

**Bristol Respite project – Next Link Domestic Abuse Services**

## Job Description

**POST:** **Female Respite Support Worker**

**RESPONSIBLE TO: St Mungo’s Team Manager and Next Link Senior Manager**

**HOURS: 37.5 (Including some evening and Saturday working on a rota basis)**

**SALARY: Point 15 (qualified) £27,803 + unsociable hours payment**

**JOB PURPOSE:**

This post will work within an integrated team from St Mungo’s and Next Link Domestic Abuse services.

This role will cover

* Providing safe temporary housing and support to women who have experienced domestic abuse and have complex needs.
* Providing support to empower women with complex needs to move on to independent or lower level supported accommodation.
* The role will ensure women are safe, are offered/receive specialist domestic abuse interventions in
* Working alongside local services, will be responsible for carrying a case load and supporting the day to day delivery of the programme; addressing women’s wellbeing and health needs, engaging with external support agencies to enable move on into independent housing.
* Deliver outcomes (as described above) for clients and evidencing their achievement. Work with colleagues to address support needs, improving life skills and building recovery networks (networks of support) with agencies, peers and from within the community to ensure clients sustain accommodation, improve health and take up work.
* Holding the domestic abuse and VAWG specialism within the team.

**MAIN OBJECTIVES:**

* To provide high quality accommodation and housing related support to women with complex needs who have experienced domestic abuse.
* To provide specialist IDVA support as well as practical and emotional support to women who have experienced domestic abuse, have mental health needs and/or complex needs, and women who have experienced homelessness to be/feel safe, stabilise substance misuse/mental health issues, gain independence skills, sustain their tenancies, and access appropriate move-on accommodation.
* Champion service user empowerment and involvement by ensuring our services:
* Are accessible to all potential service users;
* Value and respect service users as the experts of their experience;
* Work in strength-based and solution-focused ways with clients;
* Facilitate agreed actions into practice; and
* Use service user feedback and involvement to improve our service
* To work within a recovery and psychologically informed approach, understand and Operate under a Personalisation and Recovery methodology supporting women to maximise their safety, independence and wellbeing, stabilise their complex needs, sustain their accommodation and help build positive futures.
* To liaise effectively and collaboratively with all appropriate agencies and community groups to ensure the best access to services and meaningful community engagement for service
* Employ a detailed knowledge and complying with the terms of relevant legislation, in particular in the areas of housing, homelessness, rough sleeping and health and social care.
* Engage with clients to motivate them to change, utilising different motivational techniques, reflective practice and empathetic attitude.
* To work peripatetically, across Bristol with multiple agencies in diverse areas including employment, health, housing, immigration, family relationships, criminal justice system, drug and alcohol service, welfare and other statutory bodies.
* To comply with St Mungo’s and Next Link Lone Working Policy and other Health & Safety measures

**PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. Referrals and Assessments**

• Promote the service through building positive relationships with current, potential referrers and service users to ensure a steady flow of appropriate referrals.

• To take part in a duty rota and assess all referrals coming in to the service by gathering information from supporting agencies.

• To book sign up appointments for new service users.

• To carry out Risk assessments including DASH, draw up a risk assessment plan and refer women to MARAC when appropriate.

• To carry out needs assessments, that effectively establish the support needs of applicants, identify risks, and enable support to be offered as quickly as possible.

• To conduct a comprehensive assessment of complex needs

• When appropriate, using our established protocol, make referrals to ROADS for a fast track enhanced service

• When appropriate, using our established protocol, make referrals to Bristol Mental Health services for a mental health assessment.

• To be sensitive to the family’s culture, assess their cultural and religious needs and respond appropriately.

• To sign up new licensees using the agreed licence agreement and advise on rights and obligations of the agreement and then settle into the house. Complete all paperwork, photocopy and send off as appropriate. Ensure new files are set up and a handover is given to the allocated keyworker.

