

Job Description and Person Specification

Job details

Job title: Housing Options Advisor (Health and Housing)
Grade: Band 5
Reports to: Senior Housing Options Advisor
Responsible for: No direct responsibility for employees
Directorate and Service area: Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing

Purpose of the job

Working in a small casework team, provide a specialist, efficient, high-quality advice and assessment service for patients who are ready to be discharged from hospital, with the aim of identifying suitable long-term housing solutions, preventing discharge delays, homelessness and use of temporary accommodation.

Ensure that advice and casework is delivered, and patients' accommodation and support needs are met, in accordance with homelessness legislation, statutory guidance and the Council's policies and procedures.

The role will be based across the locality of North Northamptonshire.

Principal responsibilities

1. To act as a specialist advisor on all housing related matters to inpatient clinical teams at local hospitals and within the Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust and provide timely, appropriate and detailed advice and guidance under the homelessness legislation as and when required, assisting with all case referrals to help prevent delays and achieve the safe and timely discharge of patients from inpatient settings.
2. Provide an effective triage service to assess initial housing and health needs, risks, and eligibility for assistance, acting as a primary point of contact for patients and health partners, offering immediate advice, practical support, and advocacy and taking swift and decisive action to mitigate risks of homelessness, escalating complex cases as needed.
3. Deliver tailored, proactive, and person-centred advice to prevent or relieve homelessness, including negotiating with patients appointed legal teams, landlords, mediating with family or friends, and identifying suitable alternative accommodation. Working with customers to complete Full Housing Assessments (FHA's) and create and implement Personal Housing Plans (PHP's) that outline steps to resolve their housing issues sustainably and promote timely discharge.
4. Manage a varied caseload, ensuring that all advice, actions, casework, assessments and decisions comply with relevant legislation, guidance and caselaw, and the Council's policies and procedures. Ensure decisions are evidence based, and robust, liaising with Senior Housing Options Advisors for guidance on complex or high-risk cases as required.
5. Work collaboratively and proactively across the Housing Solutions service, with internal departments and external agencies to deliver holistic accommodation and support solutions for patients who are at risk of homelessness / cannot return to their accommodation upon discharge. Coordinate, lead and actively participate in multi-agency meetings to share information, discuss

concerns or risk, work together to respond to housing issues, identify and agree multi agency support plans and improve outcomes.

6. Provide empathetic, professional, and high-quality customer service at all times, resolving queries and complaints promptly and effectively. Escalate recurring issues or trends to Senior Housing Options Advisors for resolution and to support service improvement.
7. Maintain accurate, up-to-date records on all cases using the Council's homelessness case management system and other records as required, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. Contribute to data collection and reporting processes, supporting performance monitoring and service improvement initiatives.
8. Identify safeguarding concerns for vulnerable individuals, including children and adults at risk, and take appropriate action in line with safeguarding protocols. Work with relevant teams and agencies to address risks and ensure positive outcomes for customers.
9. Take responsibility for own learning and development in relation to updates to legislation, guidance, case law and best practise to enhance knowledge and skills relating to housing advice and homelessness prevention. Share best practices and insights with colleagues to ensure consistency and contribute to the development and implementation of service improvements.
10. Provide flexible support to meet service demands during peak periods or emergencies, ensuring continuity of service for customers in urgent need.
11. Identify trends and areas for improvement within the health and housing service, contributing ideas and solutions to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and customer outcomes. Support the development and implementation of new initiatives, policies, and procedures to meet changing demands and legal requirements.

General responsibilities applicable to all jobs

1. Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
2. Comply with the Council's policies and procedures including (but not limited to) safeguarding, financial regulations, promotion of equalities, customer care, agreed audit actions and health and safety (ensuring that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons).
3. Understand the council's commitment to Corporate Parenting and take responsibility to support this commitment. Enable the council to be the best corporate parents possible to children and young people in our current and previous care.
4. Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Special features of the post

This post requires satisfactory clearance of a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
Education, Qualifications and Training	<p>Hold a minimum of 5 GCSE's grade A-C (or other Level 2 NVQ qualification) or able to demonstrate an equivalent capability</p>	<p>Hold a relevant housing qualification (CIH Level 4 Diploma or equivalent) or show an equivalent capability</p> <p>Evidence of continuous professional development</p>
Experience and Knowledge	<p>Experience of working within a local authority, housing association or voluntary organisation.</p> <p>Experience of working in an advisory / support role or customer focussed environment</p> <p>Experience of managing a caseload</p> <p>A good understanding and knowledge of the main causes of homelessness and rough sleeping, and the barriers that people face when trying to access accommodation and support services</p> <p>Knowledge of homelessness legislation, guidance and caselaw.</p>	<p>Experience of working effectively in partnership with a range of stakeholders</p> <p>Experience in delivering housing advice and support services.</p> <p>Understanding of welfare benefits and financial inclusion support.</p> <p>Experience in a health care setting or health related field</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of housing allocations policies</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of safeguarding practises and procedures</p>
Ability and Skills	<p>Spoken and written English fluency</p> <p>Excellent written and verbal communication skills</p> <p>Good numerical and analytical skills and ability to produce and interpret financial and statistical information</p> <p>Experience of managing and prioritising own workload</p>	<p>Experience of working with vulnerable individuals including those with complex needs.</p>

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
	<p>Ability to work collaboratively within a team and work independently using own initiative</p> <p>Ability to manage a varied, complex caseload and work under pressure to meet deadlines.</p> <p>Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse client groups.</p> <p>Problem-solving and negotiation skills, with the ability to develop practical and creative housing solutions.</p> <p>Able to produce clear, concise and persuasive written reports on complex issues.</p> <p>Proficiency in IT systems, including housing management software and Microsoft Office.</p> <p>Good analytical skills and ability to produce and interpret statistical information</p> <p>Ability to develop effective working relationships, and work collaboratively and proactively with key partners, landlords and other stakeholders</p>	
Equal Opportunities	<p>Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.</p>	
Additional Factors	<p>Full driving licence and access to own transport for work purposes</p> <p>Willing to work outside normal office hours as necessary</p>	

Attributes	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
	This post will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check This post is office based	