

ADVOCACY

Our Mission Statement

Age UK Sunderland aims to promote the well-being of all older people throughout the City of Sunderland, improve their quality of life and help them maintain independence

The volunteer role involves assisting with the successful delivery and promotion of advocacy support to older people and their families living within the City of Sunderland. Any queries you may have during your time with the project should be addressed to the Advocacy Co-ordinator.

Objectives

- To provide advocacy support to older people aged 50 and over who have difficulty in articulating their needs, wants and wishes.

Role Description

- Discuss with the partners what sort of support is wanted
- Speak on behalf of the partners when required
- Accompany partners to appointment/review/GP or other professional setting
- Communicate with a variety of people
- Negotiate on behalf of partners
- Act as a spokesperson
- Act as a link between partners and service provider
- Obtain information to enable partners to make an informed choice
- Write letters, fill in forms and make telephone calls on behalf of partners if required
- Help partners to access supportive networks
- Develop knowledge of procedures for a variety of services
- Support partners in meetings
- Keep partners informed of relevant information
- Maintain accurate records
- Maintain regular contact with co-ordinator
- Attend relevant training courses

Role involves the following:

- Delivering the advocacy service to partners on a short, medium and long term basis in order to empower people to have control over their own situation and circumstances;
- To assist in any research undertaken by the advocacy project. Interviewing partners and filling in questionnaires and customer service satisfaction survey on the partners behalf;
- Attendance at regular advocate meetings and training offered in relation to personal and professional development. Attendance at periodic sessions with the project co-ordinator.

The Role requires you:

- To help raise awareness of the need for and purpose of advocacy amongst professionals, potential partners and the general public in the course of volunteering;
- To liaise with the advocacy co-ordinator on a regular basis in relation to your progress generally and specifically in relation to your work with individual partners;
- To document all communications with and on behalf of all partners appropriate to case files and ensure that these are stored in a confidential way;
- Adhere at all times to the policies and procedures for volunteers devised by ageUK Sunderland.

Person Specification for Advocates

- Have an understanding of the meaning of advocacy
- Have the ability to listen
- Have empathy
- Have respect for individuals
- Work in a non-judgmental way
- Have a willingness to accept slow progress
- Be open to new ideas
- Appreciate that situations may be different for different people
- Have the ability to build trusting relationships
- Be confident and competent
- Have a sense of humour
- Have a belief in equal rights
- Have the ability to enable advocacy partners to make their own decisions
- Understand empowerment and user involvement
- Have the desire to develop and learn
- Be assertive
- Recognise your own limitations
- Work in a confidential manner
- Respect advocacy partners confidences

The Skills required for this role:

- Good communication skills;
- Non subjective writing/oral skills;
- Ability to work unsupervised;
- An empathy with issues facing older people;
- Punctuality / Reliability
- Non-judgmental attitude

Suggested Hours: Flexible to be agreed mutually with the line manager/Project Co-ordinator, in accordance with the needs of the project.

Location: We provide an outreach service to people living in their own homes in the community, sheltered housing, hospital, rehabilitation centres, and residential or nursing homes. The volunteer may be expected to work in any of the above locations.

We are also able to offer confidential appointments from the Bradbury Centre and other area offices in Hetton, Houghton le Spring and Washington.

Expenses: Age UK Sunderland will repay any agreed expenses (e.g. travelling) on production of receipts/bus tickets. Forms to be completed monthly.

<p><u>PLEASE NOTE:</u> This post is subject to an Enhanced DBS clearance. This means that this post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and any unspent convictions must be declared. This post is subject to a 6 – 8 week trial period.</p>