• To liaise closely with applicant and referral agencies and keep informed of progress and outcome.

**2. Support**

• In conjunction with the service user complete the empowerment star and draw up a support plan to achieve identified outcomes, review the plan regularly and record changes agreed.

• To advise woman on personal safety and safety procedures regarding the safe house. Complete a personal safety plan.

• To establish the need for any civil legal remedies and support to access a specialist solicitor when appropriate.

• Support women to engage with the criminal justice systems if they choose too.

• Carry out a financial assessment for each service user assisting them to maximise their income, address debts and support them to make appropriate welfare benefit claims.

• Provide support as part of an integrated approach, by working closely with specialist statutory and/or voluntary agencies such as mental health, criminal justice, homelessness, ROADS services, probation, One25, Eden House to ensure access and engagement with other services is maximised, according to the agreed support package.

• Regularly review risk plans, amending the plans as appropriate when circumstances change.

• Provide recovery orientated support, psychologically informed interventions and practical support to individual women on caseload.

• Deliver group work activities, including accredited training, to service users to enable the development of skills and confidence to maximise independence and wellbeing.

• Safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults; working within St Mungo’s and Next Link’s safeguarding policies, South West Child Protection Procedures and local procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults.

• Advise and support service users with the range of move on options available, draw up and deliver move-on plans. Monitor tenancy sustainment for ex-service users as directed.

• Respond to emergency and crisis situations by providing support, advice, signposting or direct interventions as necessary.

• To monitor all safeguarding concerns and make appropriate referrals to First response/care direct as necessary.

To develop and deliver a personalised recovery network to ensure clients sustain their recovery and achieve their aspirations:

• Building networks of support across agencies and the communities in which they live

• Deliver digital inclusion

• Peer and volunteer Support

• To attend:

• In-house client reviews

• Multi-agency case conferences

* Work with Bristol City Council, other voluntary and faith based agencies, outreach teams, hostels and private landlords to increase the choice and opportunities for housing for this group. Facilitate joint working and develop initiatives with other Voluntary Agencies (e.g. day centres, hostels), Local Authority Agents, Health Providers (GP surgeries, A & E), Prisons and Discharge services and the Police and Private Landlords as appropriate to meet service requirements, client aspirations and community need.
* To challenge bad, poor or indifferent practice where it is harming a client’s recovery.

**3. Housing Management**

• Work within the team to ensure all sign up paperwork is completed, including welfare benefits claims ensuring they are accurately complete and promptly submitted.

• Take responsibility for the collection of rent and other charges payable. Work closely with the resident to minimise and manage arrears.

• Work closely and co-operatively with the team to ensure that weekly fire alarm tests and routine health and safety checks in the safe house take place, and ensure these are accurately recorded accommodation standards are maintained including reporting repairs, furniture and equipment replacement and health and safety concerns

• Ensure the house is a supportive, homely and safe environment is maintained and a daily staff presence.

• Facilitate house meetings encouraging women to participate and to contribute to decisions affecting the management of the houses.

• In liaison with the manager deal with all complaints on licence related matters, including disputes between licensees or involving neighbours by visits and letters as appropriate.

• In the event of a Notice to Quit being issued, work closely with the licensee and all relevant agencies to ensure whenever possible and necessary the provision of alternative accommodation and support.

• To read gas, electricity and water meters and to provide the relevant authorities with appropriate information.

**4. Maintenance**

• To liaise regularly with the appropriate individual contractors over matters of day to day maintenance and servicing of equipment.

• To carry out promptly inspections of void rooms and prepare for re-let.

• To complete repairs requests, follow up queries on outstanding repairs and investigate reported defects. To keep up to date maintenance requests and repairs records.

• To fully implement housing management policies and procedures.

• To maintain an up to date working knowledge of landlord and licensee legislation, housing and welfare legislation and the welfare benefit system.

