

Independent Advocate

Length of contract: Permanent - subject to continuation of funding

Salary: £25,464 per annum

Working Hours: 37 Hours per week

Working Across Central and North Lancs (Preston/Fylde)

Our Mission

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

Purpose of role

To provide specialist Statutory Advocacy to local residents across Lancashire. To promote self-advocacy and empowerment and enable service users to make informed decisions and get their views heard in matters relating to mental health and/or care and support needs within health and social care. This will be through one-to-one advocacy and other models of advocacy as required. This activity will include working with people of all ages, including those with learning disabilities, people with mental health needs, people with physical and sensory impairment, older people and people that lack capacity.

Key tasks

- Provide Independent Advocacy support as defined under the Mental Health Act (2007), Mental Capacity Act (2005), Care Act (2014), and Advocacy Standards to individuals in community, residential and hospital settings.
- Manage a client caseload and ensure accurate case management and record keeping.
- Provide information, support, or signpost clients, to inform or empower individuals on any issues regarding their health and care. Including mental health treatment under the amended 2007 Mental Health Act, deprivation of liberty safeguards under Mental Capacity Act and support with safeguarding under Care Act (2014).
- Advocate for individuals within a variety of meetings relating to their care and treatment, to include ward rounds, case conferences, Care Programme Approach (CPA) meetings, mental health assessments, best interests meetings and safeguarding meetings.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of relevant mental capacity, mental health and community care policy, legislation, case law, and good practice.
- Work within the appropriate legislation, as well as agreed case-working standards and monitoring requirements
- 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
- Work towards and successfully complete the Independent Advocacy Qualification (IAQ) within 12 months of securing a position to provide all strands of specialist advocacy.
- Be 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 an Independent Advocate. You will see you don't 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
Minimum of Grade B or equivalent in English and Math's (or equivalent)	
The ability to drive and a full UK drivers' license	Experience/ knowledge of local and national safeguarding policies and practice
	Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care or equivalent
	Working knowledge of the Mental Health, Mental Capacity and Care Acts

Achievements, experience, skills & abilities

Essential	Desirable
Knowledge of the legislation, policies, and procedures that influence advocacy and social care provisions.	Recent experience in a paid or voluntary capacity involving face-to-face advocacy or health/social care provision.
Understanding of Advocacy roles.	Experience of supporting people through health or social care services.
An understanding of the needs and issues faced by people accessing health and social care services.	Experience of working effectively in an inter-agency context, and with a wide range of stakeholders.
Ability to listen to and engage with people from diverse backgrounds, both face to face and over the telephone.	Knowledge of Health and Social Care Services.
Able to be caring, sensitive and patient while supporting people to be as independent as possible.	Knowledge of local area and local service provision.
Keen to work with the people Advocacy Focus supports and demonstrate empathy and compassion.	Experience of advocating for others in a paid or voluntary capacity.
Enthusiasm to make a difference to people's lives.	Experience of working in a work team setting. Experience of coaching and mentoring colleagues to improve practice.
Ability to listen, understand and respond to people, always putting the person that's being supported first.	Experience of developing new ideas that improve people's independence and working flexibly to achieve them.
The ability to understand guidelines, policies, and records etc. Experience of completing records yourself.	
A high standard of written and verbal skills including the ability to write letters and reports.	
Computer literate, including word processing skills, sound keyboard skills and knowledge of MS Word/ MS office applications	
Excellent organisational skills with the ability to manage a complex workload and to prioritise effectively.	
Ability to work flexibly and manage your own diary.	
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.	