



## **Recruitment Pack – Specialist Practitioner (Adults with Autism)**

**We are delighted to bring you this important role to work at The Anchor as a Specialist Practitioner for Adults with Autism.**

**The Anchor SCIO is a values-led charity that supports people on the edges of crisis, isolation and exclusion. Our work focuses on belonging, connection and relational safety. We specialise in trauma-responsive and community-rooted support - creating spaces where people are seen, heard and held.**

**We work alongside people with lived experience of mental health distress, suicide, neurodivergence, gender-based violence and social injustice - and build services that respond to real lives, not just systems.**

**We are passionate in our approach to the community, but professional every step of the way. We are creative and innovative - everything we do is rooted in relationships.**



Thank you for taking the time out to look at our Specialist Practitioner for Adults with Autism vacancy.

We are a grassroots charity dedicated to supporting our local community's mental health and wellbeing needs. We have recently re-branded and have a vision to support our whole community, including our innovative work with young people.

Our staff and volunteers take a Trauma Informed & Responsive approach to supporting our community, by using Time, Space and Compassion to create a safe space and environment for all of our members.

You will help support our adult members with autism on their journey through the charity as funded through Inspiring Scotland / Scottish Governments Adult with Autism Fund.

If this is the challenge you are looking for, we want to hear from you!

Chris Paul  
Chief Executive



**Salary: Grade 4 (£31,415 - £35,278)**

**Fixed Term: March 2028 (extension dependent on additional funding)**

**We are recruiting a compassionate and skilled Specialist Practitioner to deliver specialist support for adults with autism who may be at risk of:**

- **experiencing suicidal thoughts, self-harm, or emotional distress**
- **exposure to online harms such as radicalisation, incel culture or violent content**
- **becoming isolated, disengaged or involved in harmful behaviours, including gender-based violence**

**This role involves high-trust, relational, one-to-one and small group work with adults who may feel disconnected from traditional services. You'll be supporting individuals to make sense of their experiences, build healthy relationships, critically explore harmful influences, and connect into meaningful community life.**

**You will work closely with a network of local and national partners - including autism organisations, justice and mental health services, adult support and protection teams, and peer-led groups - to ensure that support is joined-up, relational and rooted in community. You will upskill and provide training for internal staff around autism.**

**This post is funded through the Scottish Government's Autistic Adult Support Fund and forms part of The Anchor's wider Belonging Service Framework.**

## **Role and Wider Information**

### ***Experience, Knowledge and Skills***

The ideal candidate will hold a relevant professional qualification in health, social care, education or community development. They will have direct knowledge relating to social care/ psychology or / and bring extensive frontline experience. They will be a confident and reflective practitioner, skilled in relational work with autistic adults and able to hold complexity, risk and hope in equal measure. This role requires someone who is both autonomous in managing a caseload assisting others with caseloads and collaborative in shaping wider systems of support.

#### **1. Direct and Enhanced Practice with Autistic Adults**

- Deliver high-trust, trauma-informed and autism-responsive support to individuals experiencing distress, including suicidal ideation, self-harm, and behaviours that challenge.
- Demonstrate advanced mental health and autism awareness expertise, with a deep understanding of how co-occurring conditions, masking, sensory sensitivities and communication needs influence risk.
- Hold insight into the long-term impacts of emotional-based school avoidance, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, and how disrupted education pathways can contribute to isolation and suicide risk in young adulthood.
- Create safe, structured, person-led spaces for individuals to explore identity, belonging, neurodivergence and harmful online influences.
- Support people to develop self-regulation, resilience, and emotional literacy, while honouring neurodiverse strengths and processing styles.

#### **2. Online Harms and Harmful Influences**

- Critically explore radicalisation, incel culture, misogyny, hate movements, conspiracy theories and harmful digital spaces with care, curiosity and skilled challenge.
- Help autistic adults recognise online risk and exploitation while co-developing safer strategies for navigating digital environments.
- Share emerging insights with colleagues and partners, contributing to collective understanding of online harms and their real-life impacts.

#### **3. Community Engagement, Co-Design and Collaboration**

- Build strong relationships with partners across health, social care, justice, housing, education, autism organisations and peer-led networks.
- Co-design integrated responses and support plans alongside autistic adults, families, carers and professionals.
- Actively contribute to collaborative forums, multi-agency meetings and system discussions, modelling values-led and trauma-responsive practice.
- Connect individuals into opportunities for volunteering, mentoring, advocacy, peer support and lifelong community participation.

