

Job Description

Post:	Forensic Advocate
Responsible to:	Service Manager and Head of Operations
Hours:	37.5
Location:	Office Based, Glasgow, 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.

Project Summary

Advocacy - Glasgow

Circles Network Advocacy Service provide a professional, independent advocacy service for individuals detained under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 or the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 in medium secure care (Rowanbank) and low secure care (Leverndale) in Glasgow. The majority of the individuals we support are detained and may have had contact with criminal justice services.

Our core funding comes from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and the West of Scotland Forensic Directorate.

In addition to providing advocacy in a hospital setting we also provide an advocacy service for those recently discharged to the community, for up to a three month period following discharge. The areas we cover include male and female admissions, male and female rehabilitation, the National Learning Disability Unit, pre-discharge and community outreach. In addition to independent mental health advocacy, we facilitate annual service review for the Scottish Association for Mental Health within 14 of their community supported accommodation units.

The team also provide independent advocacy for Future Pathways on an individualised commission basis.

Job Summary

- To assist the Senior Manager, Service Manager and colleagues to continue developing the advocacy service, for people accessing the services at Rowanbank Clinic and Leverndale Hospital and those who have made the transition into the community, who are at risk of isolation due to the effects of enduring mental ill-health, learning difficulties and / or in contact with the Forensic Mental Health Directorate.
- To provide Independent and Collective Advocacy to people in hospital and community settings.
- To facilitate opportunities for inclusion, empowerment, advocacy and self-determination for people accessing the service within the legal and statutory framework of Forensic Mental Health Care.
- 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 for 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.
- To ensure that all individuals are supported to advocate, 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 the individuals using Circles Network Advocacy services.
- To adopt flexible, person centred approaches to advocacy which meet the needs of each individual.
- To actively seek and identify ways in which to engage particularly vulnerable and isolated individuals.
- To embrace person centred approaches and individualised working to promote and facilitate effective communication of expressed needs in the immediate and long-term future.
- To ensure that the civil and human rights of individuals are recognised, respected and upheld.
- 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 and information sharing.
- To ensure good time management.
- To produce and contribute to written reports on work relating to the project.

- To share appropriate information within the team, distributing articles and reports and encouraging collaborative working throughout Circles Advocacy Services.
- To facilitate group work sessions with new and on-going groups when appropriate
- To work proactively with individuals who are deemed to be additionally vulnerable through matters of incapacity in accordance with statutory principles.
- To create links with advocacy initiatives in order for people of this and other services to develop relationships, skills and expertise.
- To support people to make informed choices and present information on alternatives to traditional arrangements, in particular, for people who are about to make the transition back into the community.
- To undertake appropriate training in areas related to Forensic Mental Health provision as appropriate to the role of Independent Advocate and the needs of the Forensic Advocacy Service.
- To assist in the provision of training, workshop and presentations as a means to contribute to raising of awareness of the Advocacy Service and role.
- To be aware of NHS policy and guidance on the management of Forensic Mental Health Guidelines on Risk Good Practice and Procedure and Patient Confidentiality.
- This list is not exhaustive, and this role may require completion of other tasks as reasonably required, in agreement with your line manager, Regional Coordinator or the Chief Executive Officer.

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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

- Experience of working with people with mental health differences and/or acute social care needs.
- Qualifications and/or training in the field of nursing, teaching, social work, residential care, occupational therapy, law, psychology or other field related to human need.
- Show evidence of advocacy, practical assistance, guidance and or emotional support in your work with people.
- Illustrate awareness of the processes that operate within the Forensic Mental Health Services.
- Illustrate attitudes which celebrate and respect difference and are tolerant towards individuals, your colleagues and other community members.
- Show a flexible attitude towards working hours ensuring each individual you are working with receives full support; this will include some evenings and weekends.
- Illustrate experience of being non-judgemental and respectful of the rights of the individual and their family in terms of their privacy, relationships and confidentiality.
- Be able to drive and have full use of a car for the purposes of your work or have access to a car and driver.
- Experience of producing written reports and correspondence to a high standard.
- Be able to demonstrate strong communication skills that utilise non confrontational approaches in problem solving conflict between third parties.
- To have an understanding of the difference between advocacy work and socials care intervention.
- To have the ability to interpret and apply basic principles of legislation to 'real life'.
- To have exemplary interpersonal skills with a normally diplomatic style.
- To be familiar with relevant legislation, including the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
- To interpret and apply basic principles of legislation.

- To have an 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.
- Effective IT skills, particularly with Microsoft Word and Excel.

Desirable Criteria

- An understanding of disability equality issues.
- Direct experience of providing advocacy.
- Experience and knowledge of how to deal with conflict and perceived challenging behaviour.
- Have good communication skills including the ability to communicate with people who may or temporarily have communication difficulties.
- To have experience of creating accessible materials adapted to fit different communication styles and preferences.
- To understand the legal and ethical concept of care within the criminal justice system and in particular, forensic mental health.
- To have a working knowledge of person centred approaches and tools that can be used to support people.
- To use initiative in the absence of immediate direction and support and be prepared to call on assistance as required.
- To have experience of creating information in different formats to inform disabled people and those affected by incapacity.