

Volunteer Community Champion



Role Description

What is a Volunteer Community Champion?

Volunteer Community Champions support us in promoting the services we provide, by raising awareness of what we offer, assisting with events, and improving engagement with the community. You will have strong links with the local community and understand the needs of local citizens.

Supported by: Supervising Advocate

Role available in: Bristol, Isle of Wight, Somerset and South Gloucestershire

This post is subject to satisfactory application, interview, references and DBS.

Benefits of Volunteering with SWAN

- The opportunity to develop new and existing skills and gain experience volunteering in a charity
- The opportunity to meet new people
- The opportunity to build a Personal Development Portfolio with full training and ongoing access to keep knowledge and skills up to date
- Out of pocket expenses reimbursed – mileage £0.45 per mile, Bike £0.20 per mile plus parking tickets, bus and train fares etc
- Support to progress to paid employment
- The satisfaction of knowing you are making a vital difference to the work of SWAN
- The satisfaction of empowering communities to know what is available
- Being part of an organisation, which has strong values and provides help and support to those most marginalised in society
- The opportunity to link organisations
- Wellbeing support available both internally and externally

What will you be doing?

The main thing you will be doing is promoting our Advocacy and Be Heard Services

Statutory Advocacy Services

The Statutory Advocacy Services provide Independent Advocacy in 4 key areas. Supporting clients who lack capacity (Independent Mental Capacity Advocate, IMCA), clients who are sectioned under the Mental Health Act (Independent Mental Health Advocate, IMHA), have significant difficulty, and need support to make decisions (Independent Care Act Advocate), making a health complaint (Independent Health Complaints Advocate, IHCA) or who are



struggling to be heard and need support with issues such as benefit appeals or accessing services (Generic Advocate).

Area: Bristol, Isle of Wight, Somerset and South Gloucestershire

Be Heard

Be Heard is our service wide programme which is aimed at providing self-advocacy training to the communities in which we work. We do this by running self-advocacy workshops, drop-in sessions and group and 1 to 1 training for both vulnerable people in the community and the professionals who work with them.

You will promote these services by

- Attending events in the area to promote SWAN
- Liaising with and visit community groups
- Researching and identifying areas where clients may not be referred to our services
- Helping us to think of ways to better access the local community and potential clients
- Promoting our Be Heard Self-Advocacy Programme to other organisations

What type of person are we looking for?

- Positive attitude towards vulnerable clients who may have a variety of complex needs
- Good local knowledge about services or a willingness to find out what is available for people
- Available 2-4 hours per month
- Be confident in communicating both verbal and written information
- Experience of talking to groups is desirable
- Knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding is desirable but full training is given
- Comfortable using Microsoft Office, emails and database
- Computer literate however full training is given in the systems we use and there is ongoing support for all IT

Please note that while the skills and knowledge listed are good to have, SWAN also appreciates that life experience can make you the ideal volunteer. We are keen to hear from people who have experienced adversity and difficulties in speaking out for themselves, who have found their voice and for whom advocacy would have been beneficial. If this sounds like you, then do please get in touch. The most important attribute is a drive to help others know what is available to them and how our service may be of benefit.

What we need to you to do?

- Attend training and induction period of 6 months to ensure the role is suited and meeting requirements
- After gaining an appropriate level of experience, to participate in relevant on-going training to keep up to date with services, procedures, guidelines, and legislation that affect the organisation and the clients who need the services
- To take individual responsibility to alert the organisation to health and safety matters, and general organisational needs and issues.
- To attend regular team meetings/ briefings so you are up to date on what we are delivering
- To attend 6-8 weekly supervision as outlined in the Volunteer Policy

Equality and Diversity Statement

Equality, diversity and inclusion are core to our values. In the selection of our staff and volunteers, we are committed to equality with regards to protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome applications from people with disabilities, who are culturally diverse and who have used advocacy services. The Volunteer must ensure a positive commitment towards equality by treating others fairly and not committing any form of direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation, or harassment of any description and to promote positive working relations amongst employees, volunteers, suppliers and customers.