

Job Description

Job Title: Welfare Benefit Advisor

POSCODE:

Grade: 5

Overall purpose of the job

To provide a welfare benefits advice and claims support service for vulnerable people throughout Cambridgeshire and particularly service users with disabilities or long term illnesses.

Support the preventative aims of the Adult Early Help team by contributing towards a holistic support approach.

Act as point of expertise for internal teams and external partners on welfare benefits, supporting awareness raising, training and proactive take up of benefits.

Main accountabilities

	Main accountabilities
1.	Provide advice, information and where necessary practical assistance in making timely claims for welfare benefits to ensure that income is maximised. Information and support will be provided over the telephone, in writing, by email or in person through home visits.
2.	Work with the Prevention and Early Intervention team to identify the support needs of individuals and family carers. Support with benefit claims and better off calculations to contribute to a holistic service that enables people to maintain their independence and reduce the need for social care input.
3.	Contact clients to check on progress and the award of welfare benefits, and where necessary advising the financial assessment service in a timely manner so that a re-assessment of a person's contribution can be completed, and that the benefit take up can be recorded.
4.	Where appropriate advise and support people who we have assisted with benefit claims to challenge decisions through the Mandatory Reconsideration and appeals process.
5.	Manage own caseload and organise and plan work activities. Maintain case records by providing concise and accurate information about an individual's circumstances through the appropriate IT systems in line with professional requirements and departmental recording methods and standards of information governance and confidentiality.
6.	Work with internal and partner organisations to establish best practice and contribute to support networks in local communities to raise awareness and take up of Welfare Benefits.
7.	Demonstrate a commitment to continual professional development by accessing development opportunities, keeping up to date with changes to benefit and contribution policies and legislation by reading relevant publications and attending training sessions. Establish and build on knowledge of key county wide partners, support services, charities and community resources.
8.	To demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
Knowledge		

	Understanding of the support needs of carers and the challenges of a caring role.	Essential
	Knowledge of current health and social care issues.	Essential
	Understanding and commitment to the principles of prevention and early intervention.	Essential
	Knowledge of local support options for carers and the cared for including community support, Assistive technology, Occupational Therapy, people including reablement and Social Care, adaptations through Home Improvement Agency etc.	Desirable
	Understanding of the Care Act and statutory rights of carers.	Desirable
	Understanding of Safeguarding protocols.	Desirable
Skills		
	Excellent verbal and written communication skills able to empathise, build rapport and support vulnerable customers and carers.	Essential
	Demonstrable computer skills including knowledge and experience of Microsoft products, specialist systems and using the internet for research.	Essential
	Ability to interview, advocate, negotiate, mediate and be assertive when required	Essential
	Ability to prioritise tasks, manage own workload and be accountable for case work	Essential
	Ability to maintain proportionate and robust records of work including assessments and case notes.	Essential
	Ability to work in a fast paced and changing environment.	Essential
Experience		
	Experience of working in a similar role.	Essential
	Proven knowledge and experience of understanding the needs of carers and vulnerable adults.	Essential
	Experience of delivering person centred support to vulnerable adults and/or carers.	Essential
	Experience of working with wider support network such as local resources, partnership links or wider team to build effective plans of support.	Essential
	Experience of working as part of a multi-disciplinary team.	Desirable
	Experience and understanding of balancing positive risk taking in person centred assessment and support	Desirable
	Experience of assessing mental capacity in line with the Mental Capacity Act.	Desirable
Equal opportunities	Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs	Essential

Safeguarding	Demonstrate an understanding of the safe working practices that apply to this role.	Essential
	Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of children and young people/vulnerable adults.	Essential
Travel	Able to travel around Cambridgeshire to visit people in their homes or other places. Use of car with relevant insurance is required.	Essential

Safeguarding commitment *(Include for roles involving work with children/vulnerable adults)*

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults. We require you to understand and demonstrate this commitment.

