



Job Description

- Job title:** Benefits and Legal Advisor
- Accountable to:** Working for Carers Project Coordinator
- Job Purpose:** To provide specialist benefits and legal advice to staff working across the three carers centres and to working age carers across the North of Tyne, who are unemployed and/or struggling to pursue their goals such as retaining employment.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- Provide benefits and legal information and advice to the Working for Carers team and staff working across the three carers centres, in relation to carers they are working with.
- Coordinate support with the wider Working for Carers team to respond to any crises or requests for further information as required.
- Undertake benefits checks with carers and provide specialist and tailored one-to-one information, advice and guidance to maximise their income.
- Liaise with other organisations such as Citizens Advice to provide clinics, drop-ins, and training sessions to support carers with benefit entitlement concerns.
- Work with the Employment Engagement Officers to deliver training sessions and clinics to encourage awareness and adoption of carer-friendly legal practices.

Key tasks

1. Provide specialist and tailored information, advice and guidance on benefits and legal issues to staff across the three centres supporting carers, to ensure the service meets carers needs and supports income maximisation.
2. Undertake benefits checks with carers who are not in work and provide specialist and tailored one-to-one information, advice and guidance to maximise their income.
3. Provide information, advice and guidance to carers referred to the Project from across the North of Tyne who are in work and considering reducing their hours or ending their employment due to their caring responsibilities, to help them understand the rights they have in employment and the benefits available to them if their circumstances change.
4. Develop a range of resources to share with staff and carers to help them understand their rights and benefits.
5. Provide advocacy support on behalf of carers to positively challenge decisions which have not been made in line with legislation.
6. Identify key barriers for carers within work and the benefit system, and develop creative solutions with the team to help carers overcome these.
7. Provide group interventions around benefits and legal support needs in collaboration with wider service providers including employers, job centres, voluntary organisations such as Citizens Advice, and the Carers Centres as required.

8. Arrange clinics within workplaces and elsewhere to raise the awareness of support for carers, both legal and benefit entitlements.
9. Provide emergency specialist support to the Working for Carers team alongside colleagues at the local Carers Centres and other venues across the North of Tyne area as required.
10. Undertake ongoing independent research to keep abreast of changes to the benefits system and legal frameworks and feed changes into staff and communications with carers.
11. Complete regular independent and mandated training to ensure constant professional development, feeding this knowledge to the Working for Carers and wider teams on a regular basis.
12. Be accountable for maintaining accurate case notes and other records of work, including the planning of group interventions and sessions.
13. Attend regular supervisions and team meetings to enhance accountability and professional development.
14. Alongside the Project Team, design and deliver packages of support and clear pathways into employment for carers, integrating with colleges, employers, the voluntary sector and providers of specialist support and training.
15. Safeguard children and vulnerable adults and ensure that decisions or judgments which entail a level of risk are referred to the relevant safeguarding lead in the organisation.
16. Undertake any other reasonable requests for work as directed by the Project Coordinator.

Person Specification

Qualifications and Training	Essential	Desirable
Good general level of education to NVQ Level 3 standard or above/equivalent qualification or experience level.	X	
Educated to degree level or above; or equivalent experience in a relevant field.		X
Knowledge and Experience		
A minimum of 2 years' experience providing benefits advice.	X	
Experience of working with unpaid carers.		X
Knowledge and understanding of rights and support applicable to carers such as employment rights, assistive technology, and/or benefits such as Carers Allowance.		X
Ability to independently and confidently research and demonstrate learning in a range of contexts.	X	
Understanding of the potential barriers to education, employment and learning for carers.		X
Knowledge of the local labour market in the North of Tyne region.		X

Experience of providing confidential, independent information, advice and guidance to people in need.	X	
Experience of managing a varied and complex workload.	X	
Experience or confidence providing advocacy support to individuals around a range of topics.	X	
Experience of and working to agreed targets to achieve set outcomes.	X	
Experience of and/or confidence to deliver a range of interventions including training sessions and groups.		
Knowledge of and a strong commitment to equality and diversity.	X	
Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and a clear focus on taking appropriate action.	X	
Experience of multi-agency working to achieve goals and joined up provision.	X	
Experience of working with groups and presentation skills.	X	
Knowledge and understanding of the health and social care system in Northumberland/North Tyneside/ Newcastle.		X
Experience of using Charity Log or other CRM system.		X
Skills, Abilities and Attributes		
Ability to work remotely and autonomously with minimal supervision with a delegated level of responsibility.	X	
Ability to assimilate and interpret a varied range of information.	X	
Ability to initiate, develop and sustain effective relationships with a wide range of people and services.	X	
Ability to respond to the emotional demands of vulnerable people and their family members.	X	
Excellent IT skills with particular emphasis on Microsoft packages and CRM databases.	X	
Self-motivated and capable of responding independently to problems and situations, using skills and initiative to work towards mutually beneficial solutions.	X	
Flexible approach to working, including weekends and evenings when required.	X	

Keen to learn and develop new skills and take on new challenges and additional levels of responsibility where appropriate.	X	
Commitment to providing a quality service and a strong commitment to team working and supporting colleagues.	X	
Excellent written and verbal communication skills.	X	
Ability to collate and produce high-quality information materials for circulation to service users and professionals.	X	
Ability to challenge negative attitudes and beliefs, when necessary, while working with carers.	X	
Ability to work within professional boundaries and respect and adhere to confidentiality, data protection and information sharing regulations across all aspects of the work.	X	
Model and encourage high standards of honesty, integrity, openness and respect and portray a positive image of the organisation at all times.	X	
Ability to travel efficiently throughout the North of Tyne area.	X	
Professional, enthusiastic, self-motivated, and reliable.	X	