

**CAPS Independent Advocacy**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

POST: Collective Advocacy Worker – Experience Led projects

GEOGRAPHICAL REMIT: Lothian

LOCATION: Argyle House, Edinburgh and Old Stables,  
Musselburgh

HOURS: 21 hours per week (FT week is 36.25 hours)

SALARY SCALE: AP4 (point 27 – 30)

SALARY: £24,657 per annum FTE, £ 14,284 pro rata

LINE MANAGER: Chief Executive Officer

**PROJECTS**

- The Experiences of Psychosis project
- “Much More Than a Label” project about Personality Disorder

These two projects involve working with people who have lived experience relating to the project topic. The projects aim to give a voice to people who have lived experience of mental health conditions in order to improve the future experiences of people who are receiving support and treatment.

People’s experiences can inform training for NHS staff and other care services as well as influencing strategy and policy via NHS Lothian Mental Health and Wellbeing.

A 21 hour a week Collective Advocacy worker will work across these two projects in order to meet the work demands of each group. Operational support and guidance will be provided in addition to line management.

**TASKS**

- make contact and consult with groups and individuals who have lived experience of using mental health services in Lothian;

- organise and facilitate meetings of the steering groups at times that best suit them;
- help the group get as much information as they want/need to make informed choices and understand their rights;
- use a variety of methods to help the group members to share and discuss their what's important to them;
- be led by the group and assist them to prepare and deliver experience led training to workers, carers, clinicians, students and planners of services etc through the LEARN programme;
- be led by the group and assist them to deliver experience led awareness sessions to students and community groups;
- represent the expressed views and interests of people who use mental health services at meetings where a person from the group cannot attend;
- as directed by the groups, contact and consult with other groups with an interest in the work of the project, e.g. workers, clinicians, planners of services, educational establishments;
- consult with national groups and projects;
- research and collate information from other similar pieces of work;
- distribute publicity about the project;
- use IT to prepare reports, promotional material, and to gather information, and use databases to manage communication within and outwith the project, adhering to GDPR procedures;
- report on agreed targets: recording, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the work done.

#### General tasks

- work independently, prioritise workload and meet deadlines;
- work alongside other Collective Advocacy staff as required as part of the CAPS staff team and contribute to the smooth running of the office;

- have a commitment to and ensure the practical application of CAPS' policies and procedures;
- be aware of boundaries in all the relationships established in carrying out this work;
- ensure that your actions and work behaviours meet the standards set by CAPS;
- any other duties deemed relevant to the post.

## **CONTACTS**

- people who use mental health services and other members of the public;
- mental health service policy makers, planners and commissioners;
- mental health service providers;
- mental health service monitoring groups;
- staff from other advocacy organisations;
- other CAPS' staff, volunteers, Management Committee members and students on placement with the organisation.

## **MANAGEMENT**

You will be line managed by the Chief Executive Officer and receive support and guidance from the Volunteer Co-ordinator. You will be ultimately accountable to the Management Committee and will be expected to report to them when required. You will also take part in team meetings with other CAPS' staff.

## **LOCATION**

This post is based in CAPS' office in Argyle House, Edinburgh and in Musselburgh, East Lothian. However, you will be expected to travel throughout Lothian and occasionally outside the area. In work travel expenses will be reimbursed.

## **FUNDING**

This post is fixed term until 31 March 2022 and will continue thereafter subject to continued funding by NHS Lothian.

## **EMPLOYER**

Your employer will be CAPS' Management Committee.

## **TRAINING**

You will be expected to participate in training and personal development as identified through supervision with your line manager. You may also ask for particular pieces of training. It may not be possible to approve a particular piece of training if we do not have the resources.

You may have to undertake some evening and weekend work, which will be accommodated into the contractual hours.

## **ABOUT CAPS**

CAPS is an Independent Advocacy Organisation which provides Individual Advocacy to people from East Lothian and Midlothian who have mental health issues or are using drugs and alcohol. We also provide advocacy for children and young people going through the Children's Hearings process, in these areas.

We provide Collective advocacy to groups of people across Lothian with mental health issues so they can come together and voice their experiences in order to bring about change for others or improvements in services.

The main purpose of CAPS' work is therefore to assist people, through advocacy, as individuals or as members of a group, to set their own agenda, make their wishes known and to have a say in how they live and what services they use. Visit our website for more details

[www.capsadvocacy.org](http://www.capsadvocacy.org)

We are set up so that the organisation and its staff are as free as possible from any conflicts of interest. We are independent from the people who fund us and those who provide other services to the people we work with. CAPS is a member of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) and we adhere to the Principles and Standards of Independent Advocacy. CAPS was established in 1991.

## **ABOUT THE PROJECTS**

**Much More Than a Label** – written by group members.

*This is an advocacy group in which people with lived experience of personality disorder can work together to have a stronger collective voice.*

*We want to work for tangible change, influence policy, improve services and raise awareness and understanding. We aim to tackle inequality and*

*challenge stigma, power imbalances and oppression/discrimination around personality disorder.*

*We want to be tenacious as a group and not give up. We also recognise that individuals may need to step back at times. They are free to do so and step forward again when they are ready.*

*We hope to benefit from shared learning and ideas. We recognise different voices, experiences, and views within the group and aim to make space for this difference.*

*This is not a space to give or receive advice from other people in the group, nor is it a therapy or support group.*

**The Much More Than a Label group is currently working on creating a booklet about people's experiences of Personality Disorder, gathered by an online survey and personal experiences of the group. They are also creating an online education session so others can learn from their experiences.**

**Experiences of Psychosis** – written by group members.

*The Experiences of Psychosis collective advocacy project works to have a stronger voice for the lived experience of psychosis and to work for change. We are funded to work in Lothian.*

*The work of the project is done by a steering group of people with their own lived experience of psychosis. It has a CAPS worker to facilitate the work.*

*People do not need a diagnosis to be part of the group, but need to self-identify as having their own personal lived experience of psychosis.*

*We recognise that people can have very different experiences of psychosis and we seek to include and present a wide range of perspectives. Often the experience of psychosis is defined by professionals and diagnoses. We aim to emphasise the way people understand their experience for themselves. We acknowledge this can change over time.*

*The group decides what it wants to do – it is experience-led. We look to find ways to share this collective voice. We may have dialogue with others dealing with psychosis, whether as a professional, from their own experience or in the community. We also work and campaign to redress power inequalities and to influence services and society.*

*We see a real need to raise awareness and understanding in society about psychosis. We want to communicate about these experiences and encourage people to reflect on their own approach and attitudes.*

*While the steering group drives the work, we aim to represent and be accountable to all people in Lothian with experience of psychosis. We*

*recognise that we don't represent that range and aim to be accessible and connect beyond those currently involved.*

*Our purpose is always outward looking – to have a stronger voice and work for change. We may do a range of things towards this purpose, for example, creative work or discussion about psychosis, but these will always be for the purpose of advocacy rather than for their own sake.*

**The group is currently creating an online education session so others can learn from their experiences.**

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

For the good of CAPS, all staff have a duty to be flexible enough in their working practice to support the work of other functions within the organisation.

This post will be subject to membership of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme) and appropriate check.

CAPS is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.  
Scottish Charity number SC021772

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