**5. Record keeping and monitoring**

• Maintain up to date, accurate, legible and accessible records of all work and contact with service users, other agencies/professionals and others (e.g. carers, families), ensuring that they meet the requirements of data protection and confidentiality.

• Ensure all outcome and monitoring data is accurately recorded using the Next Link database and other monitoring systems, prepare any additional information or reports used for the monitoring and evaluation of the services as required.

**6. Developing of self and others**

• Engage and support women in a creative, consistent and assertive way to ensure that positive outcomes are achieved.

• To uphold the residents' participation policy and promote it appropriately.

• Actively participate in regular one-to-one supervision, reflective practice groups, and annual appraisals.

• Attend and make a positive contribution to staff / team meetings and to participate in organisational training and development events as required.

• Provide support and guidance to trainees, relief/agency workers and volunteers, when required.

• Develop your understanding of Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) approach in engaging and supporting clients and embed PIE into your day to day practice.

**•** To record work in a way which allows reporting of outcomes including gathering evidence of outcomes achieved in line with contract requirements, contribute to reports and other briefings as required to meet investor and board requirements, and contract obligations.

• To utilise the Oasis database fully as both an outcome measurement tool and a case management system.

**7. General**

• To participate in an on call rota for an out of hours service

• Act as a representative of St Mungo / Next Link at internal and external meetings, as required, promote the organisation through building professional links with outside bodies as appropriate.

• Uphold the values and good name of St Mungo’s and Next Link at all times, represent the organisation in a way that is consistent with its philosophy and ethos and within the Code of Conduct.

• Work flexibly within a team setting, liaise with other workers as necessary and as appropriate to provide cover for holidays and staff absence.

• Ensure the service is delivered in a culturally sensitive way for all service users, including challenging stigma and discrimination.

• Observe organisations equal opportunities, confidentiality, data protection policies.

• Understand and contribute to the overall objectives of the organisation and follow all existing organisational policies and procedures.

• Undertake other duties and responsibilities in keeping with the nature of this post as may be required from time to time.

Adhere to Next Link and St Mungo’s Policies and Procedures at all times.

• Being proactive in reviewing and evaluating own performance and identifying and acting upon areas for improvement and development.

• Undertaking, as required, any other duties compatible with the level and nature of the post and/or reasonably required by more senior members of staff.

• Attend and participate in team meetings and other meetings as required.

**This job description is for guidance only and outlines the general ways in which it is expected you will meet the overall requirements of this post. The list of tasks is not exhaustive and duties may be varied from time to time, with the job description being subject to review and periodic amendments.**

**St Mungo’s and Next Link are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**

***Next Link is committed to Equal Opportunities.***

***Due to the specific requirements of this role, this post is exempt under the Equality Act (2010), Part 1, Schedule 9 (Genuine Occupational Requirement.)***

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## Person Specification

Although we are keeping direct experience/knowledge requirements to a minimum, we do need you to use the application form or covering letter to demonstrate your capabilities, in relation to each point listed under essential requirements in the person specification. Where relevant use your answers to illustrate how your competences have helped you achieve positive results.

