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**Community Treatment Team Counsellor**

Reporting to: **SCS Services Manager**

Accountable to: **SCS Services Manager / SCS Clinical Lead**

Location: **South Tyneside Community Treatment Team base**

Salary: **Agenda for Change band 6 comparable**

Hours: **Full-time - 37.5 hours per week, which will include one evening.**

The post holder will be entitled to 30 days annual leave at normal salary rate or pro-rata for part of a year. In addition, a pro-rata entitlement to all statutory public holidays will be given at a normal salary rate.

This post may involve working from other Community Treatment Team bases around Sunderland to meet the needs of clients and therefore the post holder will be called upon to use a personal means of transport while engaged in the work of the service for which travel expenses will be available.

This post is expected to be delivered in person, although a small amount of home working may be permitted and therefore the post holder may be required to work confidentially from home.

**General Description and Job Purpose**

Sunderland Counselling Service (SCS) is a unique independent mental health charity and company limited by guarantee, which is acknowledged for its contribution to the community by mental health professionals, health practitioners, and local and regional voluntary and statutory community agencies.

This is an exciting role in which the post holder will be employed on a permanent contract as a counsellor by SCS, subject to a successful probationary period of six months. The post holder will be subject to SCS terms and conditions and will work alongside and within the Community Treatment Team, known as CTT. We will also welcome applications from those who wish to be seconded into the organisation on an initial 12-month contract.

The CTT offers secondary care mental health interventions provided by Cumbria, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear (CNTW) across South Tyneside and Sunderland. Clients are likely to have a diagnosable mental health condition and be in receipt of support from the wider CTT. The postholder will be expected to work closely with colleagues within this service and others, to ensure clients receive the most effective therapeutic intervention for their presenting need(s) and will play an active role in regular multi-disciplinary team meetings within the CTT to identify counselling suitable clients.

The post holder will be expected to provide assessments, check in phone calls and time-limited counselling to adults with a wide range of issues. Up to twenty session of counselling will be offered to clients and include work on areas such as anxiety, depression, low mood, complex grief and loss, relationship issues, loss of confidence, emotional distress, historic abuse and wellbeing issues.

The post holder will be supported through regular counselling supervision provided by SCS, along with operational line management and case management provided by the CTT.

There may also be some home visits and lone working within this post.

The post holder will work with people with different cultural backgrounds and using interpreters when necessary and should be committed to equal opportunities.

**Main clinical, professional and general responsibilities**

The post holder will:

* Provide comprehensive assessments for all clients referred to the service in order to determine their counselling and other support needs; this is likely to be mainly face to face but may involve some remote work (telephone / video).
* Provide time limited individual counselling to those aged 18+ referred to the service either face to face, over the telephone or through secure video platform.
* Manage the service waiting list and accept referrals via agreed pathways and protocols.
* Be a part of the CTT MDT Meetings to aid decisions on suitability of new referrals, adhering to the service’s referral protocols, referring unsuitable clients on to the relevant service or back to the referral agent as necessary, or step the person’s treatment to another modality if required.
* Encourage and support clients using the service, to enable them to address and manage the issues and associated problems that are affecting their mental and emotional well-being.
* Make effective use of outcome measures in counselling sessions to promote wellbeing for clients and contribute to achievement of service recovery targets.
* Complete risk assessments and plans with clients, seeking clinical support where appropriate and making onward referrals where required.
* Provide check in phone calls with clients on the CTT waiting list and offer appropriate guidance and support to assist during their wait, including reviewing risk.
* Ensure that the service is accessible to the clients who need it, which may involve working from a variety of locations across the city including the CTT bases, GP surgeries and primary care centres.
* Liaise and work in partnership with other agencies to ensure clients are referred on to appropriate services to receive the most effective intervention.
* Develop, facilitate (where appropriate), and promote the use of psychoeducational and / or self-help and support groups to the client group served.
* Complete accurate, appropriate and timely notes including proforma, interventions and risk using the RIO database system.
* Develop client care plans.
* Observe Sunderland Counselling Service written procedures and policies at all times.
* Work to relevant CNTW policies and procedures, including information governance, confidentiality and risk management.
* Provide informal training where appropriate for CTT colleagues and assessment team on counselling interventions, their benefits and suitability for the service.
* Engage effectively in regular line and case management sessions along with clinical supervision.
* Observe BACP ethical framework and other guidance.
* Working within a larger team within Sunderland Counselling Service, participate in team development, training and regular supervision sessions.
* Be supported by colleagues and the wider team within SCS and the CTT.
* Be accountable for personal conduct and professional standards of practice in relation to all relevant legislation and statutory obligations, including the Children Act, Family Law Act, Health and Safety at Work, Equal Opportunities, local Safeguarding procedures and all Sunderland Counselling Service policies and procedures.
* Contribute to the further development and sustainability of the service.
* Work both effectively and creatively which may include some evening work as service needs require.
* Monitor and evaluate service provision, providing statistics, feedback and other information to the Line Manager and others as required.
* Professionally represent Sunderland Counselling Service in all dealings with external agencies.
* Undertake any other duties as required within the spirit of the post.

