**Job Description**

**Post**: Social Prescribing Link Worker

**Salary:** £23,500 - £26,500

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

**Benefits:** 5% Pension Contribution

20 days annual leave + 5 concessionary days

**Location/Base**: GP Practices & VCSE groups across Bury

**Responsible to:** Assistant Social Prescribing Manager

**Job Summary**

This role is to empower people to take control of their health and wellbeing through referral to non-clinical support with the VCSE (Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise) sector.

To work in partnership with the Primary Care Networks (PCN) and GP practices to ensure patient referrals from primary care and other health professionals are appropriate. Provide holistic assessments and development of a Social Prescribing plan to improve health and well-being outcomes for individuals, with a longer-term outcomes (reducing the number of clinical /medical interventions required).

**Key Responsibilities**

1. Take referrals from a wide range of agencies, including GP practices, pharmacies, multi-disciplinary teams, hospitals including self-referrals.
2. Provide personalised support to individuals, their families and carers to take control of their wellbeing, live independently and improve their health outcomes. Develop trusting relationships by giving people time and focus on ‘what matters to me’. Co-produce a personalised support plan to improve health and wellbeing, introducing or reconnecting people to VCSE and statutory services.
3. The role will require managing and prioritising your own caseload, in accordance with the needs, priorities and any urgent support required by individuals. It is vital that you have a strong awareness and understanding of when it is appropriate or necessary to refer people back to other health professionals/agencies, especially when the persons needs are beyond the scope of the Link Worker role – e.g. when there is a mental health need requiring a qualified practitioner.
4. Draw on and increase the strengths and capacities of local communities, enabling local VCSE organisations and community groups to receive Social Prescribing referrals. Ensure these organisations/groups are supported, have basic safeguarding processes for vulnerable individuals and can provide opportunities for the person to develop friendships, a sense of belonging, and build knowledge, skills and confidence.
5. Work with Bury VCFA (Voluntary, Community & Faith Alliance) staff to support VCSE organisations with capacity building, funding and volunteering including setting up new community groups and services, where gaps are identified in local provision.

**Key Tasks**

Referrals

* Promoting Social Prescribing, its role in self-management, and the wider determinants of health
* Build relationships with key staff (e.g. Practice Managers) in GP practices within the local PCNs, attending relevant meetings, becoming part of the wider network team, giving information and feedback on Social Prescribing
* Be proactive in developing strong links with all local agencies to encourage referrals in to the service
* Work in partnership with all local agencies to raise awareness of Social Prescribing and how partnership working can reduce pressure on statutory services, improve health outcomes and enable a holistic approach to care
* Provide referral agencies with regular updates about Social Prescribing, including training for their staff and how to access information to encourage appropriate referrals
* Seek regular feedback about the quality of service and impact of Social Prescribing on referral agencies
* Be proactive in encouraging self-referrals and connecting with all local communities, particularly those communities that statutory agencies may find hard to reach

**Provide Personalised Support**

* Meet people on a 1-2-1 basis, making home visits where appropriate within organisations policies and procedures. Give people time to tell their stories and focus on ‘what matters to me’.
* Build trust with the person, providing non-judgemental support, respecting diversity and lifestyle choices. Work from a strength-based approach focusing on a persons assets
* Be a friendly source of information about wellbeing and prevention approaches

**Reporting Requirements:**

Help people identify the wider issues that impact upon their health and wellbeing, such as debt, poor housing, being unemployed, loneliness and caring responsibilities.

* Work with the individual, their families and carers and consider how they can all be supported through Social Prescribing
* Help people maintain or regain independence through living skills, adaptations, enablement approaches and simple safeguards
* Work with individuals to co-produce a simple personalised support plan and what the individual can do for themselves to improve their health and wellbeing – based on their priorities, interests, values and motivations – including what they can expect from the groups’ activities and services they are being connected to.
* Introduce people to VCSE groups, activities and statutory services, ensuring they meet their needs. Follow up to ensure they are happy, able to engage, included and receiving the best support available
* Where people may be eligible for a personal health budget, to provide assistance alongside other Bury VCFA staff to explore options
* Support community groups and VCSE organisations to receive referrals
* Forge strong links with local VCSE, building on what is already available to create a map or menu of community groups and assets. Use these opportunities to promote micro-commissioning or small grants if available
* Support individuals to volunteer, in order to build their skills and confidence, and strengthen community resilience
* Develop a team of volunteers within your role to support you and to provide ‘buddying support’ for people, starting new groups and finding creative, community solutions to local issues
* Encourage people, their families and carers to provide peer support and to do things together, such as setting up new community groups or volunteering
* Provide regular support to community groups receiving referrals, to ensure that they are strong, sustained and have the support they need to be part of Social Prescribing

