

## Community Focus Advocate

<b>Length of contract:</b>	Permanent (Subject to continuance of funding)
<b>Salary:</b>	£23,000 (negotiable dependent on experience)
<b>Based at:</b>	Remote/ Community Focus Hub
<b>Hours:</b>	37 hours per week
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Community Focus Lead

### Our Mission

We help people to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their lives, by providing high quality advocacy

### Purpose of role

The role of the Community Focus Advocate will be to provide support to adults within the community to have a voice in decisions that affect their lives, whilst helping them to understand their rights around matters of health and social care, housing, benefits, work, education, and training. The role will provide specialist community advocacy, face to face in community settings where residents across Lancashire feel comfortable in accessing. To promote self-advocacy and empowerment and enable service users to make informed decisions and get their views heard. This activity will include working with people of all backgrounds.

Examples include:

- Supporting a person to attend meetings/appointments with GPs, the jobcentre/ benefit office, colleges and/or housing organisations
- Enabling a person to express their dissatisfaction with services; supporting the person to make a complaint
- Supporting a parent/guardian to have a voice when dealing with children's social care services
- Supporting a person to understand the range of services available to them, in order for them to live happily and as independently as possible

### Key tasks

- To triage eligible and non-eligible referrals and making necessary contact to referrer/advocacy people where further clarification is needed.
- Manage a client caseload and ensure accurate case management and record keeping
- Remain independent from all other services, ensuring you are representing the person using the service only
- Carry out advocacy duties in line with the QPM (Quality Performance Mark)
- Provide a person led and outcome focused advocacy service for the people we support
- Communicate with the person via phone, face to face, or virtually to explore what issues they would like support with
- Research and find out information for the person and help them to understand any information
- Support people to self-advocate (to articulate their own views wherever possible) or to speak on behalf of the person when requested to
- Promote the rights, equality, diversity and needs of the person by ensuring they are respected and valued as individuals
- Ensure that people have access to information that is presented in an appropriate manner for their individual needs, e.g. Easy Read documents
- Promote self-advocacy through partnership working, encouraging the person to have maximum involvement in their case, where appropriate

- Triaging referrals to the service and having discussions with partners and professionals where necessary
- Work as a member of the team, attend bi-monthly team meetings, peer group meetings, and contribute towards service planning and developments for advocacy and the wider organisation
- Represent Advocacy Focus at various meetings/promotional events as required and to provide feedback to the team
- Mentor and supervise volunteers and students to support clients through casework and peer advocacy groups
- Be flexible to support work across all service areas to meet referral, geographical and organisational demands
- Undertake duties in line with safeguarding and GDPR principles
- Produce reports for the Advocacy Managers, SLT and, others as required
- Be available to work occasionally in the evening and weekends as required
- Work within Advocacy Focus's policies and procedures
- Responsible for identifying areas for personal development
- Undertake any other duties as commensurate with the grading of the post

## Person Specification – What we need from you

This section outlines the things we need from a Community Focus Advocate. You will see you do not always need specific qualifications or experience, but you will need to be able to demonstrate certain personal qualities.

The essential criteria are those things which you must have in order to do the job. Desirable criteria are those qualities that would be either useful, or an advantage to have and/ or are things that you could be trained to do.

Don't meet every single requirement? Studies have shown that women and people of colour are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification. At Advocacy Focus we are dedicated to building a diverse, inclusive, and authentic workplace, so if you're excited about this role but your past experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification in the job description, we encourage you to apply anyways. You may just be the right candidate for this or other roles.

Education and training	
Essential	Desirable
A minimum of one year's experience of working within one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The health and social care sector</li> <li>• Housing service</li> <li>• Jobcentre or benefits office</li> <li>• Welfare rights sector</li> <li>• IAG service</li> <li>• Education/training organisation</li> </ul>	Independent Advocacy Qualification
The ability to drive and a full UK drivers' licence and access to a vehicle	Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care or equivalent
Have a minimum of GCSE grade 4 / C in Maths and English (or equivalent)	Experience/ knowledge of local and national safeguarding policies and practice
Understanding the principles of effective community engagement	
Achievements, experience, skills & abilities	

Essential	Desirable
Able to be caring, sensitive and patient while supporting people to be as independent as possible.	Experience of working with vulnerable people in a home, community or education setting.
Keen to work with the people Advocacy Focus supports and demonstrate empathy and compassion.	An understanding of human rights, safeguarding and mental health.
Enthusiasm to make a difference to people's lives.	Experience of supporting people through health or social care services.
The ability to understand guidelines, policies and records etc. Experience of completing records yourself.	Experience of outcome-based service delivery and the required records which evidence that.
Computer literate, including word processing skills, sound keyboard skills and knowledge of MS Word/ MS office applications	A commitment to personal development and training
An interest in expanding access to governmental benefits and a commitment to social justice	Facilitating group work
Ability to listen, understand and respond to people, always putting the person that's being supported first.	Experience of contributing to the person-centred review process and of using a range of person-centred planning tools.
Ability to get on well with people and work in harmony with others, by both challenging and helping people to develop and learn from their experiences.	Experience of working in a work team setting. Experience of coaching and mentoring colleagues to improve practice.
Ability to be flexible and open to new challenges, ideas, and experiences.	Experience of developing new ideas that improve people's independence and working flexibly to achieve them.