



WELFARE BENEFITS ADVISOR

Job Description

Hours: 21 – 28 hours per week. All hours to be worked between 9 – 5 Monday – Friday. We will consider full days or shorter days to meet personal commitments.

Contract: Permanent

Salary: £28 – 33,000 FTE plus 5% pension contribution. Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Blue Light card and Age UK discount schemes.

Responsible to: Information & Advice Manager

Location: White House Community Centre, Hampton and at community locations / homes across the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Some home working may also be possible in line with the Hybrid Working Policy.

Purpose of the role:

Age UK Richmond upon Thames is a local independent charity supporting older people across the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. We provide a wide range of useful and well utilised local services in Richmond upon Thames designed to improve wellbeing and enhance independence – including information & advice; a wide range of social & wellbeing centres and sessions; support after hospital discharge; digital skills development; Dementia Friendly Richmond; mental health peer support and home services such as handyperson, housekeeping and gardening. Partnership is a core part of our work – we work in close collaboration with other voluntary sector partners and wider organisations to maximise our impact and reach. Our friendly and committed team of 50 staff and 100+ volunteers support over 4,000 local older people each year.

Our Information & Advice service is a central part of our organisation. Our small team of staff supported by excellent volunteers provide free and confidential Information & Advice to older people across the borough on a range of topics. The main area of support is to claim welfare benefits and other forms of financial support – but also includes a range of other topics such as accessing care & support; independent living; sorting out paperwork and housing.

This role will join the Information & Advice team and will focus on providing welfare benefits support and advice.

Main Responsibilities:

1. Provide welfare benefits & financial advice, including advising older people on the financial support available, making applications on their behalf and following through applications to result.
1. To provide information & advice on a wide range of queries over the telephone by email and in person
2. Be responsible for managing a caseload of referrals and helping the information & advice team achieve contracted targets.
3. Assist with the completion of relevant claim forms and ensure financial information is accurate and verified.
4. Carry out home visits when necessary.
5. Take a holistic approach by signposting / referring older people to other support and services that may be of benefit.
6. Going 'above and beyond' for the older people who contact us, to ensure they get the support they need and more- following the 'make every contact count' initiative.
7. Maintain knowledge of relevant welfare benefits, guidelines and wider local services
8. Maintain accurate records in accordance with agreed standards
9. Complete all administration, form filling and data collection required.
10. Ensure all tasks and record keeping are in line with the Advice Quality Standard, and work with the rest of the Information & Advice team to ensure this accreditation is maintained.
11. Provide support to and carry out any additional tasks delegated by the Information & Advice Manager.
12. Work with and support the volunteers who support the service.
13. Provide high levels of customer service at all times.
14. Attend meetings and training as required.
15. Communicate effectively- electronically, verbally and in writing
16. Abide by Age UK Richmond policies and procedures.
17. Be aware of and report any safeguarding concerns.

Other Duties

You are required to undertake such other duties appropriate to your role and level of responsibility as may reasonably be required of you. Therefore, the list of duties in this Job Description should not be regarded as exclusive or exhaustive. Please note that, in consultation with you, Age UK Richmond upon Thames reserves the right to update your Job Description to reflect changes in, or to, your post.

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Person Specification

Experience

1. Experience of giving information & advice.
2. Experience of welfare benefits advice work and completing benefit forms.
3. Good understanding of the welfare benefits system for older people.
4. Used to working in a fast paced, busy role.
5. An understanding of the issues involved with working with older and vulnerable people, and the services and support available to them.
6. Excellent level of administration skills
7. Approachable and available, actively looking for and considering other's views and opinions.
8. Driven, a will to learn and make things better.
9. Excellent organisational skills
10. Good level of IT skills, including ability to use a database.
11. Able to work well under pressure, prioritise workload and take initiative.
12. Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team
13. Strong communication skills
14. Positive, motivated, enthusiastic and proactive approach

Other

Car Driver and access to a vehicle

Live within easy commutable distance of Richmond upon Thames