



Job Description

Job Title: Sight Loss Support Officer

Reports To: Senior Sight Loss Support Officer

Budget Responsibilities: No direct budget responsibilities

Purpose of the job

To carry out assessments of the needs of visually impaired members and carry out an ongoing programme of support to promote independence for visually impaired people within a designated area of Berkshire.

To promote the use of appropriate technology, aids and adaptations and support visually impaired people to develop the necessary skills to benefit from them.

Key responsibilities

- Carry out regular assessments of the needs of people living with sight loss, formulate and follow a support plan, tracking and reporting on their progress over a three to six-month period.
- Advise visually impaired people on technology available to them including smart phone applications
- Support visually impaired people with basic technology such as setting up a smart phone or tablet, downloading applications, and setting up accessibility features such as colour contrast, text to speech and magnification when required.
- Signpost and/or refer members to other relevant organisations to meet identified needs and arrange their participation in Berkshire Vision's activities and other services

- Advise on and demonstrate equipment for the visually impaired such as electronic reading aids when required
- Support people with sight loss to access equipment for the visually impaired such as through applying for individual grants
- Assist with paperwork such as reading post or completing forms (not including financial or legal matters) in the short term whilst identifying a more independent solution
- Provide practical support and advice to visually impaired service users
- Be aware of changes to service users' vulnerabilities and take appropriate action if needed which may involve referring to local authorities

Additional Activities / Tasks

- Follow safeguarding children and safeguarding adults' policies and procedures, including the identification and reporting of safeguarding concerns.
- Keep visually impaired people and their families up to date regarding benefits, services, information and advice relating to visual impairment
- When required, assist with accessing local social care provision
- When required, assist with and/or manage group social activities such as social clubs or coffee mornings
- Responsible for own role-related admin including entering comprehensive and accurate records of appointments, assessments and needs onto database in a timely manner
- To take on other duties commensurate with this post as directed

Other

- Be responsible for own continuing professional development, keeping up-to-date with best practice, policies and procedures and technology for the visually impaired
- Promote the implementation of policies, with special focus on equal opportunities, child and adult safeguarding, and health and safety
- Deal with all issues in a professional manner, keeping confidences where appropriate and always being mindful of data protection implications.
- Be an effective representative for the charity and act at all times in a professional manner conducive to promoting a positive image of Berkshire Vision and represent the charity at events.

Job Characteristics

- Supervision of allocated volunteers when required

Working Environment

- Regular use of a display screen (laptop provided)
- Occasionally attend external events
- Occasionally work evenings and weekends as required
- A proportion of challenging working conditions and discomfort as some service users are living in difficult/impoverished conditions. Appointments may take place in public places such as coffee shops, service users' homes, community locations or remotely.
- Over 4000 business miles annually

Autonomy

- Work is mostly autonomous. Sight Loss Support Officers are responsible for organising and maintaining their own schedule of appointments in a time efficient manner
- Plan and arrange own work to meet set objectives under guidance from the Senior Sight Loss Support Officer as required

Person Specification

Qualifications

Secondary school education - ESSENTIAL

Lone working training - DESIRED

Safeguarding training - DESIRED

Experience and Knowledge

Experience of working in a client focused environment - ESSENTIAL

Experience of working with vulnerable people - ESSENTIAL

Strong understanding and knowledge of technology such as tablets and smart phones and ability to support vulnerable people to use them - ESSENTIAL

Strong understanding of safeguarding - ESSENTIAL

Experience of supporting people with visual impairments - DESIRED

Experience of working in a similar sector – DESIRED

Knowledge of the disability sector and relevant legislation - DESIRED



Knowledge of applications and technology that supports the visually impaired - DESIRED

Skills and Abilities

Working knowledge of MS Office applications including Word & Outlook – ESSENTIAL

Time management – ESSENTIAL

A good level of written and spoken English - ESSENTIAL

Able to liaise with third parties - ESSENTIAL

Able to recognise level of vulnerability – DESIRED

Experience of using a database - DESIRED

Personal qualities

Patient Compassionate and empathetic - ESSENTIAL

Questioning and listening skills – ESSENTIAL

Self-motivated - ESSENTIAL

Good team player - ESSENTIAL

Integrity and sensitivity to disability issues - ESSENTIAL

Approachable Strong customer/service user focus - ESSENTIAL

Flexible approach to working - ESSENTIAL

Other

Eligibility for access to work for transport or full driving licence and access to a vehicle. (business-use insurance required) – ESSENTIAL

Ability to successfully pass a DBS check at enhanced level. - ESSENTIAL