

Person Specification and Job Description for the post of:

Carer Support Practitioner (Midlothian) x 2 posts

POST 1	Carer Support Practitioner (Locality - West Midlothian)
POST 2	Carer Support Practitioner (Locality - East Midlothian)
EMPLOYER	VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian
SALARY	SJC scale SCP52, £17.78 - £33,374 per annum (pro rata) VOCAL will match up to 6% pension contribution 33 days paid leave plus six fixed public holidays (pro rata)
HOURS	30 hours per week with some evening work on a rotational basis
LOCATION	Both posts will be based at VOCAL's Carers Centre in Eskbank Post 1 will deliver carer support across the West Midlothian area (Penicuik, Auchendinny, Bilston, Rosewell, Roslin, Loanhead, Bonnyrigg, Lasswade, and surrounding areas). Post 2 will deliver carer support across the East Midlothian area (Dalkeith and Eskbank, Easthouses, Mayfield, Danderhall, Pathhead, Cousland, Gorebridge, Newtongrange, Middleton, Fala and surrounding areas)

Purpose of the posts

Postholders will extend the reach of VOCAL within local communities, supporting carer identification and removing any barriers that may prevent carers from accessing support. Postholders will work across their assigned area to provide locality-based carer support, ensuring carers access the right support at the right time.

Practitioners will support carers to identify their personal outcomes and needs, and plan and access person-centred support for their caring situation, their health and wellbeing and their personal development.

Improved outcomes for carers

Postholders will contribute to the following outcomes for carers:

Carers will 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 conversational techniques which support an asset based approach and build resilience. We support carers to identify and build on their skills, 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, supporting 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

Locality-based working involves adopting a strengths-based approach and having a comprehensive understanding of the local area which increases awareness and recognition of carers, foster collaboration within the community in a creative way, and effectively leverage physical and human resources, financial support, and community spirit to provide better support to carers.

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

Postholders are expected to evidence:

Knowledge

- A sound knowledge of health and social care issues, the impact caring can have on individuals, the needs and situation of carers and a demonstrated commitment to supporting carers
- A good understanding of the range of supports which may alleviate the impact of caring and build carer confidence and resilience
- 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
- Knowledge of the key priorities of Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

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 deal with carers, professionals and members of the public in a sensitive and person-centred manner
- 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 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 of working effectively in a team
- Experience using Microsoft 365 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 of planning or brokering breaks for carers
- Experience in group work or training
- Presentation skills
- Due to the geographical nature of Midlothian, a full driver's licence and access to a car

Job Description

Carer identification

- To assist VOCAL with the identification of carers by working with and promoting VOCAL to a range of partner agencies
- 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

- Postholders are required to support a minimum of 150 carers per annum and have a generic case load of up to 40 carers at any given time – case load will be a blend of all caring situations and will include parent carers through to carers of older adults
- Participate in a Duty rota as part of the wider Carer Support Team
- 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.
- Support carers to build resilience and to prevent crisis
- A sound understanding of the principles of Self-Directed Support and an ability to identify, plan and broker person-centred solutions by navigating the statutory systems, third sector support and through applications to grants and trusts

Carer engagement

- To support carers to participate in consultation and planning structures
- Support carers to participate in regular or one off focus groups
- 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 '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 members of the Carer Support Team, postholders will be expected to consistently and effectively perform a number of general duties:

- to work with and support any volunteers assigned to facilitate their work
- 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.

Accountability, Management and Development

Postholders will benefit from a structured induction programme within the first month of appointment, followed by a 6 month probation period.

Postholders will ultimately be accountable to the Board of Directors. For line management, supervision and support postholders 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 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

Both posts are advertised at 30 hours per week over 4 days. There may be some flexibility over the distribution of hours which will form the normal working week. VOCAL operates a 36-hour week for full time staff.

There will be a six month probationary period.

VOCAL offers a range of contractual benefits, including:

VOCAL CSP – locality based– Midlothian Job Description
Scottish Charity: SC020755

VOCAL – Voice of Carers Across Lothian

- 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
- Cycle to Work Scheme.

Postholders will be expected to become members of the Protection for Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Adults Scheme. If already members, a PVG Update will be requested.

