

Job Description

Job Title:	Mental Health Link Worker
Reports to:	Team Leader
Hours:	35 hours, Monday – Friday with availability for some early evening work
Based in:	Various locations across Worcestershire
Salary:	£21,694 per annum

Job purpose

The post holder will work directly with both groups and individuals experiencing common mental health problems. The aim of the role is to promote greater wellbeing in both a group setting and on an individual basis, creatively enabling people to experience the benefits of group and personal support.

About the role

In this role, the successful applicant will:

Groups

- Organise suitable venues
- Respond to enquiries about groups
- Determine an individual's suitability for group work
- Carefully plan the content of the peer support groups
- Directly deliver several peer support groups
- Record activity data in a timely manner.

As part of delivering the groups, the post holder will provide wellbeing-focused education during sessions, using a non-judgemental and non-pathologising approach. Using a range of materials, they will assist people to cultivate strategies for self-help, encouraging positive change and personal growth.

Individual Work

The Mental Health Link Worker will also play a vital role in a new initiative aiming to engage more vulnerable clients with enduring mental health difficulties, offering them tailored individual support as appropriate based on identified needs. This will involve working closely with local Neighbourhood Mental Health teams.

The post holder will work holistically with individuals to build upon their unique strengths and assets, taking into account any trauma that they may have experienced.

The post holder will guide and support clients where appropriate to other local services that can support them further in their recovery journey. The general purpose of a Mental Health Link Worker is to help people to link up all elements of help available to them in the community, and explain the primary, secondary and third sector forms of support available to them.

Principal Responsibilities and Duties

Peer Support Groups

- Develop, organise, promote and deliver facilitated peer support groups across Worcestershire. The team works across various locations including Redditch, Evesham, Bromsgrove, Kidderminster and Worcester.
- Ensure venues are suitable and safe for group work, creating a welcoming environment that encourages group bonding and evolution.
- Provide advice and guidance to all services looking to utilise and refer clients to peer support groups; this includes liaison with local NMH Teams and other organisations in the voluntary sector.
- Develop and maintain excellent working practices, using a person-centred, non-judgmental approach to people experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Time-manage group sessions carefully, so that everyone is heard within the set time. Remain vigilant of the diverse needs of all participants, actively discouraging any one individual from dominating, while carefully encouraging the quieter members to contribute.
- Be attentive to wider social determinants that may be contributing to poor mental health, for example debt, loneliness, poor diet, lack of exercise, poverty, poor housing, social discrimination and family/relationship difficulties.
- Avoid using medicalised language and terminology, rather encourage individuals to locate their difficulties in a wider context and explore with them how to reframe their problems more constructively, embracing the possibility of change.
- Enable people to share their stories and life experiences, whilst challenging self-sabotaging behaviours in a constructive way, and encouraging group members to help one another to problem-solve and be accountable to one another.
- Include psycho-educational content during part of each session. This content will encourage self-reflection and the analysis of underlying behaviours patterns. The focus will be upon self-help, asset-building, overcoming resistance to change and promoting personal growth.
- Oversee the input and work of any volunteers who may assist in the provision of the groups, liaising with our Volunteer Co-ordinator as necessary.

Peer Support

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- Raise the profile of Peer Support within each local area across the county and embed its practice.
- Provide a quality experience of peer support to individuals attending groups, helping them to develop better life management skills and a wider social support network.
- Enable people to realise their strengths and assets, and develop more compassionate relationships both with themselves and others.
- To encourage individuals to be less problem-saturated and envisage a brighter future, based on realistic goal setting and understanding their self-identified values.
- Be aware of the humanistic philosophy and history of peer support and be able to articulate its many advantages to those uncertain of joining a group.
- Seek feedback from group members about groups and incorporate this where possible within future groups.
- To remain aware of shifting group dynamics and keep track of individuals' progress, intervening where necessary to maintain the agreed group purpose.
- Be willing to use self-disclosure selectively and appropriately during sessions to build rapport and promote trust.
- Where appropriate facilitate opportunities for those with direct lived experience of mental health difficulties to inform and support the development and delivery of the peer support programme locally.

Individual Support

- To effectively engage 'hard-to-reach' vulnerable clients who may have limited contact with local NHS services but who remain in need of further support in the community.
- To liaise with nurse practitioners as regards who on their caseload might benefit from individual support.
- To offer appropriate support in a non-judgemental manner to clients identified as being suitable and who are willing to engage.
- To report any identified concerns to the mental health team.
- To work with individuals in a holistic way to maximise their independence and enhance their general wellbeing.
- To signpost clients to any other local services that may benefit them as appropriate.
- To carry an active caseload of such clients in addition to contributing to group work with some of these clients who may wish to participate in groups.

Blended Support

- Going forwards, the Mental Health Link Worker will also play a key role in contributing to the development of another new initiative, based in Redditch, in collaboration with our own Safe Haven out-of-hours support service. This will involve offering group/individual support to clients in need and will necessitate some early evening working between the hours of 5:00pm – 7:00pm during the week.

Administrative Duties

- To maintain activity records in a legible and accurate manner according to agreed service objectives using appropriate documentation and systems.
- To ensure information captured is accurate, relevant, and up to date for people attending peer support groups.
- To ensure the confidentiality of all recorded information is protected in accordance with GDPR and The Data Protection Act.
- To seek and record feedback from people using our services and always encourage them to complete an evaluation to demonstrate whether needs are being met consistently.
- To report any untoward incidents, accidents, or any other concerns in line with South Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind's policies and procedures.
- To follow and adhere to all accepted Safeguarding procedures as set out by South Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind and the Local Authority.

General responsibilities

- Triage new referrals to determine a person's suitability for group work.
- Build and consolidate professional relationships with key partners including GPs, Social Prescribers and Neighbourhood Mental Health Teams as well as staff internally such as Safe Haven crisis support.
- Promote awareness of the role of a Mental Health Link Worker so there is a clear understanding in the wider network of the nature of the help and support on offered by the service. Attend relevant team meetings to increase visibility.
- To refer on to appropriate agencies where necessary and develop a sound understanding of services accessible to local communities.
- To promote the peer support and all South Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind's services in the wider community at every opportunity.
- To promote and be aware of current public health campaigns linked to mental health.

Personal development

- To participate in staff appraisal and attend regular Supervision sessions with line manager.
- To be committed to on-going learning through relevant staff training and staff development.
- To help ensure effective communication within the organisation and attend peer and team meetings as required.
- Implement and adhere to all organisational and operational policies of South Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind and keep up to date with said policies and procedures.

To undertake any other duties, training or projects relevant to the nature of the position. This job description is not exhaustive, will be reviewed regularly and is subject to change.

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This role will involve working in different locations and will require you to travel across the county including some isolated rural areas. The ability and means to travel independently across Worcestershire is essential. The post may require some evening work if a group operates outside of normal working hours.

Person Specification

The ideal candidate will:

- Have excellent communication skills, both verbally and written.
- Have excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work proactively with a diverse range of people.
- Show a clear understanding of confidentiality when dealing with matters relating to staff and service users.
- Effectively manage and prioritise their own workload.
- Demonstrate self-awareness, an understanding of the role's impact on others and an ability to manage self.
- Maintain professional conduct in difficult and challenging situations.
- Working knowledge of the internet, Microsoft office and CRMs.
- Be service user focused.
- Show self-motivation and resourcefulness.
- Maintain strong and appropriate boundaries.
- Demonstrate empathy and understanding.
- Demonstrate a commitment to promoting equality and diversity in the workplace.