



Maternal Mental Health – Link Worker

Job Description

Reporting to: Senior MH Link Worker

Location: Based at: Sunderland Counselling Service, 51 John Street, Sunderland, SR1 1QN.

The post holder will be required to work flexibly from a variety of locations throughout the City of Sunderland and South Tyneside, including SCS office base, GP surgeries and other community venues such as Family Hubs. The post holder will also be able to work flexibly and confidentially from home at times to suit client and service needs.

Hours: Part time = 12 hours per week

The post holder will be entitled to 9.6 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.

Salary: Agenda for Change band 5 Pro Rata (currently £29,970)

General Description:

The post holder will be employed on a fixed term contract of 12 months which will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months, with continuing employment being subject to obtaining ongoing project related funding.

The post holder will work as a link worker in our Maternal Mental Health Link Work Service, set within a unique independent mental health charity, which is acknowledged for its contribution to the community by mental health professionals, health practitioners and local and regional voluntary and statutory agencies.

The purpose of the role is to support mothers who are experiencing emotional distress or feeling at a crisis point to find solutions to their current issues and help develop more effective ways of managing their mental and emotional wellbeing, in order to help deliver better outcomes from preconception through to their baby's 2nd birthday. The service works with women experiencing practical and social difficulties that impact their daily functioning and who present with moderate to severe or complex mental health difficulties who may benefit from step-down provision.

The essential features of the link worker service are:

- empowering mothers and families to take control of their health and wellbeing
- promoting recovery
- focusing on 'what matters to me'
- giving time to take a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.

Priorities for the service are to engage and enable mothers to participate in group activities and connect to local assets, connect to local peer support and help develop and engage in action plans, reviewing these in a way that is most meaningful to the person.

This service acts as an additional emotional and practical support feature to wrap around existing maternal mental health services, supporting women to engage in or be retained in treatment, prevent deterioration, maximising treatment outcomes and supporting independence. It is **NOT** intended to operate as a crisis service or an alternative to crisis services, but rather as a bridge to support people to access crisis services should the need arise. It is not envisaged as a clinical intervention and would not take on care planning or case management functions which clearly must be provided by clinical staff.

The post holder will carry out assessments of need and provide support and guidance to people who are referred into the service via our establish pathways. This may include direct emotional or practical support, signposting, providing self-help materials, a check in system, identifying a suitable package of specific support and making any necessary onward referrals.

The post holder will be supported by regular operational line management and caseload support provided by the Senior MH Link Worker.

To allow flexibility and to respond to client need, services may be delivered confidentially from home as well as from our city centre office and other community venues in Sunderland and South Tyneside such as the Family Hubs. 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.

Main Responsibilities:

The post holder will:

- Take responsibility for a designated case load, carrying out personalised, recovery focussed action planning, and supporting implementation and review of the plan.
- Liaise with clinical staff across the maternal mental health pathway and local VCSE partners and agencies to ensure mutual understanding of the service offered and how this complements other roles within primary care and the wider local system. This will include but is not limited to primary and secondary care mental health services, health visiting and midwifery.
- Work within a multi-disciplinary team approach with other services.
- Work in a culturally sensitive way for all service users, tailoring the service to meet their individual needs, challenging stigma and discrimination, advocating for the person if appropriate, and ensuring up-to-date community knowledge.
- Work with a range of needs and with people with a range of backgrounds and ethnicity.
- Receive referrals and ensure risk assessments are completed for all service users on caseload.
- Provide telephone, online and face to face assessments for all clients referred to the service in order to determine their support needs.
- Provide non-clinical practical and emotional support to clients referred to the service; the amount and intensity of this support will vary depending on the person's needs, mental health and life circumstances.
- Provide education and reassurance regarding mental health presentations and treatment options.
- Take a holistic and system focussed view of need.
- Provide direct emotional and psychoeducational support for a range of issues which may include mental health issues or practical issues.
- Support service users to identify solutions to the issues they are facing and agree an action plan to achieve their desired outcomes.
- Review progress and outcomes with service users.
- Provide signposting and guidance to a range of community-based services that may be of use to clients.
- Provide signposting / referral / support into specialist services where needed, developing knowledge of the local care pathways to meet service users' need.
- Actively navigate, broker and signpost the person to the services and resources they need.

