

REFUGE SUPPORT PRACTITIONER

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Refuge Support Practitioner
Salary:	£23,990 - £26,487 per annum (salary will be set dependent upon qualifications and experience)
Hours:	37 hours a week
Responsible to:	Assistant Service Manager, Service Manager and will also be responsible to the Chief Executive and Board of Trustees.
Job Purpose	<p>Staffordshire Women's Aid provides a range of high quality, safe accommodation, including a 12-unit purpose built Refuge and 4 units of dispersed refuge accommodation within the local community, for women and children who need to flee their homes because of domestic violence. Referrals for our refuge include both self and agency referrals from within and outside of Staffordshire.</p> <p>You will provide a range of practical and emotional trauma informed, recovery focussed support, responding to women's individual circumstances to increase their safety, well-being and independence.</p> <p>You will carry out risk and needs assessments and deliver one-to-one support, group work and a range of inter-agency responses to ensure the needs of victims and their children are met. Interagency working will include liaising with multiple agencies, in particular Police, Social Services, Housing, Benefits, Health, Solicitors and schools.</p>

This post is open to female applicants only as being female is deemed to be a genuine occupational requirement under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010.

JOB DETAILS

Core Requirements:

- To work as a committed member of the Staffordshire Women's Aid team.
- To support the aims, values and working principles of Staffordshire Women's Aid, and to work in alignment with Staffordshire Women's Aid's Policies and Procedures.
- To take all possible steps to ensure the safety and confidentiality of service users, staff, volunteers and management of Staffordshire Women's Aid.
- To promote equality and value diversity.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POST:

- To work with individual service users in refuge accommodation to agree a planned package of support, empowering service users to identify and achieve their personal goals and ambitions.
- To provide practical and emotional support, including safety planning, advocacy, domestic abuse prevention advice, housing related support and expert information and advice.
- To ensure that support within refuge is relevant, timely, accessible, equitable and meets the diverse needs of the women and children using our service.
- To share equal responsibility within the team for the day to day running of the refuge and general office duties.
- To respond to refuge referrals by carrying out risk and needs assessments and information gathering in the best interest of the service user and all other residents.
- To assist in sourcing alternative refuge provision where we are unable to offer space due to capacity.
- To offer enhanced support to women and children with specific or complex needs, e.g. cultural, mental health, drugs, alcohol, learning difficulties, to help maintain their tenancy in safe accommodation and ensure successful outcomes.
- To participate in the development and delivery of women's and children's groups, outings and activities within the refuge.
- To work with service users to find safe, suitable, affordable and permanent accommodation.
- To deal with correspondence, produce written reports and case studies when required and be self-servicing.
- To attend internal and external meetings, as required, ensuring that decisions regarding the work of SWA are followed up.
- To give support to other workers during busy periods of staff shortage, across SWA, as and when necessary, including working unsociable hours.
- To ensure that all Health & Safety and security regulations are complied with through maintenance, flat checks, the Health and Safety handbook and all associated policies.
- To support with ensuring the refuge and flats are clean and suitably prepared for occupation. This will require some physical work.
- To ensure service user voices and experiences are central to service delivery.
- To signpost to other local specialist agencies for expertise when required.
- To monitor and evaluate activities as directed and ensure internal case management systems are updated.
- To work with volunteers as necessary to assist in meeting service user needs.
- To liaise and network with partner agencies, developing working relationships which benefit SWA and service users.
- To have a clear understanding of, and to implement, all policies and procedures relating to SWA and to share these with new members of staff, volunteers and placement students.
- To attend managerial and clinical supervision as required.
- To promote the work of SWA through participating in training, talks, presentations and multi-agency forums.

General Responsibilities:

- To share responsibility for covering the Help Line during office hours as required, making sure there is cover throughout the day when needed.
- Work flexibly to allow us to offer the best service possible to service users, this will involve working some evening/ weekend sessions.
- Attend team and service meetings as required and collaborate with colleagues in achieving team and organisational objectives.
- Attend relevant training/ conferences / workshops in line with identified professional objectives.

Variation Clause

Staffordshire Women's Aid reserves the right, following consultation with the member of staff, to vary, add or alter any of the terms and conditions of employment attached to this post.

This job description will be reviewed annually and may need to be revised according to the priorities of current workload with the agreement of the Board of Trustees and the CEO.

The performance of the post holder will be monitored through regular supervision by the line manager and reviewed at each annual appraisal.

It is in the nature of the work of Staffordshire Women's Aid that tasks and responsibilities are in many circumstances unpredictable and varied. All employees are therefore expected to work in a flexible way when the occasion arises so that tasks which are not specifically covered in their job description are undertaken. These additional duties will normally be to cover unforeseen circumstances or changes in work and will normally be compatible with the regular type of work.

Please be aware that you will be required to undertake a DBS check, and may be required to undertake additional security checks to work in some settings.

A full driving licence and access to a vehicle are essential requirements of the post.

General Information and Conditions of Service

- 5 weeks holiday (pro rata) per year, plus statutory holidays.
- Staffordshire Women's Aid contributes a sum equivalent to 3% of the annual salary to the company pension scheme following successful completion of 3 months probationary period, and subject to staff contribution as part of auto-enrolment.
- Overtime is unpaid; time of in lieu is to be taken in consultation with line manager.

REFUGEE SUPPORT PRACTITIONER

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good standard of education or equivalent experience • Further training or experience in Violence Against Women and Girls, domestic violence and/or sexual violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma informed training • DAPA or IDVA qualification
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive knowledge and understanding of the nature of domestic and sexual abuse and Violence against women and girls (VAWG) • Experience of working with a range of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary agencies • Experience of working with vulnerable adults and /or children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with Staffordshire Women's Aid • Experience of working within the violence against women and girl's sector • Experience of risk assessment and management
Knowledge & Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of adult and child safeguarding issues, legislation and best practice • Understanding of the need and ability to maintain professional notes and records of your interactions and interventions with service users • Understanding of the effects of abuse on women and their children • Understanding the need for professional confidentiality and its boundaries, in relation to service delivery, legal, ethical and safeguarding issues • A knowledge of legal rights, support and protection available to victims of domestic abuse • An understanding of inequality and a dedication to anti-oppressive, trauma informed working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialised knowledge of the immediate and longer-term impacts of domestic and sexual violence and VAWG • An understanding of the need for accurate monitoring
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to prioritise own workload and deal with competing demands. • Ability to use line management and supervision. • Good communication skills, verbal, nonverbal and written. • An ability to put the service user central to all processes. • Willingness to be creative in approach to working women and families. • Ability to work on own initiative, in partnership and as part of a team. • Proficient at using Information Technology including Windows, Microsoft Office, email and the Internet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working pro-actively, using advocacy to represent the voices and needs of service users.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will be required to work some evenings, and occasional weekends.• Will be required to do occasional helpline shifts.• Some physical work will be required within the role of Refuge Support Practitioner• You may be expected to travel to meet Service User needs and a driving licence, access to a vehicle and business insurance is essential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A sense of humour