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Scottish Charity: SCO36075 Limited Company: 275168

Volunteer Advocate Job Description

Job Title: Volunteer Independent Advocate
Location: Dumfries and Galloway
Salary: No salary but reasonable out of pocket expenses will be paid
Hours: As available and/or as required by client
Responsible to: Chief Executive / Service Co-ordinators
Age: You must be 18 years or over

Main Purpose of Job

To work in partnership with clients, to empower and enable them to be heard so that they take as much control of their situation as is possible.

You must be able to commit to the service for a minimum of one year.

What's in it for you?

You will receive training on independent advocacy, learning disability, the mental health (care & treatment) (Scotland) act 2003, adult support and protection as well as listening and communication skills and much more. You will be mentored and have access to peer support and supervision. The skills you will learn are transferrable and could be added to your CV to help with any future employment and if required we can also support you with a reference.

You will make a difference to other people's lives; develop new skills and meet new people and you will work alongside a small friendly team.

About us

Dumfries and Galloway Advocacy Service is commissioned by Dumfries and Galloway Council and NHS D&G to deliver services that are:

- Independent and professional -
- Provide individual (one to one) advocacy that is issue focused;
- Meet statutory requirements and Scottish Government priorities; and
- Have as a key principle 'Independence of mind, independence of place and independence of funding'.

We are commissioned to deliver the following services –

- Adult Generic Advocacy (over 18)
- Adult Advocacy in terms of the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

The aim of the adult generic independent advocacy is –

- to promote empowerment of adult residents of Dumfries and Galloway who require help, in whatever context, to understand the options open to them, to enable them to make informed choices and/or to make their own views known.

The aim of the adult Mental Health Act independent advocacy is –

- as above, plus
- to provide independent advocacy to people with a mental disorder in accordance with the requirements of the Mental Health Act, enabling people to be empowered and their views heard.

Key Duties Include

- Listen to the client's concerns and story
- Empower and enable the client to achieve as close to their preferred outcome as possible by:
 - (i) Providing information
 - (ii) Defining options and choices to be taken which are based on information
- Support the client through any procedures which may be necessary
 - (i) Writing or drafting letters
 - (ii) Attending meetings
 - (iii) Research
 - (iv) Review Progress
- Report to the Service Co-ordinators on the progress of client work or any problems.
- Keep an accurate record of all meetings and communications involved in a client's case.
- Keep the client fully informed of the progress of their case and all information involved.
- Attend and participate in support, supervision and appraisal meetings.
- Attend ongoing training.
- Liaising with professionals from other organisations.

You must have the ability to:

Listen
Empathise
Empower
Enable
Be non-directive and non-judgmental
Deal with emotive and distressing issues
Keep confidences (*organisational exceptions*) and boundaries
Express yourself clearly in verbal / written form
Work as part of a team and on one's own
Access to transport

Please Note: There are no minimum hours per week expected of our volunteers however, we ask that you are as flexible as possible to be able to cover client meetings and also that you sign up to volunteer to our service for a minimum of one year. This is due to the time taken through training, shadowing and mentoring.