****

**Office Manager**

**Job Description**

**Reporting to:** Services Manager

**Location:** Sunderland Counselling Service

51 John Street

Sunderland

SR1 1QN

**Hours:** 37.5 hours per week (excluding breaks). Evening cover will be required to cover annual leave and sickness.

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, all statutory public holidays will be given at normal salary rate.

**Salary:** £31,049 (comparable to AfC Band 5)

**General Description:**

The Office Manager will be based in our main office in Sunderland Counselling Service, where we work with Sunderland residents to deliver a range of counselling and link work provision to support people’s mental health and emotional wellbeing.

This post will lead a team of paid and volunteer administration workers and a cleaning team, the post holder will be based in and expected to manage a small but busy office, with responsibility for the smooth running of all aspects of the office and service administration. Working as a member of a larger team within Sunderland Counselling Service, the post holder will contribute to the sustainability and development of the service as a whole.

The post will inevitably require a flexible approach to working and time management. Due to the nature of the service, the post holder will come into contact with confidential and sensitive information, and individuals in distress. Therefore, personal integrity will be essential and a counselling qualification will be desirable. A full driving license and daily use of a car are essential.

The post holder will be supported by regular line management provided by the service.

This is a permanent position subject to the successful completion of a six-month probationary period.

**Main Responsibilities**

**Leadership and Staff Management**

* Provide appropriate and adequate line management, support and operational supervision of staff and volunteers in line with all relevant HR policies and procedures to enable them to operate safely and effectively.
* Provide daily supervision of the work of all administration staff and volunteers, ensuring that all office procedures are followed and clerical systems are set up and maintained as appropriate.
* Contribute to the induction to the service of all paid and voluntary staff.
* Ensure continuous adequate staff cover on reception and office duties, fulfilling these roles personally where necessary.
* Provide support to other activities within the service, as directed by the Services Manager, including secretarial support for meetings and HR processes, including formal meetings and interviews.
* Provide support to key personnel within the senior management team, including secretarial support such as minute taking and diary management.
* Participate in line management, training and development in line with role and service requirements.
* Attend appropriate meetings and training courses as required.
* Promote staff wellbeing and support a positive workplace culture.

**Office Management**

* Create, develop and maintain effective and appropriate office systems, including databases and spreadsheets, as required.
* Support the implementation and effective use of client case management systems.
* Utilise and oversee the correct use by others of all office equipment.
* Ensure all incoming and outgoing communications to the office are recorded, distributed and dealt with appropriately including incoming and outgoing mail, phone calls, emails and faxes.
* Ensure the co-ordination and maintenance of an effective appointments system for the provision of individual counselling, group work and any other service-related appointments.
* Oversee the ordering of leaflets, stationery, computer consumables and housekeeping supplies.
* Ensure that service leaflets and stationery are accurate, up to date and available to all staff.
* Contribute to the development of all service-related information and maintain and linked resources, in hard or virtual formats.
* Ensure effective petty cash and ordering systems are in place to meet the organisation’s needs.
* Commitment to and involvement in the implementation of an appropriate quality assurance system.
* Arrange IT support where necessary.
* Book venues and make arrangements for events and meetings as necessary.
* Contribute to Sunderland Counselling Service’s Business Continuity Plan, ensuring office operations are considered and represented.
* Implement environmentally sustainable office practices, e.g. recycling, paper use reduction.

**Client and Data Management**

* Be responsible for professionally receiving and recording all referrals into the service from a wide range of sources, including GPs and other health professionals and self-referrals.
* Ensure all aspects of a client’s referral to the service, including personal information, referral details, appointments and closure, are recorded accurately on service paperwork and databases, with regard to service procedures regarding confidentiality.
* Liaise with staff, clients and external agencies regarding referrals and appointments.
* Ensure the appropriate allocation of referred clients for assessment and counselling appointments and allocation to appropriate, qualified and competent staff as necessary.
* Liaise and work in partnership with other agencies to ensure clients receive effective and appropriate services.
* Monitor and update service records on active and closed clients, including risk rating systems.
* Support the implementation of effective systems to ensure clients are able to effectively navigate the service, including recording and reporting of this on our client case management system.
* Support the recording and monitoring of key performance indicators for the organisation.
* Be responsible for the submission of statistical and non-statistical reports and information on all aspects of service activity to the Chief Executive, as required including on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.
* In the absence of a counsellor or available practitioner, provide information, and onward referral information to distressed clients who contact the service.
* Liaise with external partners in order to book interpreters for non-English speaking clients as necessary.
* Ensure compliance with data protection and confidentiality legislation such as GDPR and Data Protection Act.
* Ensure records are kept in line with record retention policies and procedures.

