



Registered Charity No: 1125679
Company Registration No: 6599429

Job Description & Person Specification: Victim Advocate (Bristol)

SWAN supports and empowers people to have a voice, by ensuring access to quality, independent advocacy. We believe that everyone has the right to be heard & respected, the right to choice in decisions about themselves and the right to be safe.

We support adult victims of crime and antisocial behaviour who have barriers or additional support requirements linked to, or have been targeted because of their:

- Race
- Religion
- Sexuality
- Gender Identity
- Mental health issues
- Learning difficulties
- Physical disabilities
- Problems associated with old age
- Problems associated with social exclusion or isolation

Advocates help victims cope and recover from their experience and to engage with the criminal justice system if they choose to do so.

Victim Advocates provide advocacy alongside practical and emotional support. They offer direct support to individuals who have been victims of crime or antisocial behavior, especially in relation to dealing with the impact of that crime, and any related criminal or legal proceedings. People may also require support in accessing or changing benefits, housing, employment or personal security all of which may have been affected by the crime committed.

Victim Advocates work directly with individuals and their support workers or other professionals to assist in assessing need and signposting for ongoing support.

Our Victim Advocate in Bristol will engage with diverse individuals and groups (including BME and LGBTQ+) to raise awareness of the service and ensure it is accessible.

They will also champion the needs of diverse victims across the Victim Advocacy workforce and service area, advising how to make the service more accessible.

The post is subject to 2 references including previous employer, evidence of right to work in the UK and an enhanced DBS check.

Reporting to: Victim Advocates report to the VOCAS Team Manager

Employees need to be flexible and adaptable to succeed in an organisation that prides itself on the delivery of individual advocacy and support driven by the needs of the client, whilst also meeting the needs of overarching contract requirements. You may therefore be required to undertake other duties, roles and responsibilities.



Responsibilities:

- To work as part of a team to provide outcome focussed, person directed emotional & practical support and advocacy as outlined in the project specification and in line with relevant legislation, regulations, codes of practice and internal policy & procedure.
- To prioritise all work to meet the needs of victims and decision makers.
- To effectively manage individual case loads.
- Ensuring all relevant victims have clearly understood support plans that include the need to end the support at an appropriate time
- To liaise, communicate and negotiate effectively with a wide range of people
- To promote the rights, equality, diversity and needs of all by ensuring they are respected and valued as individuals.
- Facilitate Peer-Support Groups and Self-Advocacy Workshops
- To identify risks in delivering the service and ensure compliance with risk management procedures.
- To understand the relevant legislation, Codes of Practice and all organisational procedures in relation to safeguarding, including the need for timely and accurate reporting.
- To understand individual responsibility for organisational and personal health and safety

Duties:

- To act on behalf of the victim at all times, following their instruction, taking action as directed by them and representing their wishes or choices.
- To offer individual, targeted support that addresses the needs of the individual victim and their circumstances
- To have knowledge of the Criminal Justice System and the impact that crime and antisocial behaviour can have on individuals
- To promote self advocacy as a strategy to build confidence and independence.
- To network within local communities and key organisations to promote the service.
- To ensure accurate recording and reporting of all data.
- A commitment to training and continual personal development.

Skills, experience or knowledge required for the role:

- Providing support to people who are described as vulnerable, have additional support needs or needs associated with diversity, stigma or victimisation.
- Communication suitable for a wide variety of people; including those with diverse backgrounds, members of the LGBTQ community and those who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health issues or have been assessed as lacking capacity.
- An understanding of the criminal justice system and the impact of crime and anti social behaviour
- Managing work time and work priorities, managing pressure and delivering on deadlines.
- Working individually but acknowledging the importance of being part of a team
- A commitment to the belief that everyone has a right to be heard, have choice and control, to be safe from harm and to live the life they choose.