

**JOB TITLE: SENIOR WELFARE BENEFITS CASEWORKER**

 **MACMILLAN BENEFITS ADVICE SERVICE FOR SOUTH WEST LONDON**

**Based at: South Norwood and various outreach locations**

**Responsible to: CEO, Citizens Advice Croydon**

**Hours of work: 35 hours per week**

**Salary: £28,500 pa**

**We comply with the government legislation on pension auto-enrolment OR up to 5% matching contribution to a personal pension.**

**Term: Fixed term – To 31st December 2020 (subject to continuation of funding)**

**Role purpose**

To provide an effective and efficient welfare benefit advice service, primarily to people affected by cancer, their carers and/or families.

**Context of role**

The post holder will be responsible to the Chief Executive, and will have supervisory responsibility for members of the Macmillan Welfare Benefits team.

**Job Description**

**Casework**

* Provide casework covering the full range of welfare benefits, together with generalist level advice in all other subject areas.
* Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning.
* Negotiate with third parties as appropriate.
* Ensure income maximisation through the take-up of appropriate welfare benefits.
* Prepare and present cases to the appropriate statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as appropriate.
* Assist clients with other related problems where they are an integral part of their case and refer to other advisers or specialist agencies as appropriate.
* Make home/outreach visits as necessary.
* Provide advice and assistance to other staff across the whole range of benefit issues.
* Ensure that all casework conforms to the organisation’s Office Manual and the Advice Quality Standard and/or the Specialist Quality Mark as appropriate.
* Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, and statistical monitoring and report preparation.
* Ensure that all work conforms to the organisation’s systems and procedures.

**Supervision and Training**

* Supervise members of the Macmillan Welfare Benefits team by undertaking support and supervision sessions, Independent File Reviews and annual appraisals.
* Coach, mentor and support members of the Macmillan team to ensure the work of the team maintains appropriate quality standards.
* Identify training needs within the Macmillan team and ensure these form part of individual training plans and the overall organisational training needs plan.
* From time to time, provide briefings regarding legislative, policy and training updates as they apply to welfare benefits.

**Research and campaigns**

* Assist with research and campaigns work by providing information about clients' circumstances.
* Provide statistical information on the number of clients and nature of cases and provide regular reports to bureau management.
* Monitor service provision to ensure that it reaches the widest possible client group.
* Alert other staff to local and national issues.

**Professional development**

* Keep up-to-date with relevant legislation, case law, policies and procedures and undertake appropriate training where necessary.
* Read relevant publications.
* Attend relevant internal and external meetings as agreed with the line manager.
* Prepare for and attend supervision sessions/team meetings/management team meetings as appropriate.
* Assist with service initiatives for the improvement of services.

**Administration**

* Use IT for statistical recording, record keeping and document production.
* Keep up to date with policies and procedures relevant to bureau work and undertake appropriate training.
* Attend internal and external meetings as agreed with the manager.
* Maintain close liaison with relevant external agencies.
* Maintain a library of reference material and case law.

**Public relations**

* Liaise with statutory and non-statutory organisations and represent the organisation on outside bodies as appropriate.

**Other duties and responsibilities**

* Maintain knowledge and competence relating to GDPR.
* Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.
* Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the Citizens Advice service.
* Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.

**Person Specification**

**Essential**

1. At least 2 years’ recent experience of giving welfare benefits advice including casework, including Universal Credit, including preparing cases for tribunal hearings.

2. Generalist knowledge of all other subject areas.

3. Knowledge of, or a demonstrable willingness to gain an understanding of Macmillan’s services and policies which are relevant to people affected by cancer.

4. A calm and empathetic manner appropriate to dealing with cancer patients and their families.

5. Effective oral communication skills with particular emphasis on negotiating and representing.

6. Effective writing skills with particular emphasis on negotiating, representing and preparing reviews, reports and correspondence.

7. Ordered approach to casework and an ability and willingness to follow and develop agreed procedures.

8. Understand the issues involved in interviewing clients.

9. Numerate to the level required in the tasks.

10. Ability to prioritise own work, meet deadlines and manage caseload.

11. Ability to use IT in the provision of advice and the preparation of reports and submissions.

12. Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.

13. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team.

14. Ability to monitor and maintain own standards.

15. Demonstrate understanding of social trends and their implications for clients and service provision.

16. Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice service and its equality and diversity policies.

17. Access to own transport, as there is a requirement to travel to different locations within the areas of the Croydon and Wandsworth CABx and locations of the St George’s, Croydon, Kingston and Epsom & St Helier NHS Trusts.

**Desirable**

18. At least one year’s experience of providing advice work supervision.

19. Experience of providing welfare benefits advice at AQS with casework level.

20. Experience of providing advice at AQS with casework level in at least one other enquiry area, such as debt.

In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy we will require the successful candidate undergo an enhanced DBS screening. However, a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to your being able to take up the job.