**Independent Living Project (Fife)**

**Part of SDS Options Fife delivery**

**Managed by Disabled Persons Housing Service (Fife)**

**Job Description**

**Post title:** Independent Living Officer (Fife)

**Post salary:** £22,143 per annum

**Hours of Work:**  34 hours per week, Monday to Friday

**Contract Type**: Fixed Term Contract to 31 March 2018

subject to funder review for ongoing funding

**Responsible to:** Independent Living Project Co-ordinator

Co-ordinator Disabled Persons Housing Service (Fife)

**Purpose and Objectives of Post:**

The purpose of the Independent Living Project is to ensure that eligible individuals in receipt of self-directed support who wish to consider (or remain) employing their own staff (e.g. Personal Assistants) are assisted with the knowledge, skills and confidence to do so.

The Independent Living Officer will work within a small project team whose joint approach is to provide an inclusive service for Service Users in aspects of Independent Living related to exercising choice and control via self-directed support, and in particular Option 1 employing staff (or as part of a mixed support/Option 4).

The project team will provide information, advice and training opportunities to enable individuals to make an informed decision about becoming an employer, whilst assisting with knowledge, skills, training and confidence to make that choice (or note) or to sustain that choice if they are already an employer. A substantial amount of work to be undertaken will be conducted on an "outreach" basis throughout Fife.

All the areas of work are very closely linked, it is therefore essential that you have a sound understanding of the issues involved in all aspects of the project team's work. A certain amount of flexibility will be expected and at times it may be necessary for you to be directly involved in aspects of other team members’ work.

This post requires an enhanced check through PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups).

**Main Tasks and Duties**

**1** Referrals

* Ensuring that referrals meet agreed criteria and prioritising where required to ensure those in need of immediate assistance get a timely response. Raising awareness with referral agencies of appropriate referrals/timings for assistance etc. Working together with the team to ensure recording of that work.

**2** Information and Advice

* Assist individuals via meaningful conversations about becoming an employer and the role a PA/staff member may undertake.
* Directing individuals onto our training programme, where appropriate, and at the best time for them, to allow them to gain information and skills to assist them in managing their role as an employer to reduce the potential for risk/crisis.
* Identify any areas around managing paperwork and processes which may be brought to attention of training programme so that others may learn good and effective practice.

* Provide service users with impartial information and advice regarding the options available to them by referring them to our general SDS Options Fife team for information about other options.
* Encouraging link up with SDS volunteers within SDS Options Fife if this might be helpful

**3** Liaison

* Work with individual disabled people to explore the role that a PA/staff may undertake and discuss with them the routes that they may wish to pursue in relation to recruitment etc.
* Liaise particularly with Fife Health and Social Care staff who will be referring eligible individuals, ensuring referrals happen in a timely manner and at the most appropriate time in the individual’s journey.
* Liaise with the SDS Options Fife staff, particularly the SDS Volunteer Co-ordinator to establish any support via volunteers or indeed opportunities for new clients to take up volunteering.
* Liaise with HR Training Officer over items for inclusion in training e.g. accessing payroll services; maintenance of paperwork etc. (Note: our Independent Living Project does not provide payroll services but referrals can be made to a range of providers).
* Liaise with the Independent Living Project Co-ordinator and HR Training Officer over the provision of advertising/shortlisting and other services regarding recruitment.
* Liaise with other DPHS (Fife) staff to identify the range of services that DPHS (Fife) can offer and work in partnership with staff and DPHS (Fife) Board in delivering these services to individuals.

**4** On-going Support

* Provide information on a range of subjects and services to enable people to make informed choices and decisions about what "Independent Living" means to them, making referrals to existing SDS Options Fife project for general options advice.
* Support service users to maintain their chosen Option 1 (or mix/Option 4) by swift referral to ‘Pop In’ HR Surgeries for support and crisis management.
* Work with service users to assist them to self-advocate, and self-manage as appropriate, even where there may be other management involved (e.g. Carer, or other person with power of attorney/guardianship).
* Support individuals in all aspects of recruitment, selection and good employment practice of Personal Assistants by liaising with our HR/Recruitment specialist.
* Actively promote and encourage the project’s training for disabled people (or their carer) and direct referrals elsewhere for training for PAs.
* In conjunction with the project’s HR Training Officer assist to ensure training is co-produced, using real examples and experiences to further ensure the training is meaningful for our client group.
* Provide follow‑up support as and when required once people have set up their own independent living situations.
* Ensure that all information is made available in accessible formats according to individual requirements.

**5** Development and Promotion

* To develop and promote awareness of Independent Living and self-directed support, through talks, presentations, workshops, using a variety of methods aimed at individuals, statutory or voluntary organisations.
* To participate in relevant working groups regarding the development of self-directed support.
* To ensure your knowledge of independent living and self-directed support is current and up to date.
* In conjunction with team members raise awareness of the project through our website and social media channels in line with the organisations branding guidelines.
* In conjunction with team members, the provision of on-going development and effective monitoring of the projects Social Media channels (including Facebook and Twitter) to ensure increased drive and engagement.

