

Job Description: Advocacy Support Officer

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.

Role Overview

The Advocacy Support Team are the first point of contact for the organisation, responsible for handling calls, responding to enquiries and triaging incoming referrals for all our services from a range of professionals and vulnerable people.

This is a busy and demanding role which requires a high standard of communication skills with the ability to remain calm under pressure. The role requires the ability to learn, understand and apply a wealth of knowledge about our individual services. It also requires the ability to be able to process data quickly and accurately.

A friendly, helpful individual, you will go that extra mile to ensure our clients are always happy with the service provided. You will need to be a strong team player who is flexible and willing to learn new processes and information. A clear communicator with the ability to remain calm in stressful situations and deal with very complex issues in a professional manner is essential.

An Advocacy Support Officer is always present in the office 9am–5pm Monday to Friday. All members of the team need to remain flexible in their working hours to ensure cover during sickness and annual leave periods.

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

General Information

The Employee must always carry out their responsibilities with due regard to SWAN's policies and procedures in particular; Health & Safety, Financial Authorisation, Confidentiality with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and all other relevant regulations.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are core to our values. In the selection of our staff, 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 disabled people. The Employee 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, suppliers and customers.

The above Job Description is not intended to be exhaustive; the duties and responsibilities may therefore vary over time according to the changing needs of the company.

Reporting to:

Advocacy Support Officers report to the Advocacy Support Team Supervisor who reports to the Operations Support Manager.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Receive all incoming referrals via telephone and email
- Accurately record all essential information on SWAN's client database
- Provide assistance, advice and information about specialist advocacy services.
- Provide information and signposting to other organisations
- Triage and process complex referrals across all organisation and partner services
- Deal with all enquirers in a friendly, professional, and helpful manner
- Manage challenging communications from distressed and/or vulnerable clients and recognise when to consult with and/or escalate calls to the Advocacy Support Team Manager
- Ensure consent and confidentiality protocols are adhered to and the referral processes are managed in the appropriate manner
- Timely and accurately record data
- Act as first point of call to advocates in the field who may need assistance
- Promote the rights, equality, diversity and needs of all by ensuring they are respected and valued as individuals
- Print and bind Living Well Plans
- Administration of incoming and outgoing post
- Greet visitors to the office
- Admin associated with the Independent Mental Capacity Act role
- Additional administrative tasks, as necessary
- Respond to lone working issues, when necessary

Person Specification: Advocacy Support Officer

Qualification requirements

Willingness to undertake Independent Advocacy (City & Guilds level 2) training, with the opportunity to work towards the formal qualification.

Skills, experience or knowledge required for the role

- Working with people who are described as vulnerable, or who have additional support needs
- Communication skills suitable for a wide variety of people, some of whom may have learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health issues or have been assessed as lacking capacity
- Managing work time and work priorities, managing pressure and delivering on deadlines
- Use of technology, including data bases and telephony systems
- Ability to input data quickly and accurately
- Ability to remain calm under pressure and whilst dealing with complex issues in a sensitive manner
- Working individually but acknowledging the importance of being part of a team
- Managing work time and work priorities and delivering on deadlines
- Willingness to undertake training in advocacy and learn new processes and information on an ongoing basis
- 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

Desirable

- Knowledge of the Acts governing best practice: Care Act, Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act
- Knowledge of all types of advocacy

Attributes needed

Advocacy Support Officers are expected to always uphold the organisation's principles and values and to contribute towards building and maintaining a culture of trust and personal responsibility through their behaviours.

The personal attributes needed to succeed in the role and contribute to the organisation's culture are as follows:

Communication skills

- Ability to adapt communication style depending on audience
- Communicates well on a 1-2-1 basis using different questioning and listening skills
- Seeks and interprets information accurately
- Understands instructions

Decision making

- Able to make decisions which are consistent
- Able to consider a variety of alternatives before making a decision
- Takes personal responsibility for all decisions
- Supports collaborative decision making

Influencing others and negotiation

- Able to convey benefits to a course of action
- Makes positive suggestions to encourage commitment from others

Teamwork

- Inclusive of others by allowing suggestions for the service, sharing information and solutions
- Encourages team co-operation
- Pro-actively supports others

Personal Responsibility

- Takes personal responsibility for own performance
- Perseveres to achieve individual and team goals

Client Focus

- Understands and is sensitive to clients' wants and needs
- Able to act on client needs, issues and complaints
- Uses good judgement when dealing with clients
- Monitors and follows up corrective action
- Works to improve client satisfaction
- Encourages others to improve client satisfaction

Pro-activity and Planning

- Ability to plan for self and others

Integrity

- Understands, demonstrates and promotes the values of the organisation
- Supports the aims of the organisation
- Delivers what they promise
- Treats all others with the same respect
- Works ethically and honestly
- Strives for and meets high standards

Positive Attitude

- Enthusiastic and cares about the organisation and its aims
- Takes pride in their role and aims for success
- Actively models positive organisational behaviour
- Creates an environment where positive attitudes can thrive
- Works to overcome obstacles

Agreement:

Employee's signature:		Date:	
Line Manager's signature:		Date:	