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## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**TITLE OF JOB:** Self-Advocacy Supporter (Mid Sussex Speakup)

**SERVICE/PROJECT:** Impact Advocacy Service

**REFERENCE NO:** SAMSS/Oct20

**CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:** 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**HOURS PER WEEK:** 12

**BAND 3, NJC POINTS 22-27, STARTING SALARY £21,496** per annum (pro rata), paid monthly by Automated Credit Transfer on 25<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT:** 27 days annual leave plus 3 extra days at Christmas and the usual statutory holidays pro rata per annum

**ACCOUNTABLE TO:** Self Advocacy Team Leader

**LINE MANAGED BY:** Self Advocacy Team Leader

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** To provide support to the members of Mid Sussex Speak Up Self-Advocacy group

**For an informal chat about the job, please ring: Harriet Wilson or Lesley Durbin on 01903 730044**

**This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) and the successful applicant will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.**



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Impact Initiatives is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.  
Company registered in England no. 140692 Charity Commission no. 276669

## **BACKGROUND AND AIMS OF IMPACT ADVOCACY SERVICES:**

Impact Initiatives was set up over 40 years ago through a partnership including Brighton Borough Council and Sussex University. These people came together as they all wanted to support local people in need and knew this could be most effectively done through pooling resources and skills. Our original remit of 'filling the gaps in statutory services' is as relevant today as it has always been.

Today Impact Initiatives manages a range of services in Sussex for all ages, the services are all designed to help people to meet their potential and have an improved quality of life. This is achieved by providing the right support from the right people at the right time. Each of our services has a specialist manager and staff team who are supported by the Impact Central Team who provide management in finance, HR, admin, IT, facilities and project development. This is a cost effective way of the services having consistent professional support and enables them to focus on the service provision.

Impact has provided Advocacy Services in West Sussex for over fifteen years. The services have developed over time changing to meet the current needs of those who use them.

We currently provide:

- A countywide issues based advocacy service for:
  - Adults with learning disabilities (16+)
  - Adults with a physical and/or sensory impairment (16-65)
  - Adults with an acquired brain injury (16-65)
  - Parents with learning difficulties going through childcare proceedings
  - Adults with Asperger's Syndrome
- A Citizen Advocacy service for adults with learning disabilities in residential homes or supported living venues.
- A countywide support service for self-advocacy groups. This currently supports 4 Self- Advocacy Groups for people with learning difficulties and 2 self-advocacy groups for people with Asperger's. Impact also support people with learning difficulties and people with Asperger's to carry out Quality Check work for WSCC.

The self-advocacy groups operate independently from Impact but are involved in lots of joint project working. Each learning disability group meets twice a month. Group members also come into the office during the week and the Supporters help members run the office. In this role you would need to help the members run their own group meetings and support members to attend external meetings. You will be a source of advice and encouragement to members who are part of this Self-Advocacy Group. This work will require working approximately 2 evenings each month. It will also involve attending other meetings in West Sussex as appropriate.

## **MAIN TASKS:**

To support the members to hold regular monthly meetings, committee meetings and weekly drop-ins and carry out the tasks necessary for the smooth running of the group.

This includes the following:

- Supporting individual members in the meeting.
- To transport the equipment, such as laptop and portable projector, to and from the group meetings.
- To prepare the venue for the group meeting, this may involve moving chairs and tables.
- Supporting the committee members to plan and organise the meeting.
- Ensure that the meetings achieve the stated outcomes.
- Ensure that risk assessments have been done for each meeting and that health and safety has been covered.
- To build good working relationships with group members built on openness and trust. To have a good awareness of the group dynamics and how these affect the way the group works and support needs. To also help the group deal with any conflicts.
- To enable group members to be as independent as possible.
- To keep group members up to date with information about services, conferences, training, and opportunities for the group to find out more about their rights.
- To support the group to keep in touch with other relevant organisations.
- To support the group members to seek out independent advice about the issues that they raise.
- To provide group members with information in an accessible way.
- To support group members to self-advocate and to speak up about their views/concerns/issues to the right people and to make sure that they listen to them.
- To support, and where applicable pass on skills, to individual committee members, including support to access IT.
- To support the group to keep their social media accounts up to date.