**6** Administration

* Record all referrals/actions, maintaining records of the difference he project is making in relation to knowledge, skills and confidence.
* Record and collate gaps and deficiencies in individual’s abilities to exercise choice of Option 1 (employing own staff), and pass these to the project’s Independent Living Project Co-ordinator and DPHS (Fife) Co-ordinator.

* Undertake recording of information in accordance with project’s policies and procedures and ensure people have access to their own confidential file.
* Assist the Independent Living Project Co-ordinator in collating statistics and preparing reports.
* Delegate and supervise tasks to the Independent Living Project Administrative Officer where appropriate – e.g. event planning for training; recording of survey results; preparation of materials, etc.

**7**  Other

* Covering for other staff members in their absence as appropriate.
* Any other reasonable tasks which are appropriate to the smooth running of the project.

**Decisions made in the Course of the Job**

* Accountable to the Independent Living Project Co-ordinator for tasks concerning individual case work, and promotion of training.
* Initiating contact with individual disabled people, disability organisations and service providers eg Fife Health and Social Care.
* Prioritising referrals and timing of access to training and monitoring waiting list (in conjunction with Co-ordinator)
* Supporting service users to have meaningful input to develop training modules and project delivery.
* Making recommendations to the Independent Living Team Co-ordinator regarding gaps in services and provision for Service Users.

**Contacts**

* Disabled people, families and carers
* Disability organisations in Fife and elsewhere
* National disability organisations
* Local Authority Officials
* Local Authority Councillors
* Statutory Health & Social Care, Housing and Education Providers
* Local & National Voluntary and charitable bodies
* Government departmental officials
* Private Sector Organisations

**Supervision Received**

You will receive regular individual supervision from the Independent Living Project Co-ordinator in accordance with the terms and conditions of service and where appropriate from the DPHS (Fife) Co-ordinator.

You will be expected to attend staff meetings, team meetings, training courses, events and other meetings deemed appropriate to the functioning of project work.

**Complexity and Creativity**

The Disabled Persons Housing Service (Fife) is an innovative and demanding expanding initiative which has a significant impact on the lives of disabled people, their families and the statutory authorities in the Fife. The organisation is currently looking at re-branding and all staff will be involved in this, alongside Board members and advisors.

You will be required to have the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people and be required to take initiative on a wide range of tasks and work as part of a team to ensure we maintain an inclusive approach.

The provision of support which enables disabled people to increase their level of self-control in all aspects of their lives is highly complex. It requires sensitivity, an extensive knowledge of services which are available for disabled people and a wide knowledge of the concerns of disabled people.

Challenges currently exist around funding of supports for individuals we represent and at all times we deliver our service with a focus on what we CAN do and what makes a difference.

**Person Specification: Independent Living Officer**

**EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

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|  |  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **E1** | Good knowledge of Independent Living and Self-Directed Support. | **✓** |  |

**SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **E2** | Experience of planning and delivering events. | **✓** |  |
| **E3** | Experience of developing and delivering training. | **✓** |  |
| **E4** | Excellent written communication skills including report-writing skills. | **✓** |  |
| **E5** | Excellent verbal communication skills including confident public speaking and an ability to convey complex information in a clear and concise manner. | **✓** |  |
| **E6** | Ability to use own initiative and prioritise own workload efficiently. | **✓** |  |
| **E7** | Previous experience of working effectively in collaboration with a wide range of external agencies and partners. | **✓** |  |
| **E8** | Experience of positive partnership working at all levels and able to represent the organisation and the sector to a high standard. | **✓** |  |
| **E9** | Negotiation and influencing skills. | **✓** |  |
| **E10** | Able to confidently use IT including Microsoft Office, Outlook and Databases, the internet and social media. | **✓** |  |
| **E11** | Demonstrable understanding of, and a commitment to, disability equality and equality of opportunity for all people in the community. | **✓** |  |
| **E12** | Working knowledge of personalisation and person centred support. | **✓** |  |
| **E13** | Experience, either paid or unpaid, of working within a supportive role for groups of individual, disabled people who use health or community care services. | **✓** |  |
| **E14** | Ability to be able to adapt a variety of methods of communication to meet individual’s needs. | **✓** |  |
| **E15** | Comfortable with conducting home and community based visits. | **✓** |  |
| **E16** | Experience and understanding of employment issues such as recruitment, health & safety, writing job descriptions, contracts of employment and personnel issues e.g. grievance and disciplinary procedures and PVG. | **✓** |  |
| **E17** | Valid driving licence and access to a car | **✓** |  |
| **D1** | Experience of working with volunteers |  | **✓** |

**PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **E15** | Professional attitude. | **✓** |  |
| **E16** | Approachable, flexible and proactive nature. | **✓** |  |
| **E17** | A team player who can be left to work unsupervised. | **✓** |  |
| **E18** | Ability to work flexibly to meet the demands of the project as required. | **✓** |  |