

## Midlothian Carer Support Practitioner (Parent Carers)

<b>POST</b>	Midlothian Carer Support Practitioner (Parent Carers)
<b>EMPLOYER</b>	VOCAL – Voice of Carers Across Lothian
<b>SALARY</b>	SJC scale SCP50, £15.21 - £28,549 per annum VOCAL will match up to 6% pension contribution 32 days paid leave plus six fixed public holidays
<b>HOURS</b>	36 hours per week (including some evening and occasional weekend work)
<b>LOCATION</b>	The postholder will work across Midlothian from VOCAL's Carers Centre at Eskbank

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### **Purpose of the post**

The post holder will support unpaid carers living or caring in Midlothian to access person-centred information, advice and support with a specific focus on supporting parents caring for a child with a disability and/or additional support need. In addition, the post holder will also support parent carers to access a range of additional interventions and services to achieve agreed personal outcomes.

### **Improved outcomes for carers**

The postholder will be part of the VOCAL Midlothian team and contribute to the following outcomes for carers:

- Maintaining my health and wellbeing
- A life of my own
- Changing relationships
- Feeling financially secure
- My choices in caring, including the limits of caring
- Feeling informed, equipped and safe in my caring role
- Feeling confident and able to continue in my caring role
- Feeling actively involved in shaping support
- Quality of life for the person I care for
- Plans for the future care of the person I care for

### **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 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 the content and nature of the support provided, with VOCAL staff acting as knowledgeable facilitators.

### **Practice expectations**

Carer support is offered on a flexible, person-centred basis through personal contact by appointment, telephone, video, 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.

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## **Person Specification**

The postholder 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 maximisation and self-directed support.
- A good understanding of equality and diversity issues and a commitment to supporting people from marginalised groups.

### **Skills**

- Excellent interpersonal and conversational skills that allow effective communication with all
- The ability to listen effectively, understand needs, research and present options

- Ability to deal with carers, professionals and members of the public in a sensitive and person-centred manner
- Good literacy and writing skills with ability to write accurate case notes and reports
- Ability to work collaboratively to coproduce positive outcomes in a timely manner
- Ability and willingness to use social media and web-based tools
- Proven ability of organising, prioritising and managing own work
- Effective research skills and ability to effectively disseminate learning

### **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 a range of sources
- Experience of maintaining detailed electronic client records
- Experience using Microsoft 365 and web browsers on both desktop and mobile devices

### **Desirable**

- Experience of solution focussed client practice
- Experience of using person centred tools or tools for care planning
- Some experience in group work or training
- 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.
- Given the geography of Midlothian, a current driving license and access to a car are desirable

## **Job Description**

### **Carer identification**

- To assist with the identification of carers by working with and promoting VOCAL to a range of partner agencies such as education, children & families services and other third-sector children's services.
- To receive referrals for carers from health and social care staff, third sector agencies and local community agencies, including self-referrals.
- To participate in activities to raise awareness of carer support in a wide variety of settings e.g. roadshows, surgeries and presentations.

## **Carer support**

The postholder 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
- support carers to identify personal outcomes and needs through an Adult Carer Support Plan, and assist them in identifying solutions and interventions to address identified needs.
- identify, plan and broker person-centred solutions by navigating the statutory systems, third sector support and through applications to grants and trusts
- identify and access 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 engage in peer support opportunities and actively engage in online and in-person parent peer groups
- support carers to build resilience and to prevent crisis

## **Carer engagement**

- Provide an accessible service and enable carers to benefit from VOCAL and other supports
- Support carers to participate in consultation and planning structures
- Support carers to participate in regular or one-off focus groups
- Inform and consult carers on relevant issues by assisting in the organisation of carer events and the production of 'Midlothian Carers News' and other publications

## **Monitoring and evaluating carer outcomes**

- Comply with VOCAL's casework model and outcomes focused working, specifically the use of an Adult Carer Support Plan 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:

- participate in the Duty rota as part of the wider Carer Support Team
- work with and support any volunteers assigned to facilitate the work of the post holder or the wider team

- 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 meetings and local planning groups as required
- 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 postholder 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 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 36 hours per week over 5 days. There may be some flexibility over the distribution of hours which will form the normal working week.

The post holder qualifies for 32 days annual leave plus 6 fixed public holidays on a pro rata basis.

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