

Job Description

Post: Advocate

Responsible to: Service Manager and Co-ordinator for Scotland

Location: Fife, Scotland

Circles Network Summary

Circles Network is a UK wide voluntary organisation based in Warwickshire, renowned for building inclusive communities on the foundations of justice, advocacy, empowerment and friendships.

Working with people of any age who are isolated or at risk of isolation, this organisation has ground breaking expertise in the development of Circles of Support, Independent and Collective Advocacy, Person Centred Planning and Inclusion into the mainstream of life. Working in highly creative, entrepreneurial styles, we are dynamic and ever more determined to dream, dare and do.

Job Summary

- To assist the Co-ordinator for Scotland, Service Manager and colleagues to continue the development of the advocacy project in Fife.
- To provide direct, independent / collective / citizen advocacy to individuals experiencing mental health differences.
- To facilitate opportunities for inclusion, empowerment, advocacy and self-determination for people using the service.
- To ensure that the ethos of the organisation and its values and beliefs are upheld at all times.

The Values of Inclusion

All the work carried out by Circles Network is underpinned by a strongly held set of values and beliefs known as the values of inclusion. This philosophy, where all people, regardless of ability, are seen to be citizens of worth, drives us in our mission to support.

- Everyone has a voice and the right to be heard.
- All people have dreams and aspirations.
- All people have capabilities and qualities.
- All people should have power and control over what they do now and in the future.
- The whole community can benefit from embracing diversity.
- All people should have the opportunity to lead ordinary and valued lives.
- All people have the right to live and be part of the community.
- All people need friendships and independent relationships; a natural support network.
- All means All.

Essential Tasks and Responsibilities

The main duties and responsibilities of the post are as follows:

- To provide independent advocacy to individuals, in compliance with the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and other relevant legislation and guidelines including the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
- To maintain and operate within professional advocacy standards in accordance with advocacy guidelines and to ensure that all individuals are supported to advocate in their own right, including the safeguarding of rights relating to those individuals defined as not having capacity/insight.
- To promote awareness of statutory rights and resources available to individuals using Circles Network support.
- To adopt flexible, person-centred approaches to advocacy which meet the needs of each individual.
- To ensure that the rights of individuals are recognised, respected and upheld.
- To actively seek and identify ways in which to engage particularly vulnerable and isolated individuals.
- To maintain accurate and up to date records in a clear and concise manner with strict adherence to confidentiality and data protection policy.
- To source and provide relevant information on a range of services that the individual may wish to access.
- To contribute to the ongoing development of the advocacy role through participation in training, research, and professional development within Circles Network and other appropriate external agencies.
- To contribute to the communication and planning processes within Circles Network through meetings, planning groups etc.
- To organise the administration of work undertaken ensuring efficient, accurate filing with the help of an administrator.
- To ensure good time management.
- To produce and contribute to written reports on work relating to the project.
- Any other tasks commensurate with the work of the project in agreement with your line manager and the Chief Executive.

Person Specification

The Person Specification describes the qualities that we will be looking for when selecting an applicant for the post. Use the Person Specification when you are completing the form to highlight your relevant skills and experience.

Essential Criteria

- To show sensitivity to the needs of and ability to build trusting rapport with individuals utilising the project.
- Excellent communication skills including the ability to communicate using alternative methods of engaging with an individual.
- The ability to be respectful of and to uphold the rights of the individual in terms of their privacy, relationships and confidentiality.
- Skilled intervention and positive approaches to enable each focus person to develop their skills and grow in confidence.
- Ability to produce detailed reports in a clear and concise manner.
- Skills and motivation to work effectively as an individual and as a member of a team, sustaining positive and consistent approaches.
- A good standard of education and training, preferably at degree level or equivalent.
- An understanding of relevant legislation, including the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Adults With Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
- A clear understanding of the social model of disability, the values of inclusion and equal opportunities, learning styles and their implications for how we communicate with one another.
- At least one year's experience of working with individuals with mental health differences utilising person centred approaches.
- Experience in building and maintaining respectful working relationships with individuals.
- A flexible attitude towards working hours ensuring each individual you are working with receives full support, which may include some evenings and weekends.

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- Show attitudes which celebrate and respect difference and are tolerant towards individuals, your colleagues and other community members.
 - To behave with sensitivity, confidentiality, integrity and respect for all those you come in contact with in relation to this project.
 - Willingness to undertake ongoing personal development including regular supervision and appraisal.
 - A willingness to learn new skills such as developing positive relationships and conflict management.
 - Demonstrate a willingness to participate in and contribute to the ongoing development of professional quality monitoring systems, both within the project and Circles Network as a whole.
 - Ability to travel around the region, with some requirement to work unsocial hours and occasionally be away from home overnight.

Desirable Criteria

- A degree or equivalent qualification.
- An understanding of disability equality issues.
- Direct experience of providing advocacy.
- Experience in the field of working in a human service discipline- nursing, teaching, social work, care etc.
- Experience and knowledge of how to deal with conflict and perceived challenging behaviour.

