

Mind in Bexley

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Welfare Rights Team Leader
Grade:	SO1
Salary:	Negotiable, depending on experience
Pension:	Access to Stakeholder Pension
Hours:	Full time : 36 hours per week Evening and weekend working may be required from time to time.
Holidays:	34 days(pro rata) per annum including public holidays
Based at:	2a Devonshire, Bexleyheath Kent DA6 8DG (Mind Offices) and at locations throughout Bexley including the Woodlands unit
Responsible to:	Recovery Services Manager
Accountable to:	Chief Executive, Mind in Bexley

Mind in Bexley's services are established on the principles of 'co-production'. By co-production we mean that services are designed, delivered and evaluated by both staff and users in order to make them more effective, more efficient, and more sustainable

Purpose of Job:

To provide and continue to develop a Welfare Rights/Benefits / Housing and Money advice service to users of Mental Health Services in the London Borough of Bexley, in order to maximise their income and help improve their quality of life.

You will work collaboratively with the CEO, the Recovery Services Manager and Service Leads to ensure a 'one team' approach to the planning and achievements of Mind in Bexley's objectives and goals

1. PRIMARY TASKS:

- To increase levels of benefit take-up from users of mental health services referred into the Resource Centre.
- To develop the capacity of mental health services staff to deliver basic, good quality benefits advice.
- To deliver training to mental health service staff, tailored towards a range of expertise in multi-agency teams.
- To develop and deliver workshops to service users and carers, at an appropriate level, demystifying a complex legal system to help them deal with straightforward benefit problems.
- To design and distribute welfare benefits bulletin to update staff on changes in legislation and policy.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the welfare benefit service to include:

- Range and complexity of casework advice
 - Representation at tribunals
 - Actual levels of income maximised
 - Views of Service Users.
- To maintain the service delivery above the C.L.S quality mark standard compliance level
 - To provide leaderships, supervision and motivation to a small team of welfare rights workers, carrying out monthly one-to-ones and annual appraisals
 - Set up and develop a peer-support service in order to minimise the impact of welfare reform on the individual and the organisation and aid service user financial planning

2. DEVELOPMENT & DELIVERY OF THE SERVICE

- To provide direct advice and assistance to people with more complex benefit problems.
- Advise of Housing and Tenancy issues, preventing arrears and homelessness.
- To Provide support to people through first stage appeal tribunals
- To provide money/ debt advice with individuals in financial crisis, particularly in relation to identifying and resolving debt and budgeting difficulties and developing money management skills
- To mediate and negotiate with appropriate agencies in the preparation and presentation of appeals
- To develop, with others, the most effective way of organising the time and facilities available to provide the service.
- Together , with others, to revise & update appropriate operational policies and procedures for the service.
- To consult with and establish positive working relationships with staff in Queen Mary's Hospital, Woodlands Unit and with staff in community services.
- To participate in training programmes on Welfare Rights
- To identify areas for service development and accordingly make recommendations to the CEO of Mind in Bexley.
- To develop referral pathways with other with referral partners , to maximise the amount of information and support that can be provided.
- Maintain a detailed knowledge of all aspects of social welfare & Housing law and related legislation.
- Provide a specialised consultancy service on welfare rights and other anti poverty issues to particular mental health workers.
- Monitor the needs of the staff concerned for training and information purposes.
- Advise on, initiate and participate in local and national campaigns on welfare benefit issues.

- Ensure the data is input to monitor the effectiveness and success of the service provided to include:
 - the keeping of statistics of cases dealt with
 - the views of users and mental health workers
 - any other monitoring as required to develop the service.

- Provide written reports as necessary to CEO, Recovery Services Manager, Board of Trustees and funding bodies.

Partnership Responsibility

- With other staff contribute to the 'Marketplace' of providers , though partnership building and information gathering, ensuring referral pathways are established with other service providers
- Participate in initiatives that improve working relationships within the wider voluntary and other sectors, to bring benefit to those with mental health needs.
- Participation at meetings as required by the Chief Executive and SMT.
- Input into the LB Bexley and CCG Panel meetings

Person Specification

Experience & Qualifications

Essential

- The post holder should have excellent knowledge of and experience of providing Welfare Benefit and Housing advice to people with severe mental illness in a hospital or community setting.
- A good understanding of mental illness is essential
- Experience of attending tribunals and representing service users
- Demonstrable track record of service delivery and innovation
- Successful record of building relationships and forging partnerships with demonstrable benefits
- Experience of working in the voluntary sector or a demonstrable aptitude of doing so
- At least one year's experience of managing and supervising staff in a welfare rights/housing setting
- Experience of working with contracts with an understanding of the risks and issues these bring

Desirable

- Social work/ Mental Health background
- Educated to degree level

Skills and Abilities

Essential

- Openness to new approaches and ability to adapt to change
- Good communication skills, in writing and speech,
- Able to operate effectively under pressure
- Persuasive and diplomatic at all levels, at ease socially
- Well organised, able to follow a task through to completion
- Ability to problem solve
- Able to work collaboratively with staff, users and other services
- Work flexibly as part of a team, to cover a rota as required
- Work in a culturally sensitive way with people from a variety of roles and backgrounds
- A facilitator
- IT-literate with an understanding of database systems

Desirable

- Ability to deliver training and confident in public speaking

Qualities and Competencies**Essential**

- Display spirit, passion and energy to make a real difference to lives of people
- Understanding of and commitment to the principles of advocacy and co-production in delivering mental health services
- Understanding of and commitment to the voluntary sector and appreciation of its values
- Commitment to Mind in Bexley's culture which includes consultative working practices and transparency and inclusion
- A person of Integrity and discretion
- Curious, willing to learn from elsewhere