**Information and Advice Leader**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title:** Information and Advice Leader

**Hours:** 28 (Mon-Thurs) or 35 (Mon-Fri) hours per week

**Contract:** Permanent - subject to our standard six-month probationary period

**Location:** Wandsworth - to lead your team on site (this is not a remote role)

**Salary:**  £39,000 to £41,000 per annum (pro-rata if part-time), depending on experience

**Reports to**: Director of Operations and Quality

**Context:**

We are looking for an experienced and inspiring leader and adviser to join our Information and Advice Service and lead our wonderful advice team. Age UK Wandsworth is a local, independent charity that works to promote the wellbeing of all older people in the London Borough of Wandsworth. Our Information and Advice Service aims to improve the quality of life of older people and their carers through the provision of independent advice and support.

**Purpose of the role:**

* To lead and manage a team (staff and volunteers) to deliver an outstanding information and advice service to older Wandsworth residents and to retain our professional accreditations.
* To support older people with high levels of income deprivation and health inequality to successfully identify and access benefits, health and social care, and other services, such as scams awareness, as needed.

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

# Leadership:

1. Lead and manage an effective team of Advisers, Advice Assistants and volunteers. This will include their line management, training schedules, adherence to Age UK Wandsworth policies and to ensure that their work meets the standards required to maintain our professional accreditations.
2. Oversee all recording and reporting for the service internally and to funders to meet KPIs in a timely fashion. Ensure that the staff team and volunteers fully obtain and record appropriate consents for all clients and record any conflicts of interest for staff, clients and volunteers.
3. Keep up to date on relevant changes in the law, policies and procedures both locally and nationally, and as they apply and affect older people and their carers. Share knowledge with all staff and volunteers to ensure high standards of service to clients and ensure that all information resources used by staff and volunteers are up to date.
4. Contribute to the cohesion of the staff as a team through facilitating weekly team meetings, attending Senior Leadership Team meetings, whole staff meetings and other events as required.
5. As a senior staff member, represent the CEO and the charity at events/meetings and promote the service and the charity. Collaborate with Information and Advice Leaders in other organisations, for example, knowledge sharing and peer/case reviews.
6. Lead and manage all administration for Wandsworth Borough’s Crimes Against Older People Forum.

# Casework and reporting:

1. Provide information and advice to older people and their carers and relatives on a wide range of topics including welfare benefits, housing, community care, disability rights and key issues affecting older people and their carers, such as scams. Provide this information and advice face to face at the Age UK Wandsworth office, in people’s homes, in community settings, on the telephone and in writing.
2. Carry out benefits checks and advise clients accurately and appropriately in relation to their welfare benefits entitlements and to assist them in making the necessary claims.
3. Where appropriate, and at the client’s request, to act on their behalf and represent their interest to third parties by letter, telephone, email or in person.
4. Where appropriate, and at the client’s request, challenge welfare benefits decisions and other decisions, supporting the client through the appeals process as necessary and representing at tribunal, if necessary.
5. Record and monitor the quality of advice and the level of service provided by the whole team to ensure high standards are set and sustained.
6. Comply with all of Age UK Wandsworth’s policies and procedures in standards of good practice; including equal opportunities, confidentiality, data protection and health and safety.

# Other Duties:

1. Act as a Deputy Safeguarding Lead within the wider staff team.
2. Attend training courses as appropriate and as requested by the CEO and Director of Operations and Quality.
3. Provide written contributions, as needed, to Age UK Wandsworth’s publications, such as the annual impact report, newsletters, social media posts and reports to the Board of Age UK Wandsworth, including relevant data and case studies.
4. Manage own administration in connection with the post, including word processing and data handling and correspondence. Where necessary, delegate administration tasks to volunteers, giving them the necessary support.
5. Actively participate in regular support and supervision sessions and appraisals with the Director of Operations and Quality.
6. Identify potential sources of funding to grow the service and provide input to funding applications with the CEO and Director of Operations and Quality.
7. Carry out any other duties as may be required by the CEO and Director of Operations and Quality that are consistent with the duties and responsibilities of the post.

**Please note:**

* This role is subject to a DBS check.
* Travel to meetings within the borough and around London will be necessary.
* The job description will be reviewed regularly and may be subject to change to meet the needs of the charity.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**Essential Experience:**

1. Experience of leading, managing and inspiring a team is essential to this role.
2. Recent, up to date experience of undertaking casework as a welfare rights/generalist adviser.
3. Experience of maintaining casework with the ability to follow set procedures concerning casework and file management.
4. Experience of leading a successful audit to achieve professional accreditations.
5. Experience in the preparation of high-quality, accurate reports.

**Desirable Experience:**

1. Experience of recruiting, working with or managing volunteers.

2. Experience of representing clients at tribunals and other hearings/meetings.

3. Experience of working with older and/or vulnerable people.

**Knowledge:**

1. Extensive and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of welfare benefits with the ability to advise accurately and comprehensively on the whole range of benefit entitlements and the ability to assist clients to make benefit applications.
2. Extensive and up-to-date knowledge on housing, care, mental capacity, mental health, disability rights and key issues affecting older people and their carers.
3. Good to excellent knowledge of Microsoft Office applications and databases.
4. Ability to travel independently on public transport to different locations around the borough, as necessary.
5. A commitment to the mission of Age UK Wandsworth, including an understanding of, and commitment to, the application of anti-discriminatory practice, equal opportunity principles and confidentiality.

**Skills:**

* + - 1. Excellent written and oral communication skills and ability to communicate simply and effectively with people from a wide range of backgrounds and to respond to their needs (especially when they are distressed) with sensitivity.
      2. Excellent numeracy skills.
      3. Ability to organise and manage own workload to meet deadlines and priorities and to work accurately and calmly under pressure whilst acting as a role model to other staff.
      4. Ability to work flexibly, independently, and as part of a team in a very busy environment.
      5. Enthusiastic and positive disposition with a strong commitment to professional development.
      6. Ability to write clear, concise, and comprehensive case notes and letters and reports.
      7. An understanding of, and commitment to, the needs and dignity of older people and the contribution they make to society.