- To support group members to attend the external meetings by agreement with the Team Leader.
- To support members to operate within an agreed budget and maintain accurate financial records.
- To support group members in the office to plan and organise work for the group.
- To work with group members on any of their fundraising initiatives.
- During Covid-19 Voice has been having weekly Zoom meetings. A key role of the supporter is therefore to support group members to access the equipment and support necessary to join these Zoom meetings and offer them easy read information and training on how to access online resources.

### **In addition to this role:**

- To be prepared to work flexibly.
- To provide 3 monthly reports of the group's activities and progress on an agreed work plan.
- To report to the Team Leader on a regular basis and attend 4-6 weekly supervision and attend team meetings as required by your Manager
- To attend Impact Days and other training events organised for personal development including completing accredited advocacy training.
- To be prepared to use your own car to take members to meetings where public transport is not available or not accessible to members.
- To comply with and implement the Impact Equal Opportunities Policy and any specific policies and procedures designed to promote and monitor equal opportunities
- To comply with and implement the Impact's Health and Safety Policy and any specific policies and procedures relating to the specific activities on which you are employed. Generally to take reasonable care for the health and safety of all those affected by this work
- To be aware of the range of services that Impact Initiatives provides and have an understanding of the work of colleagues from other services within Impact. To also attend Impact Initiatives training events in Brighton
- To be aware of the needs of other workers, paid or unpaid, and contribute positively to a supportive working environment.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<b>Essential Skills:</b>	
<b>Experience of working with people with Learning disabilities</b>	The post involves working closely with self advocates who have Learning disabilities. The post holder would need to have experience of working with people with learning disabilities, so that they have an understanding of the challenges they face and have experience of adapting their communication to work successfully with members.
<b>An understanding of advocacy and self-advocacy groups</b>	This role is around supporting members to run their own self advocacy groups. It is important that the post holder understands the principles of advocacy and how these apply to self-advocacy groups, and is able to work with the group in an empowering way.
<b>Communication skills</b>	The post holder will need to be able to establish rapport with group members and communicate information both verbally and in writing in a manner that members understand. They will also need to be able to communicate verbally and via email to a range of professionals to promote the groups and organise events that the self-advocacy groups may host.
<b>Passionate about working with self advocates to improve lives for people with learning disabilities</b>	The self-advocacy group's work on a number of projects and campaigns to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities, it is important that the successful candidate shares this passion and can help self advocates identify structure and implement projects and campaigns.
<b>Experience of managing your own workload and being able to prioritise tasks</b>	The post holder is required to work independently often in different geographical locations around the county. There are often a number of email, telephone and work tasks that need to be prioritised into the post hours.
<b>IT skills</b>	The post holder is required to use Office 365 to send emails and use MS Teams. They will need to be proficient in Word to complete reports and documents for the group. They also need to have some experience of excel spreadsheets to support with group accounts. The groups have Facebook and Twitter accounts which the post holder would be required to update when needed. At present meetings are via Zoom so experience of using Zoom would

	be essential.
<b>Ability to attend evening meetings and to support members to attend day time Partnership Board meetings.</b>	There are normally 2 evening meetings per month. The group are currently meeting via Zoom. The Learning disability Partnership Board runs quarterly on a Thursday morning.
<b>Car driver, who is willing to use car for work</b>	Due to the late (7pm-9pm) finish of some meetings and the rural nature of West Sussex and limited public transport a car driver is needed for this role.
<b>Demonstrable commitment to equal opportunities</b>	Impact Advocacy is committed to working towards a fairer society for all groups in the community. The post holder needs to share these values and support the self advocacy groups to implement the values of equal opportunities within their groups.

### **Desirable Skills and Experience:**

<b>Experience of facilitating group meetings.</b>	The post holder will need to support the chair of group to chair meetings, so previous experience of taking on this role is desirable. There can be disagreements between members which the post holder will need to support the group to address in a sensitive and conflict resolving manner.
<b>Experience of producing Easy Read information</b>	Part of the supporter's role is to provide information to groups members and when easy read information is not available the supporter will need to produce Easy Read information around a particular topic. Previous experience of having produced easy read information would be useful.
<b>Experience of fundraising via grant applications</b>	The self-advocacy group are an independent group who need to fundraise for room hire, transport costs and special projects. Part of the supporter's role is to support groups members with this task and previous experience of making successful grant applications would be an advantage.
<b>Knowledge of local services</b>	At self-advocacy group meetings information is given about local services that can support members, often an employee of a local service will come to talk to the group. It would be helpful if the successful applicant had a previous knowledge of local services in the local area.