Person Specification

Qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

Minimum level of qualifications required for this job

Qualifications Required	Subject	Essential/ Desirable
Educated to GCSE standard or equivalent.	Maths and English at GCSE C and above	Essential
A level or equivalent		Desirable

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this job

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
Knowledge	Detailed and up to date knowledge of welfare benefits and the Welfare Reforms including understanding of benefits and tax credit systems for all age groups.	Essential
	Understanding of national legislation, policies and guidance to level where you can explain complicated information to people in a clear and concise way.	Essential
	Knowledge and experience of challenging benefit decisions.	Desirable
	Knowledge of Care Act 2014 and Social Care policies and legislation.	Desirable
Skills	Ability to communicate effectively, face to face, in writing and by telephone with different people including those with specific communication needs.	Essential
	Ability to use IT and information resources to provide advice and information.	Essential
	Able to manage and prioritise own work load whilst working effectively as a part of a team.	Essential
Experience	Able to demonstrate direct experience of delivering welfare benefits advice, challenging decisions and supporting with appeals and managing a caseload.	
	Experience of working independently and within a team environment.	Essential
	Experience of working with vulnerable people, parents, families and their support networks.	Essential
	Experience of working with internal and external partners to gather or provide information to advice and support benefit claims and/or financial assessments.	Essential
	Experience of supporting people who may find it difficult to express themselves or have communication difficulties.	Desirable
	Experience using benefit calculators, databases and IT programmes.	Desirable
Equal opportunities	Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs	
Safeguarding	Demonstrate an understanding of the safe working practices that apply to this role.	
	Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of children and young people/vulnerable adults.	
Other requirements	Able to travel around Cambridgeshire to visit people in their homes or other places.	

Disclosure level

What disclosure level is required for this post?	None	Standard
	Enhanced	Enhanced with barred list checks ✓

Work type

What work type does this role fit into?	Fixed	Flexible X	Field	Home
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Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this job

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
Knowledge		
	Knowledge of current health and social care challenges and priorities.	Essential
	Committed to the principles of Transforming Lives, person centred support and proportionate responses.	Essential
	Knowledge of the issues effecting people with care and support needs and their family carers.	Essential
	Knowledge of local support options for people including community groups	Desirable
	A good understanding of the Welfare Benefit system.	Desirable
	Detailed and up to date understanding, experience and knowledge of current social care legislation.	Desirable
	Knowledge older peoples and specialist housing options e.g. Sheltered and extra care housing, shared ownership etc. including accommodation and financial issues.	Desirable
Skills		
	Excellent verbal communication skills able to empathise, build rapport and support individuals and their families.	Essential
	Proven ability to interview, advocate, negotiate, mediate and be assertive when required.	Essential
	High standards of written communication including the ability to write concise and proportionate case records.	Essential
	Demonstrable computer skills including knowledge and experience of Microsoft products, specialist systems and using the internet for research.	Essential
	Ability to interpret and explain complex information and legislation including knowledge of the Care Act.	Essential
	Ability to prioritise tasks, manage own workload and be accountable for case work.	Essential
	Ability to operate in a fast pace, changing environment.	Essential
Experience		

	Significant demonstrable experience in a similar role.	Essential
	Experience of holding conversations to establish support needs.	Essential
	Experience of working with a range of internal and external partners to manage and support the best outcomes for individuals.	Essential
	Experience and understanding of balancing positive risk taking in person centred assessment and support.	Essential
	Experience of creating close working contacts in the community to support individuals and their families.	Desirable
	Experience and understanding of balancing positive risk taking in person centred assessment and support	Desirable
	Experience of working as part of a multi-disciplinary team.	Desirable
Equal opportunities	Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs	Essential
Safeguarding	Demonstrate an understanding of the safe working practices that apply to this role.	Essential
	Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of children and young people/vulnerable adults.	Essential

Disclosure level

What disclosure level is required for this post?	None	Standard
	Enhanced	Enhanced with barred list checks X