#### 4. Relational Safeguarding and Suicide Risk Practice

- Respond confidently to suicide risk, self-harm and safeguarding concerns, using a balance of professional authority and relational connection.
- Apply advanced suicide prevention skills, undertaking risk assessments and co-creating collaborative safety plans that are realistic, adaptive and person-led.
- Work within complex safeguarding frameworks and Adult Support and Protection processes, maintaining dignity, trust and inclusion throughout.
- Engage in reflective supervision, team debriefs and peer consultation to ensure safe and accountable practice.

#### 5. Evidence, Accountability and Reflective Practice

- Maintain accurate, meaningful and confidential records that balance narrative reflection with clear evidence of outcomes and impact.
- Use data and evidence-based tools to track progress, inform risk planning and contribute to service-wide evaluation.
- Demonstrate accountability to members, colleagues, funders and partners through transparent and ethical record-keeping.
- Critically reflect on personal practice, identity and power, actively engaging in reflective supervision and learning spaces.

#### 6. Autonomy, Caseload and Professional Development

- Work independently, managing a varied caseload with initiative, reliability and sound judgement.
- Balance autonomy with teamwork, seeking support appropriately and contributing to a culture of mutual accountability.
- Commit to ongoing professional development, advanced training and community of practice engagement, ensuring practice remains evidence-led and responsive to emerging needs.
- Innovate and co-produce as part of a developing model of support, shaping practice that can influence both local and national approaches to suicide prevention and autistic adult wellbeing.

---

#### **Lived Experience**

We actively welcome applications from people with lived experience of the issues our community faces, including mental health challenges, suicide, trauma, poverty, gender-based violence, neurodivergence, care experience or conflict with the law. We believe lived experience provides valuable insight, empathy and authenticity to practice, and we encourage candidates who bring both personal and professional understanding to this role.

## Essential Criteria

- **Qualifications & Experience**
  - Relevant qualification in health, social care, education or community development (minimum HNC / SVQ Level 3, or equivalent experience).
  - Proven experience supporting autistic adults, particularly those at risk of isolation, distress, or complex needs.
- **Autism & Mental Health Expertise**
  - Strong understanding of autism, including communication needs, masking, sensory experience and co-occurring mental health conditions.
  - Deep awareness of how mental health challenges, suicide risk and emotional-based school avoidance (including the long-term impact of pandemic disruption) shape pathways into isolation in young adulthood.
- **Suicide Prevention & Safeguarding**
  - Demonstrated skills in responding to suicide risk and self-harm, including assessment, relational engagement and co-creation of safe plans.
  - Confident knowledge of safeguarding and Adult Support and Protection processes, and ability to apply them in complex, relational contexts.
- **Online Harms & Harmful Influences**
  - Strong knowledge of online cultures and content, with awareness of exploitation, radicalisation and harmful influence on autistic adults.
  - Proven understanding of the intersection between incel culture, masculinity, misogyny and gender-based violence, and their impact on wellbeing.
- **Practice & Approach**
  - Confidence supporting individuals who may present with behaviours that challenge, using a relational and non-judgemental approach.
  - Commitment to trauma-responsive, strengths-based and person-led practice.
  - Ability to critically reflect on power, identity and personal practice within a values-led team.
- **Collaboration & Caseload**
  - Experience of partnership working across health, social care, justice, education and community sectors.
  - Ability to work independently with a caseload, exercising initiative and sound professional judgement, while contributing to collaborative service delivery.
  - Experience in caseload management.
- **Evidence & Communication**
  - Skilled in accurate and meaningful record-keeping, with an ability to use evidence and data for accountability, evaluation and learning.
  - Excellent communication skills - verbal, written and relational - with the ability to engage diverse audiences.

## Desirable Criteria

- Lived experience of neurodivergence, mental health challenges, suicide, trauma or social exclusion.
- Training in areas such as ASIST to evidence CPD.
- Experience in community mental health, advocacy, peer-led or co-designed services.
- Familiarity with reflective practice, service design and evaluation methods.
- Access to a car and full driving licence (desirable but not essential).
- Degree desirable, however, a follow up conversation around this can be sought prior to application.
- Post qualifying knowledge and accreditation in neurodiversity and / or autism specialism.



- A team culture rooted in relational practice, trust and shared learning.
- Trauma-Responsive Reflective Time and Support, including life-balance days and access to counselling and wider mental and physical health supports.
- Flexible and reflective working environment.
- Meaningful work that supports our community.
- Ongoing training and opportunities to shape service design.

To apply for this post, please send a cover letter and CV to our Hub Manager, Stacey Caldwell, at the following email address:

[stacey.caldwell@Anchor-Scio.co.uk](mailto:stacey.caldwell@Anchor-Scio.co.uk)

Should you wish to have an informal discussion prior to applying please specify this in an email.

**Closing date:** 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Interviews will take place Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

Thank you for your interest!