

Person Specification and Job Description for the post of:

Carer Support Practitioner – (Duty - Financial Wellbeing)

POST	Carer Support Practitioner (Duty – Financial Wellbeing)
EMPLOYER	VOCAL
SALARY	SJC scale SCP52, £16.69 per hour - £31,352 per annum (pro-rata) VOCAL will match up to 6% pension contribution 33 days paid leave plus 6 public holidays (pro rata)
HOURS	36 hours per week over 5 days with occasional evening and weekend work
LOCATION	The postholder will work across Edinburgh from VOCAL's Edinburgh Carer Hub at 60 Leith Walk, with occasional meetings in other Edinburgh locality areas
CONTRACT	Permanent

Purpose of the post

The postholder will provide duty cover, acting as first point of contact, for carers seeking support to improve their financial wellbeing. This will require the postholder to engage with carers by utilising a range of methods including telephone, in person, social media and webchat facilities.

The postholder will also support carers through the duty system to gain access to person-centred support from a variety of means, including welfare benefits, grants, and funds. In addition, the postholder will also support carers to access a range of other additional interventions and services to achieve agreed personal outcomes.

Improved outcomes for carers

The postholder will contribute to VOCAL Edinburgh's eight carer outcomes and undertake carer evaluations to ensure:

- Carers will report being better informed about issues linked to their caring role
- Carers will report improved confidence in their ability to shape services and support
- Carers will report improved confidence in managing their caring role
- Carers will report improved physical and mental wellbeing
- Carers will report improved confidence in their ability to deal with changing relationships resulting from the caring role
- Carers will report improved social wellbeing
- Carers will report improved financial wellbeing
- Carers will report 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 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.

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 knowledge and understanding of carers' rights
- A basic knowledge of welfare rights
- A sound knowledge of local and national universal services
- A sound knowledge of statutory, independent and third sector resources, services and support for carers and people with long term conditions and disabilities
- Experience supporting the completion of applications in order to access a wide range of benefits, grants and funds, this should include paper and online applications
- 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
- Excellent 'customer service' skills
- Good literacy and writing skills with ability to write accurate case notes

- Ability to work collaboratively to coproduce positive outcomes in a timely manner
- Skills and ability and willingness to use social media and web-based tools
- Proven ability of organising, prioritising and managing own work

Experience

- Experience of person-centred support work
- Experience of brokering support from a range of sources
- Experience of maintaining detailed electronic client records
- Experience of working with eligibility criteria
- 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 using social media professionally
- Experience of working with carers
- Given the geography of Edinburgh a current driving license and access to a car are desirable

Job Description

Carer support

The postholder will:

- through a mix of one to one and group support, support a minimum of 150 carers per annum and have an open case load of up to 35/40 carers at any given time
- respond to carer enquiries by telephone, email, social media and face to face
- use solution-focussed, outcome-based conversational techniques and tools to establish the carer's financial wellbeing outcomes, provide initial information, make initial referrals and signposting to relevant support
- following the provision of initial information and support, complete referrals and signposting to other longer-term supports.
- identify, plan and broker person-centred care solutions by navigating the statutory systems, the use of spot purchase budgets and applications to trusts
- support carers to access and complete Adult Carer Support Plans
- support carers to build resilience and to prevent crisis
- work effectively with VOCAL's Money Matters team to ensure appropriate onward support provided when required

Carer engagement

- Support carers to participate in consultation and planning structures within Edinburgh
- Support local developments of carer support services

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.

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:

- 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 the Duty rota as part of the wider Carer Support Team

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 a 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 based at the Edinburgh Carers Centre, but will be expected to carry out a range of duties at different locations in Edinburgh, 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 that will form the normal working week.

VOCAL offers a range of contractual benefits, including:

- generous annual leave entitlement of 33 days plus six public holidays (pro rata for part-time staff). This increases with length of service.
- a 6% pension contribution which increases with length of service
- enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption pay
- paid Carer's Leave
- enhanced sick pay
- a Cycle to Work Scheme.

The postholder will be expected to become a member of the Protection for Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme (Adults). If already a member, a Scheme Update will be required.