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| **Skills and qualifications** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Numeracy and literacy to GCSE level/NVQ 2 or equivalent | **✓** |  |
| Ability to maintain accurate and up-to-date records of contact with service users, other support /housing related information and to communicate with colleagues and stakeholders using common Microsoft Office packages, e.g. Word, Excel, Outlook and other IT software | **✓** |  |
| Ability to assess the support needs of vulnerable women who have experienced domestic abuse and/or complex needs | **✓** |  |
| Co-produce support plans using the outcome star  | **✓** |  |
| Ability to respond and set up support quickly and effectively | **✓** |  |
| Ability to work as part of a team demonstrating a flexible approach including a commitment to being part of a rota and on-call system | **✓** |  |
| Ability to work in partnership with a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies, to achieve outcomes for service users  | **✓** |  |
| Ability to network, build enabling relationships and work effectively in a multi-agency context | **✓** |  |
| Ability to communicate effectively, both written and verbal, with a range of people and to produce high quality reports including using data effectively  | **✓** |  |
| An ability to work with and develop outcome monitoring and case management databases and other administrative systems | **✓** |  |
| Show resilience and reliability under pressure | **✓** |  |
| An understanding of the services and legislative environment regarding, housing and health, work and immigration as it relates to homeless people | **✓** |  |
| A detailed understanding of the support needs of street populations in particular those with complex health histories | **✓** |  |
| Ability to support women with complex needs in a shared housing setting within the boundaries of a support worker relationship | **✓** |  |
| Excellent and proven non-judgemental interpersonal skills with vulnerable women who have survived trauma and abuse | **✓** |  |
| A capacity to handle responsibility & remain enthusiastic and motivated in a demanding and target driven role | **✓** |  |
| Ability to apply psychologically informed practice |  | **✓** |
| Ability to work with a recovery focused approach |  | **✓** |
| **Knowledge** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Knowledge and understanding of the issues, barriers and support needs of women experiencing domestic abuse, homelessness, mental health and complex needs face in accessing and sustaining accommodation | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of domestic abuse civil legal remedies | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of Domestic Abuse risk assessment tools including DASH and the MARAC process | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of housing management procedures | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of health and safety issues, especially those relevant to mental health and supported housing | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of health and safety issues specific to women fleeing domestic abuse | **✓** |  |
| A thorough understanding of safeguarding relating to vulnerable adults and children, including how and when to report concerns  | **✓** |  |
| Up to date knowledge of the welfare benefits system and the ability to ensure service users maximise their benefit entitlement | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge and understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on women and their families | **✓** |  |
| Comprehensive knowledge of welfare benefits and rights, particularly relating to housing benefit, Income support, ESA, job seekers allowance and Universal Credit | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of safeguarding issues, policies and procedures with vulnerable adults and children | **✓** |  |
| Knowledge of mental health legislation |  | **✓** |
| Knowledge of housing |  | **✓** |
|  **Experience** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Proven experience of working with women who have survived domestic abuse | **✓** |  |
| Proven experience working with people with mental health needs, or people with complex needs | **✓** |  |
| Proven experience working in homelessness / supported housing sector providing support in shared or self-contained accommodation | **✓** |  |
| Experience of working with women with multiple needs (e.g. mental health, homelessness, alcohol/drug dependency, self-harm behaviours) | **✓** |  |
| Experience of carrying out needs and risk assessments and the deliver support as part of a negotiated programme of support implementation and evaluation of support plans  | **✓** |  |
| The ability to deal with and diffuse crisis and emergency situations in a professional and effective manner. | **✓** |  |
| Demonstrable experience of being proactive rather than reactive: focuses on preventing problems in the future rather than just resolving immediate issues | **✓** |  |
| Able to work on own initiative | **✓** |  |
| Demonstrable experience of delivering excellent services in social care, housing or health services  | **✓** |  |
| Demonstrable experience of motivating and empowering complex and diverse client groups to sustaining housing, health and/or work outcomes  | **✓** |  |
| Experience of delivering women only services |  | **✓** |
| Experience of working with victims of sexual violence |  | **✓** |
| Experience of delivering group work and / or training  |  | **✓** |
| **Values** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| A commitment to the Victim’s Code of Practice | **✓** |  |
| An understanding and commitment to meeting the needs of vulnerable women | **✓** |  |
| Commitment to diversity and equal opportunities at work | **✓** |  |
| Commitment to service user participation and involvement | **✓** |  |
| A commitment to empowering women to make informed choices | **✓** |  |
| **Other** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Be available and committed to be part of the out of hours on call rota and work regular shift patterns during weekdays 9am – 8pm  | **✓** |  |
| A current, full driving licence and access to appropriate motorised transport | **✓** |  |