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**Job Description**

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| **Role** | Welfare Rights Officer |
| **Responsible to** | Head of Department |
| **Department** | Services Department |

**1. Main objectives of the post**

1.1 To provide information, advice,practical assistance and representation on welfare benefits to individuals and families affected by epilepsy.

1.2 To develop information on welfare rights in a variety of formats.

1.3 To contribute to policy development in relation to welfare benefits including initiatives, campaigns and consultations.

1.4 To prepare and provide training to internal and external audiences as required.

**2. Accountability**

2.1 To the Head of Department on a day-to-day basis and ultimately, through the Chief Executive, to the Board of Directors.

**3. Principal Duties**

**Welfare Benefits Advice**

3.1 Providing welfare benefits information via:

* face to face meetings
* telephone
* electronic media
* information days

3.2 Assisting clients to complete forms and signposting them to relevant agencies and services.

3.3 Carrying out preparatory work on behalf of clients in relation to:

* assessments
* mandatory reconsiderations/redeterminations
* Appeals

3.4 Managing a caseload of complex welfare benefits cases including representing clients at First-tier Tribunal appeals and Upper Tribunals.

3.5 Maintaining accurate notes and records. Completing case reviews.

3.6 Working in partnership with statutory organisations e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, Social Security Scotland and Epilepsy Specialist Nurses.

**Training and Information**

3.6 Maintaining up to date knowledge of welfare benefits including reforms affecting people living in Scotland by:

* attending training events
* conducting research
* attending relevant peer networks

3.7 Developing and providing welfare benefits training and awareness talks to a variety of audiences such as:

* Scottish Parliament
* Department for Work and Pensions
* Elected representatives

3.8 Creating, reviewing and updating information resources regarding welfare benefits including:

* leaflets
* factsheets

3.9 Contributing to the production of:

* website content
* social media content

**General**

3.10 Supporting the delivery of Epilepsy Scotland’s information events as required.

3.11 Identifying trends and common experiences of people affected by epilepsy in relation to the welfare benefits system.

3.12 Positively representing the organisation and creating a positive image of Epilepsy Scotland’s services with key stakeholders.

3.13 Providing information for reporting purposes as required.

3.14 Participating in the organisation’s Annual Appraisal and regular Support and Supervision processes.

**Health and Safety**

3.15 Ensuring high standards of health and safety are maintained by adhering to the organisation’s Health & Safety policy at all times.

**Other**

3.16 Any other relevant duties as required.

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**Welfare Rights Officer**

**Person Specification**

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| **Personal Attributes** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Qualifications  * Relevant welfare benefits qualification or equivalent skills * ls through ongoing professional/personal development | \* |  |
| **Experience**   * Extensive experience of providing welfare rights and benefits advice * Practical experience of working with people affected by epilepsy * Practical experience of working with people who have difficulties with communication * Experience of AdvicePro or similar case management system | \*  \*  \* | \* |
| Knowledge  * An understanding of the issues faced by people affected by epilepsy as they attempt to access disability and other benefits. * Experience of welfare rights advice work, including working from legislation and case law * Thorough up to date knowledge of the benefits system. * Understanding of the issues surrounding epilepsy | \*  \*  \* | \* |
| Skills & Qualities  * Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to quickly build trust with service users in a confidential setting * Ability to influence key decision makers within the welfare benefits system * Excellent verbal and written communication skills * Represent people at appeal tribunals and other hearings. * Excellent report writing skills with the ability to capture evidence and complete legal submissions in line with welfare rights and benefit system processes. * Ability to work on own initiative and collaborate effectively working as a team * Excellent organisational and time management skills | \*  \*  \*  \*  \*  \*  \* |  |

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| Other  * Ability to work to clear deadlines * Ability to work occasional evenings and weekends as required. * Ability to travel within Scotland. | \*  \*  \* |  |