**Musselburgh and District Citizens Advice Bureau**

**Job Title:** Hospital and Healthcare Welfare Advice Services - Welfare Adviser – Full Time

**Responsible to:** Deputy Chief Officer/Chief Officer

# Responsible for: The development and delivery of the Hospital Welfare Advice Service in East Lothian

# About the role

**Purpose:** To tackle health inequalities through the reduction of poverty, maximisation of income and reduction of household expenditure by increasing uptake of welfare benefits and improving access to employment, housing and debt advice.

Welfare advice services provide free, confidential, independent and impartial welfare rights advice service for patients, carers and staff at the East Lothian Community Hospital

**Aims**

* Tackle health inequalities through the reduction of poverty by maximising income and reducing household expenditure (e.g. debt management, review of utility bill expenditure)
* Increase uptake of welfare benefits and improve access to employment, housing and debt advice.
* Increase financial resilience and capacity among clients to help prevent future issues
* Improve self-reported health status and well-being of clients
* Reduce impact of financial, employment and housing problems on physical and mental health
* Improve use of clinical staff capacity where a referral to an adviser frees up time

**Key responsibilities**

* Provide responsive, on-site, person-centred advice and support.
* Provide additional options to clients of home visits, telephone and online appointments where appropriate
* Provide free, independent, impartial and confidential advice to those on low incomes and those who are most vulnerable; where feasible managing case work and referring to community services as appropriate.
* Work to promote and embed the service across East Lothian Community hospital site by attending team meetings and providing training, promotional materials and ward visits where necessary
* Establish and maintain effective relationships with hospital staff to ensure continuity of service and the development of effective, secure referral pathways.
* Promote financial wellbeing among NHS staff.
* Represent and negotiate (where needed) for clients.
* Provide a minimum of **40** client appointments per month
* In conjunction with the Deputy Chief Officer, manage a hardship fund on behalf of the NHS Lothian Charity (formerly Edinburgh and Lothian Health Foundation) to meet client’s immediate financial needs.
* Maintain expertise in relevant legislation e.g. welfare rights, debt and bankruptcy and identify any changes that would impact on users of the service and disseminate that information
* Work in partnership with other advice agencies in Lothian and beyond where appropriate.
* Refer (where specialist advice is needed) and signpost clients to other organisations relevant to their needs and work in partnership with those organisations where necessary.
* Actively obtain, utilise and act on feedback from clients, service users and NHS staff
* Provide support for workforce development to enhance the knowledge and increase the competence of hospital staff (e.g. ward staff, allied health professionals including Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech Therapists, outpatient staff and Social Work) to identify issues around welfare rights and refer as appropriate.
* Work with Lothian Heath Board staff wellbeing leads to promote financial wellbeing among hospital staff.
* Maintain accurate records of all advice and casework on CASTLE the Scottish CAB service electronic case recording system
* Keep records of benefit income raised, client profiles, details of referrals and other statistics for both the CAB service and project reporting
* Contribute to the bureau’s social policy work ensuring that issues affecting outreach areas are taken up locally, regionally and nationally

**Activities**

* To run regular, confidential holistic advice sessions. Locations, number, duration and venue to be determined in consultation
* Accept self-referrals from individuals and referrals from clinical or social care staff, with patients’ consent. The latter can be made through staff contacting the advisers by phone/email (NHS Lothian email address only for patient identifiable information) or verbally when the adviser visits the ward.
* The advisers will regularly visit wards at each site to source referrals, particularly those areas treating patients with chronic conditions which may increase the likelihood of welfare issues.
* The suitability of referrals will be determined by the advisers, based on the type of advice issue(s), length of stay in hospital and the degree of casework required. If the adviser feels that a specialist or community-based service is more suited to the client’s needs, they will be signposted or referred accordingly. The service will be available to clients at short notice therefore the advisers will avoid carrying a large caseload.
* Carry out other duties and responsibilities which may be reasonably determined by the bureau management.

*The above job description is not exhaustive and is clarified to include broad duties inherent in the post as reasonable requested by the bureau management.*

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| Person specification | | |
|  | ESSENTIAL | DESIRABLE |
| QUALIFICATIONS | * Good level of general education * Demonstrable knowledge of Microsoft applications | Completion of CAB Generalist Adviser Training or equivalent |
| EXPERIENCE | * Experience in casework and case management in a busy environment | Income maximisation experience  Experience of completing benefit applications  Work or voluntary experience in the advice sector  Experience of working in the health and social care sector |
| SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES | * Ability to manage a large caseload in a demanding and busy work place. * Ability to work without close supervision and prioritise work. * Ability to work in a crisis situation and meet deadlines. * Ability to work within a team framework. * Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing * Good interpersonal skills and client empathy. | Ability to plan and introduce change as appropriate  Ability to support and motivate |
| KNOWLEDGE | * An understanding of and commitment to aims, principles and policies of the CAB service. | A knowledge of money advice strategies  Knowledge of welfare benefits and of the legal rights of debtors and creditors. |
| OTHER | * Responsible, reliable and hardworking * Ability to work under pressure * A willingness to undertake training identified in collaboration with the Chief Officer | Able to travel throughout East Lothian. |

**The post subject to a PVG Disclosure check**

**The Musselburgh and District Citizens Advice Bureau is committed to equal opportunities both in service provision and employment.**