

Independent Mental Health Advocate Job Description

Accountable to: Service Manager

Main Objectives

- The provision of Generic Mental Health Advocacy and Independent Mental Health advocacy to qualifying patients, including people detained under the MHA' 83, conditionally discharged restricted patients, people subject to Guardianship under the Act or on Supervised Community Treatment and people being considered for section 57 treatment.
- Enable eligible people with mental health problems to have their perspective recognised, respecting the multiple needs of the diverse client group and encouraging the widest possible access.
- Contribute in the development of an efficient administration system that will meet the needs of the service in helping evaluating the benefits of the service to the service users and commissioners.
- Raise awareness of advocacy, IMHA and the service to other professionals, individuals and agencies

Main Tasks

- To work with individual patients to provide information, support and representation in order to assist them in any decision making process affecting their care, treatment, legal status or other aspect of their daily lives.
- To work with groups of patients on a ward or other community basis to assist them in developing and expressing a collective point of view.
- Liaise with other professionals and services to express and promote the Advocacy and IMHA service. Support the Manager in providing training to ensure awareness and understanding of Advocacy and IMHA
- To assist in the design and provision of training for patients and/or other groups
- Develop and agree a work schedule with the Manager that meets the requirements of the post.
- Develop targets with the Manager and work to meet them.

- Maintain detailed case notes and accurate statistical and other records for the purpose of information retrieval, project evaluation and casework.
- Work at all times within the principles and policies of Together, the Service Specification and the Contractual requirements of the Project
- Undertake all necessary or relevant training as agreed.
- The successful completion of accredited training for Independent Advocacy Qualification in particular completing the IMHA module of the National Advocacy Qualification, during first year of employment.
- Provide written or verbal reports as requested.
- Work as part of a team, providing support and assistance to other members of the team, including volunteers, and working in co-operation with them to meet the requirements of the Service.
- Undertake such other duties or responsibilities, commensurate to the nature and grade of the post, as may from time to time be requested.

Confidentiality

- Information relating to users must be treated in the strictest confidence and discussed only within the remit of the work of the Advocacy and IMHA service with the appropriate members of staff.
- Information relating to staff must be treated in the strictest confidence and discussed only with other senior staff or line manager.

This list is not exhaustive and amendments and additions may be required in line with future policy changes.

Equal Opportunities Statement

We acknowledge the unique contribution that all Together employees and service users can bring to the work of the projects and the organisation in terms of their culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, nationality, age, religion or belief and any physical disability or history of mental health or additional problems.

All appointments and promotions are based on merit and no job applicant or employee will be treated unfairly or discriminated against. All staff have equal access to staff development.

Full details may be found in the Human Resources Policy and Procedure Manual. Any member of staff who breaches this policy may be subject of grievance and/or disciplinary procedures.

Independent Mental Health Advocate Person Specification

In addressing each of these criteria, candidates must evidence their statements - it is not sufficient to state that you possess the competence

	Short-listing criteria	Essential	Desirable
1	Experience of working in an advocacy or care setting	✓	
2	Understanding of the issues involved in providing independent advocacy	✓	
3	Experience of liaison and negotiation with health and social care professionals.	✓	
4	Ability to work flexibly to meet varying demands on the service	✓	
5	Excellent communication skills – orally and written.	✓	
6	Access to appropriate transport to enable effective access to services & service users that are geographically dispersed, i.e. essential car user.	✓	
7	Competency in the use of basic information technology	✓	
8	An understanding of discrimination & its effects.	✓	
9	Evidence of training & learning.	✓	
10	Willingness to undertake essential training – Independent Advocacy Qualification with IMHA specialism.	✓	
11	Ability to work independently, on own initiative and prioritise workload while working as part of a team.	✓	
12	Understanding of Care Planning and Assessment		✓
13	Understanding of the specific role, purpose and responsibilities of an Independent Mental Health Advocate		✓

Where candidates lack the competencies identified as 'desirable' in the Person Specification, they will be required to address these as a priority if appointed to the post.