build on their strengths, skills and knowledge and the connections and resources within families and communities, rather than

focusing on problems and deficits. VOCAL applies a solution focussed and outcomes based practice across all carer support and interventions. This supports carers to reflect and identify areas for improvement, change and prioritisation. This approach recognises that carers are the experts in their situation and places them 'in the driving seat'. It allows carers to shape services and support required and to build resilience, with VOCAL staff acting as knowledgeable facilitators.

Practice expectations

Carer support is time limited and offered on a flexible, person-centred basis through personal contact by appointment, telephone, email and web-based tools. Staff are required to manage their own caseload, ensuring that client support is structured, with baseline assessment, support, outcome review and closure.

Personal outcomes are identified at the beginning of carer support. Personalised solution-focussed support and information follow. The conclusion of support is planned, includes a review of personal outcomes and leaves the carer empowered to move forward independently.

Staff are responsible for ensuring their work with carers is methodically and accurately recorded. All contact with carers is recorded in real time, electronically on a web based case management system.

VOCAL has defined essential data which is captured and includes demographic information and baseline, key actions and review information indicating the carer's progress to their self-defined outcomes.

Building carers' digital confidence and skills is an integral part of supporting carers to continue in their caring role, and to build and maintain a life outside the caring role. Digital tools also offer flexible and creative options when tailoring and delivering person-centred support for carers. VOCAL staff are expected to use a range of web based tools and social media to support and engage with carers, and to encourage carers to develop new skills.

Person Specification

The postholder is expected to evidence:

Knowledge

- A sound knowledge of health and social care issues, the needs and situation of carers and a demonstrated commitment to supporting carers
- A good understanding of the benefits of short breaks for carers
- A good knowledge of how the statutory, voluntary and private sectors work and an ability to undertake outcome-focused networking with other agencies and professionals
- A good understanding of equality and diversity issues and a commitment to supporting people from marginalised groups
- A sound knowledge of health and social care issues, the needs and situation of carers and a demonstrated commitment to supporting carers

Skills

- Excellent communication skills and competence in using social media and web-based tools
- Good listening, verbal and writing skills with ability to write accurate case notes and reports

- Ability to deal with carers, professionals and members of the public in a sensitive and person-centred manner
- Proven ability of organising, prioritising and managing own work
- Effective research skills and ability to effectively disseminate learning

Experience

- Experience of person centred support work
- Experience of working with carers
- Experience of brokering support from range of sources
- Experience of maintaining detailed electronic client records
- Experience using Outlook, Word and Excel and web browsers on both desktop and mobile devices

Qualifications

- Educational qualifications which may include qualifications in counselling or person-centred training, community development, adult education, social work, education to university degree level, or other relevant qualifications.

Desirable

- Experience of solution focussed client practice
- Experience of using person centred tools or tools for care planning
- Experience in group work or training
- Presentation skills

Job Description

Carer identification

- To assist with the identification of carers by working with primary and acute health care professionals, and social care services to establish simple and effective systems for this purpose
- To receive referrals of carers from primary and acute health care staff, community care staff and from any local agencies, including self-referrals
- To assist in the development and delivery of Short Breaks 'surgeries' for carers and practitioners to provide information and guidance on short breaks

Carer support

- The postholder is required to support a minimum of 250 carers per annum and have an open case load of up to 40 carers at any given time
- Support carers to access an Adult Carer Support Plan and Emergency Plan in line with requirements within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016
- Support carers to access person centred information, advice and support which is outcome-focused and sensitive to their particular caring situation
- Identifying, planning and brokering person-centred solutions by navigating the statutory systems, Third Sector support and through applications to trusts

Carer engagement

- To support carers to participate in consultation and planning structures within Midlothian
- To support local developments of carer support services
- To inform and consult carers on relevant issues by assisting in the organisation of carer events and the production of 'Carers News' and other publications

Monitoring and evaluating carer outcomes

- Comply with VOCAL's casework model and outcomes focused working, specifically the use of the Carer Outcomes Evaluation tool used to shape casework and measure impact.
- Be responsible for the accurate and timely recording of all carer contact and casework on VOCAL's web based case management system,
- Assist in producing statistical information on carer support

General Duties

As a member of the Carer Support Team, the postholder will be expected to consistently and effectively perform a number of general duties:

- To work with and support any volunteers assigned to facilitate the work of the postholder
- Comply with Carer Centre policies and procedures such as confidentiality policy, telephone and recording procedures, lone working policies, etc
- Comply with and contribute to VOCAL's work of continuous quality improvement
- Participate in VOCAL staff team planning meetings
- Carry out other non-recurring duties as arise from time to time, and occasionally help cover carer centre duties during the absence of team members.
- Participate in duty rotas as required by line manager

Accountability, Management and Development

The postholder will benefit from a structured induction programme within the first month of appointment, followed by a six months probation period.

The post holder will ultimately be accountable to the Board of Directors. For line management, supervision and support the postholder will be answerable to the Lead Officer, VOCAL Midlothian.

VOCAL acknowledges its responsibility to help identify training needs of staff and to allow reasonable time and resources for staff training, where such training furthers the duties and responsibilities of the post.

Emphasis is placed on team accountability and mutual support.

The post holder will be based at the VOCAL Midlothian Carers Centre, but will be expected to carry out a range of duties at different locations in Midlothian, with occasional meetings in Edinburgh

The post holder will be expected to carry out the duties of this post with due regard to Equal Opportunities and non-discriminatory practice.

Conditions of Service

The post is initially advertised at 28 hours per week over 4 days. There may be some flexibility over the distribution of hours which will form the normal working week.

The employer is committed to meet a 6% pension contribution.