

Job Description

Role title: Sessional Advice Practitioner – Welfare Rights Advice

Service: Bradford Advice Service

Salary: Grade 2 point 11 - 19 (dependent on experience)

Hours: Sessional hours

Location: Bradford, Ringwood Road, Bradford, BD5 9LB

Responsible to: Service Manager

Summary of role:

You will deliver welfare rights advice including benefits, debt, housing, and income maximisation remotely via digital channels as well as face to face by travelling to outreach venues across the Bradford East locality. You will work sessional hours by arrangement and provide welfare rights, information and advocacy using a holistic casework approach.

Key tasks and responsibilities:

1. Provide comprehensive and accurate advice covering the full range of benefits and welfare reform changes, providing a generalist advice service in the following areas: benefits, debt, housing, consumer problems, fuel poverty and empowering service users to undertake action on their behalf where appropriate.
2. Liaise effectively with outreach venues to provide an outreach advice service to patients or service users of the agency.
3. Carry out in depth benefit and income checks and ensure income is maximised through take up of appropriate welfare benefits and grants.
4. Support clients through the process of the negotiation with creditors in order to stabilise their debts, both priority and non-priority, working with Specialist Debt Advice services to prevent where possible court actions for debt against clients. Prepare financial statements and assist clients in prioritising debts.
5. Act for the client negotiate with third parties, take on casework where necessary to progress the clients case and ensure a holistic approach to advice delivery by assisting clients with other related problems, referring to other agencies or Family services.
6. Maintain accurate, up to date and organised case records, utilising the case management system effectively and undertake follow up work, meeting deadlines and inputting/providing statistical information for monitoring purposes.
7. Work within deadlines and maintain accurate and organised case records in support of monitoring and reporting requirements.

8. Identify cases where more specialist benefits or debt advice is required and refer clients to specialist benefits, debt, immigration and housing specialist advice.
9. Support volunteers and non-advice staff to provide early help by explaining information clearly, making onward enquiries and assisting with written tasks.
10. Keep up to date with case law in benefits by undertaking research and training, developing skills and expertise in identified areas of welfare rights advice.
11. Work at all times to the Advice Quality Standard policies and procedures including participation in case file reviews and work towards OISC level 1 in immigration and advice where required.
12. Attend internal and external meetings as required.
13. Adhere to Family Actions confidentiality policy and ensure that confidentiality and professional boundaries are maintained at all times.
14. Ensure you have an understanding (appropriate to your role), of and comply with, Family Action's procedures for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
15. Embrace and implement Family Action's Equality & Diversity Policy in every aspect of your work and positively promote its principles amongst colleagues, service users and other members of the community.
16. Comply with Family Action's Health and Safety and Data Protection policies and protect your own and others' health, safety and welfare.
17. Work flexibly as may be required by the needs of the service and carry out any other reasonable duties as required.
18. To be able to evidence Family Action's values at all times, which underpin Family Action's mission of 'building stronger families' by:
 - a) Being people focused
 - b) Reflecting a 'can do' approach
 - c) Striving for excellence in everything we do
 - d) Having mutual respect for everyone we work with, work for and support through our service

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Requirements		Essential	Desirable
Education, Qualifications & Background			
1.	Educated to level 3 or above.	✓	
2.	Certificate or Award in Advice and Guidance or a transferable qualification within the advice sector such as: NVQ Advice and Guidance level 3 & 4, Advice Studies Degree, Advice Work LLB, Foundation degree in Advice & guidance or Legal Practice Course.		✓
3.	Undertaken some post qualifying or professional development.		✓
Experience			
4.	Experience of welfare benefits casework, plus a commitment to continual learning and professional development.		✓
5.	Experience of client focussed casework and using a case management system to access and record information.	✓	
6.	Experience of working to the Advice Quality Standard quality and improvement process and procedure.		✓
7.	Experience of working with volunteers and delivering outreach or solution focussed support to vulnerable families or adults.		✓
8.	Experience of supervising volunteers, contributing to staff development through case work supervision, training and appraisals.		✓
Knowledge & Skills			
9.	Strong active listening, critical thinking and client centred service skills.	✓	
10.	Excellent English language skills and the ability to communicate effectively and professionally verbally and in writing, with clients and a range of organisations.	✓	
11.	Ability to speak fluently in Urdu and /or Punjabi or multilingual language skills		✓
12.	Good organisational and time-management skills.	✓	
13.	Up to date knowledge of legislation, case law and procedures relevant to Welfare Benefits and some knowledge of debt, housing and immigration advice procedures and processes.	✓	
14.	Excellent levels of literacy and numeracy skills, with the ability to prepare accurate benefit calculations.	✓	
15.	An understanding of safeguarding issues and relevant procedures appropriate to your role.	✓	
16.	Efficient in the use of IT and case management systems	✓	
Values			
17.	Able to evidence Family Action's values at all times, which underpin our mission of 'building stronger families' by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Being people focused b) Reflecting a 'can do' approach c) Striving for excellence in everything we do d) Having mutual respect for everyone we work with, work for and support through our services 	✓	

18.	Be committed to equal opportunities and uphold and comply with Family Action's Equality & Diversity policy in all aspects of your work, promoting its principles amongst colleagues, service users and other members of the community.	✓	
In addition			
19.	Willing to work flexibly as required with an expectation of some occasional out of hours work, remote working and travel.	✓	
20.	Willingness to undertake relevant training and apply learning, including OISC Immigration level 1 or above.	✓	