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**Community Treatment Team Counsellor**

**Personal Specification**

**Knowledge, qualification & experience**

**Essential:**

* Qualified to Degree, MSc, MA, or Diploma level in Counselling.
* Significant counselling experience post qualification, either in a paid or voluntary capacity.
* Competence in and possession of a recognised theoretical model of counselling.
* Experience and knowledge of working within a time limited counselling model.
* Sound knowledge of the associated issues facing this client group, including relevant legislative frameworks in relation to mental health and child protection.
* Sound knowledge and understanding of complex mental health issues and presentations.
* Understanding of the stepped care model.
* Sound knowledge of the range of interventions used in primary and secondary care mental health services.
* Willingness to contribute to and assist in the development of strategies that will make the service provision accessible to all clients.
* The ability to create, sustain and disengage from productive therapeutic relationships.
* Experience of carrying out assessments of client support needs.
* Experience of carrying out robust risk assessments and risk management plans.
* Experience of writing accurate clinical notes.
* Experience of developing care plans.
* Ability to make good use of supervisory processes.
* Ability to manage clear, professional boundaries with clients.
* Experience of managing a client’s care, including referring on to other appropriate interventions or modalities.
* Ability to evaluate effectiveness of interventions at an individual and project level.
* A clear understanding of, and willingness to acknowledge and adhere to, the service philosophy.
* Membership of and registration with BACP or other relevant professional body.

**Desirable:**

* Experience of delivering assessments and effective counselling interventions over the telephone and video.
* Experience of delivering therapeutic or psycho-educational groups.
* Possession of, or showing evidence of working towards, BACP accreditation or equivalent.
* Experience of working within a Talking Therapies Service for anxiety and depression.
* Experience of working within a secondary care mental health treatment team.
* Sound knowledge of Talking Therapies and the stepped care model.
* Sound knowledge and understanding of the Community Treatment Team and their role.
* Possession of, or showing evidence of working towards, Counselling for Depression, Couples Counselling for Depression, EMDR and / or Interpersonal Therapy qualifications.
* Sound knowledge of broader mental health issues and services available to support people.
* Commitment to and experience of working with multi-agency partnerships.
* Experience of using electronic case management systems such as RIO.
* Good information technology skills.
* Full clean driving license and use of car.

**Essential skills and behaviours:**

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| Ethical Behaviour | Working in accordance with the service standards of practice and BACP Ethical Framework, identifying and raising ethical concerns relevant to the organisation. |
| Ability to work alone and as part of a team | Working in an unsupervised area and sharing information where appropriate, with the relevant personnel.Ability to work autonomously.Ability to work as part of team. |
| Good communication skills | Excellent interpersonal skills.Listening actively, asking questions, clarifying points and rephrasing others’ statements to ensure mutual understanding.Ability to respond sensitively to people in distress.  |
| Commitment to good practice | Ability to challenge poor practice and identify and work to best practice standards.Ongoing evidence and commitment to continuing professional development. |
| Proactive in information gathering | Making best use of existing resources of information. Seeking information from multiple sources. |
| Ability to manage self | Handling other’s emotions without becoming personally involved in them. Taking responsibility for identifying and meeting own learning and development needs. Self-motivated. |