**General Tasks**

**Data Capture**

* Work sensitively with people, their families and carers to capture key information, enabling tracking of the impact of social prescribing on their health and wellbeing
* Encourage people, their families and carers to provide feedback and to share their stories about the impact of social prescribing on their lives
* Support referral agencies to provide appropriate information about the person they are referring. Use the case management system to track the person’s progress. Provide appropriate feedback to referral agencies about the people they referred
* Work closely with GPs to ensure that Social Prescribing referral details are inputted to our database and that the persons use of the NHS can be tracked, adhering to data protection legislation and data sharing agreements with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
* Ensure recording of data to track clients progress using Bury VCFA’s Social Prescribing database
* Ensure relevant targets and deadlines are met to ensure Bury VCFA's compliance with contractual obligations for social prescribing
* Liaise with primary care providers to ensure that data is gathered to evidence the achievement of the objectives of the service
* Monitor the performance of the service and produce monitoring reports on the progress and outcomes

**General Requirements**

* Participate in training and information briefings and maintain an up to date knowledge of the VCSE sector
* To be familiar with and comply with all departmental policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines
* Attend supervision sessions and staff meetings
* Assist management in preparing quarterly monitoring reports outlining progress of the work, bids submitted; funding secured and key issues raised by members
* Carry out occasional other duties as agreed within supervision to develop the aims of VCFA
* Undertake personal training as may be required to keep up to date and fulfil the professional requirements identified for this job description
* To have a collaborative and flexible approach to work undertaken by VCFA
* Contribute to the development of VCFA

**Equal Opportunities**

* VCFA is committed to equal opportunities, anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive policy or practice. No one we have contact with may be discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, age or impairment. This policy applies to job applicants, employees, volunteers and patients.

**Notes**

* All jobs are subject to change from time to time and this job description will be reviewed regularly
* The job description is a guide to the work that you will be required to undertake and represents a range of responsibilities in line with the grade for the post
* This post is subject to a 3-month probationary period

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **Qualifications & Training** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| NVQ Level 3, Advanced level or equivalent qualifications or working towards |  |  |
| Training in motivational coaching and interviewing or equivalent experience  |  |  |
| Demonstrable commitment to professional and personal development  |  |  |
| **Qualities & Attributes**  |  |  |
| Ability to listen, empathise with people and provide person centred support in a non-judgemental way  |  |  |
| Able to get along with people from all backgrounds and communities, respecting lifestyles and diversity  |  |  |
| Commitment to reducing health inequalities and proactively working to reach people from all communities  |  |  |
| Able to support people in a way that inspires trust and confidence, motivating others to reach their potential  |  |  |
| Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, with people, their families, carers, community groups, partner agencies and stakeholders  |  |  |
| Ability to identify risk and assess/manage risk when working with individuals  |  |  |
| Have a strong awareness and understanding of when it is appropriate or necessary to refer people back to other health professionals/agencies, (where the individuals needs are beyond the scope of the link worker role) – e.g. when there is a mental health need requiring a qualified practitioner  |  |  |
| Able to work from an asset based approach, building on existing community and personal assets  |  |  |
| Able to finish work tasks |  |  |
| Ability to maintain effective working relationships and to promote collaborative practice with all colleagues |  |  |
| Commitment to collaborative working with all local agencies (including VCSE organisations and community groups). Able to work with others to reduce hierarchies and find creative solutions to community issues  |  |  |
| Demonstrates personal accountability, emotional resilience and works well under pressure |  |  |
| Ability to organise, plan and prioritise on own initiative, including when under pressure and meeting deadlines |  |  |
| High level of written and oral communication skills |  |  |
| Ability to work flexibly and enthusiastically within a team or on own initiative  |  |  |
| Understanding of the needs of small volunteer-led community groups and ability to support their development  |  |  |
| Knowledge of and ability to work to policies and procedures, including confidentiality, safeguarding, lone working, information governance, and health and safety |  |  |
| Experience of working directly in a community development context, adult health and social care, learning support or public health/health improvement (including unpaid work) |  |  |