



Learning Disability User Involvement Coordinator

Job title	Learning Disability User Involvement Coordinator
Reporting to	Learning Disability UI Team Leader
Contract	12 month fixed term
Hours	Part-time 30 hours per week
Salary	£24,156 - £26,600 pa
Location	Westminster (in person and working from home)
Closing date	12 noon, Monday 2 October 2023

We welcome applications from people with transferrable skills and qualities, and people with diverse employment histories and personal backgrounds.

Hybrid working: we deliver in-person services, and hybrid working must prioritise the needs of those receiving our services. The amount of time working from home / offices / face-to-face services will be dependent on the role.

About The Advocacy Project

We help people speak up and make decisions about their health, wellbeing and social care. We're here to make sure people who are vulnerable because of their circumstance can understand their rights, make effective choices about their lives and voice their concerns.

Some of the ways we do this include:

- advocacy services that make sure people can express their wishes when decisions are being made about their care or wellbeing
- user involvement projects that help organisations improve what they offer by listening to people who use their services
- local Healthwatch services, which act as health and social care champions for the areas they serve and give people a direct channel to share their feedback
- innovative Personal Health Budget projects that allow people to access items and services to improve their wellbeing.

Our services are independent, confidential, and free to those receiving them. Together, our teams are standing up for essential rights and supporting people to have a say on the issues that matter to them.

Our vision

A world in which every person has a voice

Our mission

To enable every person to have their voice heard, uphold their rights and make choices

About the role

We are growing and developing as an organisation and want to enhance our capacity in user involvement with people with learning disabilities in line with current and future trends. We have a well-deserved reputation for delivering high quality user involvement services.

We are searching for an exceptional Learning Disability (LD) User Involvement Coordinator to work in our well-regarded learning disability user involvement services. We are proud of the impact of our innovative and exciting user involvement projects.

This post will seek out views and opinions from the learning disability community, including from service users with a dual diagnosis (DD) of learning disability and mental health issues. It will also influence strategy and development at individual, local and national level and develop and maintain a loud and clear voice to bring about positive change for all people with a learning disability.

We will carry out a standard DBS check for the successful applicant as part of the recruitment process.

Key responsibilities

- Support speaking up opportunities for expression of views and opinions of people with a learning disability (LD) or people with a dual diagnosis (DD) of learning disability and mental health (MH) issues. Specifically, but not limited to, how they experience the delivery of learning disability and mental health services. It may also include drop-ins, group meetings, forums, focus groups and surveys
- Work with LD service user members and elected learning disability representatives (LD reps) to develop consultations, groups and people engagement skills, for example, delivering presentations, training or awareness sessions
- Induct, train and supervise service user reps; manage and coordinate payment of reps' involvement work; manage election of service user reps
- Support service user reps to attend senior council and inclusive meetings (e.g., Learning Disability Health & Social Forums, Bi-borough Health Subgroup, Transport for London Network meetings) and network with other self-advocacy organisations (e.g. Mencap, Learning Disability England (LDE) and the London Regional Forum)
- Work with local authority Health and Social Care Forums to support engagement with the wider learning disability community
- Develop and facilitate training and workshops with adults with an LD diagnosis
- Communicate effectively with all people with a learning disability using a range of creative approaches, for example, Easy Read, Makaton, Intensive Interaction and Objects of Reference
- Work according to the Equality Act 2010 and other forms of legislation that combat discrimination and promote equality and diversity
- Use organisational software and systems to record information and produce reports

- Keep up to date with developments in health and social care and local and national policy priorities. Follow good practice guidelines in advocacy and user involvement including co-production, involvement, representation and consultation practices
- Develop and maintain positive working relationships with key stakeholders to deliver effective consultation, involvement and co-production
- Attend local, London-wide and national events and meetings and support the membership to attend
- Work as an active member of the user involvement team contributing to service planning and development. Where necessary, provide cover within the User Involvement team
- Raise awareness and actively promote co-production and user involvement with people with learning disabilities, people with a LD/MH dual diagnosis and with partner organisations

General responsibilities

- Participate in team meetings and training as required
- Participate in personal, team and organisational and business development
- Ensure an understanding of and compliance with Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Risk Regulations and the Advocacy Project policies
- Work to our mission, vision, and values
- Work flexibly to meet the needs of the service, in line with the changing local and national landscape, and carry out other projects and tasks as needed.

Person specification

We welcome applications from people with transferrable skills and qualities, and people with diverse employment histories and personal backgrounds.

Essential qualities and attributes:

All team members – regardless of their role within The Advocacy Project – need to be passionate about supporting people to have their voices heard, and have rights upheld; and show values and attributes which help us in our mission to give an outstanding service to the people we support and be an excellent place to work. These include:

- Excellent interpersonal skills and use of the person-centred approach – including an ability to listen and build trust, to encourage people with learning disabilities to express their own views and participate in speaking up opportunities
- Excellent communication (written and verbal) and understanding and experience of using a variety of creative communication methods such as Easy Read, Makaton and Objects of Reference
- Ability to use own initiative to plan and prioritise workload and work as part of a team

- Commitment to Equality and Diversity – to understand, recognise, respect and value difference (e.g., due to Age, Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief)

Essential knowledge, experience and qualifications:

- Experience of the principles, practice and different approaches to user involvement, including co-production, consultation and speaking up forums
- Understanding of the issues faced by people with a learning disability and also people with a learning disability/mental health (LD/MH) dual diagnosis, and recent developments in policy and practice and health and social care legislation
- Sound knowledge of services for people with learning disabilities
- Understanding of the Accessible Information Standards
- Effective in working with a wide variety of stakeholders ranging from commissioners to service users and colleagues
- Ability to work and deliver the project remotely using technology and various online platforms, for example, Zoom, Microsoft Teams etc.
- Ability to produce clear and concise reports

Desirable knowledge, experience and qualifications:

- Understanding of the mental health care system, services and pathways, and how people with learning disabilities may come into contact with mental health services across primary and secondary mental health care
- Understanding of the issues faced by children and young people with learning disabilities, and by older adults
- Understanding of Advocacy under the Care Act
- Experience of providing supervision and support to others

Benefits of working for us

We're committed to providing an empowering, flexible and supportive working environment for all our staff.

Our employee benefits include 30 days annual leave (including up to 3 days between Christmas and New Year), participation in a pension scheme with 6% employer contribution, access to a free confidential counselling service, and an interest-free travel/bike loan.

All our staff are supported to learn and develop in a variety of ways, including a monthly lecture series where we invite sector experts to talk to our staff on topical issues.

We are a Disability Confident and Mindful Employer.

How to apply

Upload your application via our website on www.advocacyproject.org.uk/work-for-us

Please address each and every point of the Person Specification, using examples from paid or voluntary work, life experiences or training. **Please note, candidates who do not answer the Person Specification points will not be considered.**

Please fill in an application form and upload it.

It's a legal requirement that you are eligible to work in the UK for all our posts.

If you have any questions please get in touch on HR@advocacyproject.org.uk / 020 8106 0640.

An external review concluded that:

"...advocates have excellent support and training to undertake their roles" and advocates find the "lectures, internal training, team meetings and case review meetings extremely helpful"

The review also stated "managers are always accessible and there was a great deal of knowledge and experience across the teams".

**Winner of the
National Advocacy Award for Equality & Diversity**