**Health, Safety and Facilities**

* Ensure health and safety policies and procedures are completed and adhered to, including checking in / out processes, workplace assessments, risk assessments, fire safety checks and overseeing the implementation of the lone work procedures as set out in the service health and safety policy.
* Oversee general cleanliness and housekeeping within service premises.
* Lead on building management for our central base, including the reporting, coordination and resolution of issues including liaising with external trades.
* Act as designated First Aider within the workplace.
* Coordinate service related problems or incidents, liaising with the Services Managers where necessary.

**Other**

* Be accountable for personal and professional conduct in relation to all relevant legislation and Sunderland Counselling Service policies and procedures and be similarly responsible for all administration staff and volunteers.
* Observe Sunderland Counselling Service written procedures and policies at all times.
* Professionally represent Sunderland Counselling Service in all dealings with external agencies.
* In conjunction with the Services Managers and external contracted website developer, contribute to the management and maintenance of the service website.
* Contribute to our Social Media plan where possible and appropriate.
* Undertake any other duties as required within the spirit of the post.

**Sunderland Counselling Service Office Manager**

**Person Specification**

**Knowledge, skills and experience**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications** | Good standard of education with a minimum of 5 GCSEs or equivalent  Suitable and relevant leadership / management qualification.  Possession of an administrative qualification. | Training in health & safety and risk assessment.  Training in human resources, equal opportunities, equality & diversity.  Qualified first aider. |
| **Experience** | Experience of using Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, Power Point and Outlook.  Practical experience of setting up and maintaining effective and efficient administrative systems.  Experience of using and managing IT systems and the ability to resolve issues.  Experience of working as an administrator with a significant level of responsibility.  Experience of leading and motivating teams of people.  Experience of providing effective line management to staff members and volunteers, including HR processes.  Leadership experience within services which are customer facing and customer focussed.  Experience of working with complex databases and record management systems.  Experience of effective note taking and providing effective secretariat support.  Experience of working in a service with agreed targets in place demonstrating activity levels and outcomes. | Experience of leading formal HR processes.  Experience of working with clients and service users, including those in distress.  Experience of managing premises  Experience of marketing / promotion / use of social media. |
| **Skills & Competencies** | Excellent communication skills and telephone manner, with the ability to resolve issues appropriately.  Flexible approach to working, with the ability to work on own initiative and to tight timescale and / or as part of a team.  Proactive, organised and methodical approach, with an ability to grasp detail and complexity and reach appropriate resolutions.  Ability to handle other’s emotions without becoming personally involved in them.  Able to communicate clearly and persuasively, both verbally and in writing.  Excellent IT skills, including word processing and database packages.  Excellent organisational skills including diary management and effective administrative systems.  Ability to use databases, reports and other sources of information to analyse performance and identify areas for improvement.  Ability to work within a team and foster good working relationships.  The ability to lead and motivate others to achieve excellence. |  |
| **Knowledge** | Knowledge and experience of health and safety procedures. | Knowledge and understanding of working in the charitable sector.  Knowledge and / or experience of working within services supporting people with common mental health problems.  Knowledge and understanding of health and safety policies and procedures. |
| **Other** | Willingness to undertake training and continuous personal development.  Ability to identify own learning and development needs.  Ability to work under pressure.  Ability to manage self.  Ability to identify own learning and development needs.  Ability to work alone and as part of a team.  Empathy with the Sunderland Counselling Service’ aims, vision and values and a commitment to support delivery in line with these.  A commitment to working within the principles of equal opportunities. | Full clean driving licence and use of a car. |

Issue Date July 2025