

The Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind

Job Description – Emotional Support Officer

Hours: 16 hours per week and some flexibility in terms of working hours may be required to meet the needs of our client group, including appointments with clients and their families during evenings or weekends. Additional hours may be required, from time to time.

Salary: Negotiable subject to relevant skills and experience.

Contract: Initially this is a one year fixed term post to assess demand for the service but, subject to the development of a successful service, funding is available to continue this for a second year with every likelihood that it will become a permanent position at the end of the 2 years..

Background Information:

Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind provides a range of services and facilities to support people with sight loss in Sheffield and people with sight loss and/or hearing loss in Rotherham. Our services in Rotherham are delivered under the name of Rotherham Sight & Sound. Our overarching aim is to promote people's independence through advice and subsequent referral to other services, both our own and other agencies.

The Emotional Support Officer is a totally new role and whilst informal emotional support has previously been provided for some clients on an ad-hoc basis by various staff, a need has been clearly identified for a more structured service with a dedicated member of staff.

This dedicated role will be to support people with a sensory impairment to adjust to their sight and/or hearing loss. Whilst there will be an element of one to one counselling for some clients, the emotional support service is not just about counselling; emotional support can be provided in many different ways.

Duties & Responsibilities:

Reporting to the Deputy General Manager to provide an Emotional Support Service for the visually impaired people of Sheffield and sensory impaired people of Rotherham, including their immediate families.

1. Respond to referrals from a variety of sources.
2. Meet with clients to offer emotional support, sometimes on a one to one basis and sometimes in small group sessions. This could be at the client's home, at our Sheffield or Rotherham Centres or occasionally at other suitable locations.
3. Liaise with colleagues, especially the Community Advice Officers who are likely to be the major source of referrals.
4. To contribute to regular reviews of the client and provide feedback to the referrer on progress made, although without disclosing any personal details.
5. Contribute to the development of the service including considering innovative ways of supporting our clients with their emotional needs.

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6. Maintain and develop relationships with other organisations such as the hospital eye departments, audiology clinics, education support services, RNIB etc.
7. Undertake appropriate training as and when required.
8. Other ad-hoc duties as may be required from time to time.

Person Specification

E = Essential Requirement

D = Desirable Requirement

Experience and Qualifications	E or D
Counselling training, ideally with a recognised qualification	E
Previous experience in a similar role	D
Experience of person-centred planning	D
Experience of developing and delivering therapeutic support programmes	D
Experience of producing written and electronic based reports	D
Experience of empowering individuals to meet their goals	D
Experience of working in the field of sensory impairment	D
Commitment to own continuing professional development and attendance at further training	E

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Skills and Abilities	
Ability to travel across Sheffield and Rotherham on a daily basis in a time efficient manner, which in practice probably means access to a car	E
Ability to communicate clearly and effectively in a structured way with a range of individuals, both verbally and in writing	E
Ability to listen and empathise whilst remaining objective	E
Ability to communicate with staff in a professional manner - to develop and maintain appropriate positive relationships with clients, their families and outside agencies	E
IT literate and competent in use of Microsoft Office software including Word, Excel and Outlook, or equivalent	E
Experience using CRM (database) software, currently Goldmine but due to be upgraded to Microsoft Dynamics over the course of the next 3 months	D
Ability to work on own initiative and liaise with colleagues as and when required	E
Ability to prioritise and manage own workload	E
Qualities and Competencies	
Self motivated	E
Personal commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices	E
Ability to motivate and support others	E
A commitment to empowerment	E
Conscientious and thorough in record keeping, data collection and data protection to support service delivery and development	E
Other Requirements	
Ability to travel for events such as training, forums etc	E
This post may require some very occasional UK travel and may include occasional overnight stays	E
Appointment is subject to an Enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references, including a reference from your current/most recent employer	E

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All Staff are required to:

Understand and comply with all relevant legislation and SRSB's policies and procedures, including data protection, safeguarding and health & safety. Confidentiality of information relating to clients, volunteers and staff is of paramount importance.

To bring to the attention of the General Manager any serious problems or areas of concern

Work as part of a team for the benefit of our clients. Staff are expected to be conscientious, adaptable and flexible in their duties.

Actively promote the work of SRSB as an independent charity for the provision of help, support and provision of services in various forms for the benefit of our clients.

Undertake appropriate training as and when required, some of which will be Health & Safety related and some of which will be skills related.

Benefits:

Life Assurance

All staff are covered under a life assurance policy for twice their annual salary. However, please note that this is not a contractual obligation and, whilst we have no intention of removing this benefit, the Charity in its sole and absolute discretion reserves the right to discontinue, vary or amend the scheme (including the level of your cover) at any time on reasonable notice to you.

Pension

You will be auto enrolled in SRSB's staff pension scheme immediately and contribute 1% of your gross earnings (plus employer contribution 1%). This percentage is due to increase to 3% employee (employer 2%) in April 2018 and 5% employee (employer 3%) in April 2019, subject to the government not deferring these increases. If you wish to contribute over and above this percentage you may do so, but SRSB will not match this extra contribution. This is a 'money purchase' scheme and is contracted in to SERPS.

Holidays

Pro-rata to full time equivalent which is 23 days per annum plus 9 days statutory/customary holidays. 3 days must be reserved for the Christmas/New Year shutdown. Additional holiday entitlement starts to accrue after 3 years' service. Our holiday year is 1st January to 31st December, holiday entitlement accruing pro-rata throughout the year.