Carer Support Practitioner (Parent Carers)

**TITLE OF POST:** Carer Support Practitioner (Parent Carers)

**EMPLOYER:** VOCAL – Voice of Carers Across Lothian

**HOURS:** 30/36 hours per week (including some evening and occasional weekend work)

32 days paid leave plus 6 public holidays

**SALARY:** £27,986 per annum

VOCAL will match up to 6% pension contribution

The post holder will support parent carers living or caring in Edinburgh plan and access person-centred support for their caring situation, their health and wellbeing and their personal development. They will work within a new Edinburgh based partnership – Parents Carewell - to support parent carers across the life course. Supports will include one to one information and advice, group supports and events. The lead agency of this partnership is the Action Group, with partners including VOCAL Edinburgh, FAIR Advice and Edinburgh Development Group (EDG).

The post holder will support carers to plan and access person-centred support for their caring situation, their health and wellbeing and their personal development. They will work as part of a team and will support the service achieve its objectives maximising uptake of VOCAL’s services through promotional activities, developing joint working relationships with partner agencies and encouraging referrals.

**LOCATION:** The post holder will be working from the Edinburgh Carers’ Hub

(60 Leith Walk)

**Purpose of the post**

**Improved outcomes for carers**

The post-holder will contribute to VOCAL Edinburgh’s eight carer outcomes and undertake carer evaluation to ensure carers report:

Carers will report

* being better informed about issues linked to their caring role
* improved confidence in their ability to shape services and support
* improved confidence in managing their caring role
* improved physical and mental wellbeing
* improved confidence in their ability to deal with the changing relationships resulting from their caring role
* improved economic wellbeing
* improved social wellbeing
* improved personal safety in relation to their caring role

# VOCAL’s approach to carer support

VOCAL supports carers using conversational techniques and an asset based approach. This supports carers to identify and build on their 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 services 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 the content and nature of the support provided, 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 post holder is expected to evidence:

# Knowledge

* A sound knowledge of education and/or health and social care issues, the needs and situation of parent carers and a demonstrated commitment to supporting 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 basic knowledge of financial issues affecting carers including welfare benefits, income maximization, Self-Directed Support and the Adults with Incapacity Act
* A good understanding of equality and diversity issues and a commitment to supporting people from marginalised groups

**Skills**

* Excellent interpersonal and conversational skills that allows effective communication with all
* The ability to listen effectively, understand needs, research and present options
* Skills and ability and willingness to use social media and web-based tools
* Good literacy and writing skills with ability to write accurate case notes
* Effective research skills and the ability to effectively disseminate learning
* 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
* Ability to work collaboratively to coproduce positive outcomes in a timely manner

**Experience**

* Experience in casework and person-centred support work, in a paid or unpaid capacity
* Experience in 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

Experience of working effectively in a team

Experience in recruitment and/or supporting volunteers

**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 focused client practice
* Experience of using person centred tools or tools for care planning
* Some experience in group work or training
* Presentation skills

Job Description

**Carer identification**

* To assist with the identification of carers by working with educational staff, 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

**Carer support**

The post holder is required to support an expected level of carers per annum as determined by overall service objectives via one to one and group work.

* 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, the use of spot purchase budgets and applications to trusts
* Identifying and accessing training and personal development opportunities, to help improve the balance of care with employment, learning and social life and the carers well being
* Support carers to build resilience and to prevent crisis

**Carer engagement**

* To provide an accessible service and enable carers to benefit from VOCAL and other supports
* To participate in consultation and planning structures
* To obtain and capture carer feedback through their interactions with carers
* Support carers to participate in regular or one off focus groups
* 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 post holder 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 post holder/team
* Participate in carers support duty rota
* Comply with Carers’ Hub 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
* 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 enquiries and casework records including use of VOCAL’s bespoke database
* 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

##### Accountability, Management and Development

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

The post holder will ultimately be accountable to the Board of Directors. For line management, supervision and support the post holder will be answerable to the Senior Carer Support Practitioner.

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 working across Edinburgh, expected to carry out a range of duties at different locations.

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 36 hours per week over 5 days. To meet service expectations there will be a requirement for some regular early evening work and occasional weekend work.

The post holder qualifies for 32 days paid leave plus 6 public holidays

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