

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE	Senior Domestic Abuse Refuge Practitioner
HOURS	37.5 hours per week plus on call rota duty
SALARY	£25,000 per annum
DURATION	Permanent
LOCATION	Basildon, Rochford, Castle Point, Essex
RESPONSIBLE FOR	In collaboration with Operational Manager – Basildon, responsible for Refuge Practitioners, Facilities staff, Contractors and Volunteers

JOB PURPOSE:

The post holder will support the Operational Manager – Basildon to lead the Refuge Team and be responsible for delivering high standards of support and advocacy for women and their children who are residents within Changing Pathways refuge accommodation.

The post holder will ensure that the highest standards of practice are sustained and that all Refuge staff have, on a day to day basis, the guidance and support they require.

The post holder will also manage their own caseload and deputise for the Operational Manager – Basildon as required.

MAIN DUTIES:

- With the Operational Manager – Basildon, take a lead in managing the high and medium risk Refuge service user workload, ensuring that through effective tasking and coordination the team is able to manage risk, needs and choices of existing service users and referrals to best effect.

- Be proactive and take initiative to enable the best risk, safety and recovery plans to be delivered for service users, advocating effectively with partner agencies and escalating appropriately as necessary.
- Work with refuge colleagues to manage new referrals for vacant refuge spaces within the site, ensuring the suitability of new residents for refuge space.
- Ensure that new referrals are allocated within the stated timeframes and that initial needs and risk assessments are undertaken; that plans to manage and address risks and needs are initiated in line with standards.
- Complete risk assessments with individuals using the Safe Lives DASH and make referrals to the local MARAC as necessary.
- To ensure service users have in place, and have continuously reviewed with them, robust safety plans to support in the event that a crisis arises and they need to be made safe using additional support.
- Ensure excellent professional relationships are forged and maintained with both service users and agencies.
- Actively manage a caseload of individuals based in refuge accommodation who are or have experienced domestic abuse, working with individuals to reduce their risk, increase their safety and improve their well-being.
- Work with service users to holistically assess their individual needs and formulate and regularly review a support plan to achieve positive outcomes.
- Support and advocate for individuals in a range of areas including but not limited to: safety; risk; housing; finances and budgeting; legal and civil orders; parenting; children; physical and mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues.
- Work with service users and advocate on their behalf to secure suitable move on housing solutions.

- Support refuge residents with applications for housing and other welfare benefit claims and collect amenities and other rent chargers from residents on a weekly basis.
- Work in a manner which ensures cultural sensitivity, addresses discrimination and other barriers to accessing service.
- Identify safeguarding concerns and report any concerns immediately to duty manager and follow organisational procedures for reporting to social services as necessary.
- Support and advocate for service users at meetings including core groups and team around the child.
- Deliver group work and facilitate service user led activities including consultation as required.
- Represent the organisation at external partnership meetings including MARAC and other multi-agency meetings.
- Ensure the timely and accurate input of service user data into the organisation's case management system and all other administrative duties associated with the role.
- Prepare regular monitoring reports as required by funder and contribute to internal monitoring procedures as required.
- Ensure the highest standards of health and safety are maintained across all sites and report any issues as a matter of urgency.
- Ensure VOID bed spaces are cleaned and prepared for advertisement for new referrals within a timely manner, working with Facilities to achieve this.
- Participate in regular management supervision, case reviews, clinical and group supervision to ensure the highest standards of support and advocacy.
- Maintain strict organisational confidentiality, professional boundaries and security procedures.
- Participate in out of hours on call service on a rota basis.

GENERAL:

1. Identify own training and development needs and participate in all training courses relevant to the Changing Pathway's commitment to providing high quality services.
2. Work at all times with due regard to the policies and procedures of Changing Pathways, including financial regulations, participating in their development and amendment where required.
3. Willingness to work outside normal working hours including evenings and weekends and to participate in promotional, fundraising and income generating events, activities and any other duties as may be reasonably required by the organisation.

OTHER:

1. The post is subject to a DBS disclosure which will be carried out at appointment of a candidate.
2. This post is subject to completion of a six-month probationary period.
3. Must be mobile to visit sites and work across the whole contract area as required.
4. Post is open to women only under the Equality Act 2010, schedule 9, part 1

This job description is not designed to provide an exhaustive list of tasks and therefore the post holder is expected to undertake any other reasonable duties within the scope of the post as specified by their line manager.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE		
Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Assessed?
Experience of working with individuals experiencing domestic violence and abuse	E	Application Form/Interview

Experience of managing a caseload of individuals, assessing their needs and formulating support plans	E	Application Form/Interview
Experience of completing Safe Lives DASH risk assessments, making referrals and attending MARAC	E	Application Form/Interview
Experience of working in a women's refuge or supported housing environment	E	Application Form/Interview
Experience of identifying safeguarding concerns and reporting concerns in line with local procedures	E	Application Form/Interview
Experience of multi-agency partnership working and representing organisations at external meetings and conferences	E	Application Form/Interview
Experience of working with individuals with complex needs such as drug or alcohol issues and/or poor mental health	D	Application Form/Interview
KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING		
Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Assessed?
Excellent understanding of all inter personal violence (including the Power and Control Wheel)	E	Application Form/Interview
Good understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people	E	Application Form/Interview
Excellent understanding of Housing Law and the ability to translate this knowledge to the benefit of service users	E	Application Form/Interview
Comprehensive knowledge of current welfare rights legislation and its impact on individuals leaving abusive relationships	E	Application Form/Interview
Good knowledge of the criminal justice system and civil and legal orders available to victims of domestic abuse	E	Application Form/Interview
Comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding procedures and how to recognise types of abuse including neglect and physical harm	E	Application Form/Interview
Good understanding of correct and effective information sharing between agencies	E	Application Form/Interview
Knowledge of local support services for individuals living in the Thurrock and South Essex	D	Application Form/Interview
SKILLS AND ABILITIES		
Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Assessed?

Ability to work in a manner that empowers service users to make decisions and choices about their recovery from domestic abuse	E	Application Form/Interview
Highly skilled in making sound judgements in crisis and difficult situations	E	Application Form/Interview
Ability to work in a flexible and responsive manner whilst prioritising work within a busy environment	E	Application Form/Interview
Excellent communication skills and the ability to work in a confidential manner	E	Application Form/Interview
Able to develop, sustain and evaluate joint partnership work between agencies to obtain positive outcomes for service users	E	Application Form/Interview
Good IT skills including the ability to use Microsoft Office and organisational case management databases	E	Application Form/Interview
EDUCATION		
Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Assessed?
A good standard of general education	E	Application Form
A Save Lives IDVA or Women's Aid DAPA qualification or other social work/care, housing, counselling qualification	D	Application Form
OTHER		
Criteria	Essential/ Desirable	Assessed?
Commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice	E	Application Form/Interview
Willingness to undertake training and a commitment to continuous personal development	E	Application Form/Interview
Willingness to work flexibly and able to travel to different sites and venues	E	Application Form/Interview

Employee Signature		Date	
Manager Signature		Date	