

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Specialist Advocate
Responsible To:	Team Manager, SASS, Southwark
Responsible For:	Assertive outreach, advocacy and support to women experiencing domestic abuse (DA) who are finding it hard to engage with DA services
Conditions of Service:	<p>Full-time (37.5 hours) or part-time role (0.5 fte) available</p> <p>25 days annual leave</p> <p>Public Holidays</p> <p>6 month probationary period</p> <p>3% matched contribution to SWA stakeholder pension scheme</p>
Salary:	£26,000 - £28,500 depending on experience.
Contract:	Fixed-term contract 2 years 2 months
Location:	Southwark including colocation with Southwark Children's Services

Main Purpose of Job

- Ensure women who are experiencing domestic abuse, are known to Southwark Children's Services (SCS) or MARAC and are finding it hard to engage with DA services, are supported to reduce risk and make safe choices. Many women will be socially excluded and have complex/multiple needs
- Learn from innovative, bespoke assertive outreach/ engagement models implemented in My Sister's Place (MSP), adapt it to the local context, and implement them effectively

Tasks and Responsibilities

General

- Work closely with SCS/MARAC to identify women who could benefit from intensive support and develop a joint understanding (including liaising with relevant external agencies) of the reasons why they are not engaging with existing DA services
- Use an assertive outreach approach, based on good practice in MSP and Pause, to engage women with the service
- Promote social inclusion, encourage independence and develop personal resilience of women affected by violence and with multiple needs
- Ensure that women are aware of the support for their children that the project provides

Casework

- Deliver solution-focused, trauma informed, casework interventions with women who have experienced VAWG and may have multiple needs
- Provide emotional support using a psychologically informed approach
- Build and maintain supportive relationships with women
- Ensure ongoing assessment and management of risks associated with service users within an attitude of 'positive risk taking'
- Provide support with life skills, including practical assistance where skills are not yet developed
- Maintain accurate case notes and up to date records
- Contribute to the completion of outcomes reports and funding returns

Advocacy and support service

- Promote peer support work with women multiple/complex needs
- Empower women to access benefits and services they need
- Involve service users in the design, development and delivery of the service
- Contribute to the development of peer support network and 'survivor' forum

Multi-agency

- Liaise with the SCS social workers and attend meetings as required
- Engage with a wide range of professionals (some of whom may have very different approaches to problem solving) through a multi-agency approach, to understand the needs of each woman and advocate to agencies on behalf of the project and its service users
- Promote coordinated, joined-up service delivery for service users between violence against women services and drug and alcohol agencies, mental health, housing, health and legal agencies.
- Attend and contribute to child protection case conferences
- Attend and contribute to Domestic Violence MARAC
- Contribute to monitoring and evaluation of the project, including engaging with the project evaluators at Women's Aid
- Attend the Project Steering Group when requested, including supporting Service Users to attend

Corporate Responsibilities

- Ensure that all Solace's policies and procedures in your work area are up to date
- Ensure effective implementation of Solace's Equality and Diversity policies and ensure awareness and integration of an equalities and human rights agenda in all your work
- Ensure that the service user is at the heart of all service delivery and development
- Attend all meetings and training relevant to your role
- Attend regular team meetings, ensuring that you contribute to effective working practice and communication
- Act as an ambassador for Solace

Carry out other duties appropriate to the post as requested by your line manager.

Whilst every endeavour has been made to outline the duties and responsibilities of the post, these duties are not exhaustive.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Your application should give clear examples of your experience, knowledge, skills and abilities gained in both paid and/or unpaid (volunteer) work for **each** of the Person Specification criteria.

Experience	Degree level education and/or IDVA or DAPA qualification
	Experience of working within the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Sector, including experience of risk & needs assessment, casework and safety planning with victim-survivors
	Experience of working with people with complex/multiple needs: homelessness, substance use, mental health issues, insecure immigration status, prostitution and offending behaviour
	Experience working with BAMER women and a diverse staff team applying anti-discriminatory practice
	Experience of building and maintaining partnerships with other agencies
Knowledge + Understanding	An excellent understanding of the issues faced by women survivors of VAWG, including a knowledge of options for and rights of women experiencing all forms of VAWG
	An understanding of the impact of trauma on women experiencing abuse
	Awareness of the intersection between severe and multiple disadvantage and VAWG, and a strong understanding of how the intersection of these issues can make it difficult for people to engage with support
	Extensive knowledge of Safeguarding frameworks and Child protection procedures and legal proceedings
	Knowledge of the particular needs of women from diverse communities and the barriers to accessing support faced by women from BAMER communities
Skills + Abilities	A resilient and assertive approach to reaching out to and building trust and positive relationships with women who have complex/multiple needs and who may present as reluctant to engage and/or may be presenting in crisis



	Ability to provide solution focused advocacy and support
	Ability to advocate successfully within a multi-agency framework
	Ability to critically reflect on own practice and performance and make use of clinical supervision
	Excellent organisational and ICT skills including the ability to be self-servicing, use relevant IT packages and maintain an efficient case recording and data reporting system
	Excellent written and verbal communication skills
Values + Ethos	Commitment to improving services and life chances for women and children affected by VAWG with complex /multiple needs
	Commitment to working within an anti-discriminatory framework
	Non-judgemental, non-directive and empowering approach to supporting individual women
	High level of personal resilience, flexibility, self-motivation and ability to think creatively with a 'can-do' attitude that can inspire others
	Commitment to respecting and valuing service users' perspectives and integrating them into service provision
	Commitment to fostering innovation in working practice
	Commitment to working with a feminist ethos