- Complete check in calls with clients who are waiting to access other services.
- Provide self-help materials to clients or direct them to online resources.
- Provide in the moment interventions to help people manage their overall wellbeing to assist them to be able to focus on and follow through on actions to achieve their desired results.
- Pro-actively reach out to those clients who need more intense support to move forward.
- Encourage and support clients using the service, to enable them to identify, address and manage the issues and associated problems that are affecting their mental and emotional well-being.
- Make effective use of outcome measures to promote wellbeing for clients and contribute to achievement of service targets.
- Ensure that the service is accessible to the clients who need it, which will involve providing support face to face, by telephone or secure video platform and will involve working from a variety of locations.
- Facilitate and support the delivery of our peer support group for individuals who are engaged within the service.
- Liaise and work in partnership with other agencies to ensure clients are referred on to appropriate services to receive the most effective intervention for their needs.
- Complete accurate, appropriate, and timely case notes using an electronic case management system.
- Observe Sunderland Counselling Service written procedures and policies at all times.
- Engage in regular line management and support sessions.
- Undertake training as determined by the service to ensure skills are up to date and relevant.
- Working within a larger team within Sunderland Counselling Service, participate in team development, training, and regular supervision sessions.
- 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 flexibly, effectively, and creatively which may include some evening work as service needs require.
- Monitor and evaluate service provision, providing statistics and other information to the Senior MH Link Worker 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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Person Specification

	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Assessment Method</u>
Qualifications	<p>Educated to A level standard or equivalent.</p> <p>Relevant qualification e.g. Level 3 Counselling skills, NVQ level 3 in Social Care, Advice & Guidance qualification, social prescribing qualification.</p> <p>Demonstrable commitment to personal and professional development.</p> <p>Safeguarding training for both adults and children.</p>	<p>Relevant degree e.g. psychology.</p> <p>Training in risk assessment and assessments of client support needs.</p> <p>Mental health training / qualification.</p>	<p>Application Form.</p>
Experience	<p>Experience of supporting people with mental health difficulties either in a paid or voluntary capacity.</p> <p>Experience of carrying out assessments of client support needs, including risk assessments.</p> <p>Experience of working in a relevant community setting.</p> <p>Experience of accurately collecting and recording information and data whilst maintaining confidentiality.</p> <p>Experience of working collaboratively with different organisations, building trust, confidence and partnerships.</p>	<p>Experience of using outcomes measures.</p> <p>Experience of using electronic case management systems such as IAPTus.</p> <p>Experience of working with pregnant women or as part of a maternal mental health pathway.</p> <p>Experience of developing peer led initiatives.</p> <p>Experience of facilitating groups.</p>	<p>Application Form and Interview.</p>

Skills & Competencies	<p>Ability to actively listen, empathise with people and provide non-judgemental support.</p> <p>Ability to create, sustain and disengage from productive interpersonal relationships, working within the boundaries of the role.</p> <p>Ability to appropriately advocate for a client's needs.</p> <p>Ability to handle others' emotions without becoming personally involved in them.</p> <p>Ability to identify risk to self and others, identifying and reporting safeguarding incidents.</p> <p>Understanding of and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>Ability to make good use of line management, supervisory and support processes.</p> <p>Ability to evaluate effectiveness of interventions at an individual and project level.</p> <p>Ability to work in an unsupervised area and share information where appropriate, with the relevant personnel.</p> <p>Ability to challenge poor practice and identify and work to best practice standards.</p> <p>Ability to take responsibility for identifying and meeting own learning and development needs.</p> <p>Ability to evaluate and put in place the effect of training.</p>	<p>Willingness to contribute to and assist in the development of strategies that will make the service provision accessible to all clients.</p> <p>Ability to effectively facilitate client led groups.</p>	<p>Application Form and Interview.</p>
Knowledge	<p>Knowledge and understanding of emotional distress, mental wellbeing, and mental ill health,</p>	<p>Understanding of talking therapies and specialist mental health services and</p>	<p>Interview.</p>

	<p>specifically relating to maternal mental health.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of relevant support services available in Sunderland, specifically relating to maternal mental health.</p> <p>Sound knowledge of the associated issues facing the client group, including relevant legislative frameworks in relation to mental health, safeguarding and child protection.</p>	<p>which service may be relevant to a client's presentation.</p> <p>Knowledge of medication used in treating mental health problems.</p> <p>Knowledge of health and social care terminology.</p> <p>Knowledge of additional risk factors that exist for pregnant or new mothers.</p>	
Other Requirements	<p>Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office applications.</p> <p>High level of enthusiasm and motivation.</p> <p>Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including telephone skills.</p> <p>Able to write clear reports and letters.</p> <p>Ability to work within a team and foster good working relationships.</p> <p>Ability to work autonomously towards service objectives.</p> <p>Ability to work under pressure.</p> <p>Ability to work within the boundaries of the role and within own competencies.</p> <p>Regard for others and respect for individual rights of autonomy and confidentiality.</p>	<p>Full clean driving license and use of car.</p> <p>Fluent in languages other than English.</p>	<p>Application form.</p> <p>Interview.</p>