

NATIONAL YOUTH ADVOCACY SERVICE

JOB DESCRIPTION –

ADVOCATE – FAIRHAVEN UNIT, WARRINGTON

Salary	£19,000 - £21,000 pro rata
Hours	7 hours per week (with some unsocial hours & some home based working)
Leave	26 days pro rata
Pension	Stakeholder pension
Probationary period	6 months

Location of post Based from home and the Fairhaven Young People's Unit

There is a requirement to visit alternative venues for the purpose of meetings, supervision or training.

Responsible to: Operations Manager

General Responsibilities

1.1. To work and carry out independent and confidential advocacy work in accordance with NYAS' aims and objectives. To empower and enable children and young people to have a voice by providing information, advice, support and advocacy. To assist with training and development work in support of the aims and objectives of NYAS.

1.2 In carrying out their duties, the advocate will be particularly aware of the requirements of Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which deals with the right of any child or young person to be consulted in decision making and to be “provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child or young person, either directly or through a representative or an appropriate body in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.”

1.3 In accordance with NYAS Equal Opportunities Policy to be aware of issues of race, disability, gender, class, sexuality, religion, language and culture in the context of the NYAS service and be willing to challenge practice and policy which unfairly discriminates against young people in any of these areas.

- 1.4 To maintain confidentiality at all times and ensure proper observance of and adherence to NYAS' Confidentiality and Serious Concerns and Reporting Policy and all other NYAS policy and procedure.
- 1.5 To work toward full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

2. Specific Duties and Responsibilities

Work Direct with Young People

- 2.1 To provide information, advice, advocacy and support for young people receiving in-patient services from Fairhaven Unit, Warrington. To ensure the delivery of services for children and young people in their care in accordance with the NYAS mission statement, core values and strategic objectives.
- 2.2 To provide support and information to children and young people, and information to their parents and carers and to unit staff, ensuring all understand the rights and health care choice available to children and young people, and operating to the highest advocacy standards and in accordance with the NYAS professional, administrative and financial practices and procedures.
- 2.3 To ensure an appropriate and efficient response to referrals as required and to consult and work closely with the Operations Manager.
- 2.4 To consult and work closely with the NYAS Legal Team in appropriate cases.
- 2.5 To participate in supervision and in line with NYAS supervision policy.
- 2.6 To convene meetings with unit staff when necessary, for the purpose of maintaining a partnership approach to young people's concerns without compromising confidentiality, providing support and addressing matters of local relevance to the provision of services to young people.
- 2.7 To liaise and maintain effective working relationships with all relevant agencies in accordance with the development strategy for the service, and to inform the appropriate senior manager of all significant matters.
- 2.8 To ensure a supply of information material about NYAS services, and ensuring information is available to young people concerning how to refer themselves to NYAS.
- 2.9 To visit the unit once a week and to carry a caseload, under the supervision of the Operations Manager.
- 2.10 To raise the profile of the service and establish the Children's Rights agenda in the unit by providing information sessions for staff and new inpatients. To

promote good practice on young people's rights in the area through the provision of information, and advice, for individuals and organisations working with young people in and leaving care.

2.11 To attend young people's statutory reviews or management meetings, Mental Health Review Tribunals or Managers Hearings, if requested, and to advocate on their behalf, as required. To facilitate access to independent legal advice for MHRT representation as necessary

2.12 To liaise, as required, with parents and carers, leaving Care Teams, Social Services, foster-carers and other persons and agencies concerned with the welfare of the young people, in order to help resolve their issues.

3. Internal liaison and working arrangements

3.1.1 To work to a personal action plan, agreed with the Operations Manager.

3.2 To engage in a learning and development programme, agreed with the NYAS Operations Manager.

3.3 To work within agreed quality frameworks and to agreed quality standards.

3.4 To take part in supervision and appraisal and to meet on other occasions, as required with the Operations Manager.

3.5 To attend staff meetings, as required.

3.6 To keep accurate records of all casework and contacts, and of any expenditure incurred and to ensure that such expenditure is within agreed limits and has been duly authorised.

3.7 To maintain such records as may be required for the purposes of monitoring, evaluation and review, using the NYAS Information system.

3.8 To uphold the NYAS values and adhere to NYAS policies and procedures.

3.9 To undertake such other duties as may, from time to time, be reasonably required.

3.11 To undertake any other duties as required by the Operations Manager, Children's Service Director and the Chief Executive Officer.

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ADVOCATE

PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. *Qualifications and Experience*

Essential

- 1.1 A recognised professional qualification in a child care related field, such as social work, youth work, law, teaching, psychology, with preferably a minimum of three years' post qualifying experience.
- 1.2 Substantial experience of face to face work with young people.

Desirable

- 1.3 A proven record of advocacy work over at least three years.
- 1.4 Experience of working in a hospital setting.
- 1.5 Administrative experience.
- 1.6 Experience of multi – agency working.
- 1.7 Experience of working with young people with mental ill health and distress

2. *Knowledge*

Essential

- 2.1 Knowledge of the provisions of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the accompanying guidance and regulation.
- 2.2 Knowledge of the Human Rights Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 2.3 Knowledge of advocacy practice and working with children and families.
- 2.4 Knowledge of the principles of anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities.
- 2.5 Knowledge of health, welfare and educational systems as they impact on children and young people.
- 2.6 Knowledge of childhood mental health disorders and their impact on children and young people.

2.7 Knowledge of the needs of socially excluded children and young people including those from black and ethnic minority groups.

Desirable

2.8 Knowledge of Mental Health Review Tribunal proceedings and managers' hearings.

2.9 Knowledge of the Mental Health Act 1983 and Mental Health Act 2007

3. *Abilities and Aptitudes*

Essential

- 3.1 Ability to listen to children and young people effectively.
- 3.2 Ability to communicate effectively with children and young people both orally and in writing.
- 3.3 Ability to assess and summarise accurately and concisely.
- 3.4 Ability to work in a way which empowers and enables young people to develop self advocacy skills.
- 3.5 Ability to develop a sensitive but “problem-solving” approach to the situations in which children and young people can find themselves.
- 3.6 An ability to resolve conflict and to negotiate and handle conflict effectively
- 3.7 Ability to liaise and develop effective working relationships with a range of professional people
- 3.8 Ability to communicate effectively with figures in authority, in particular in professional settings, both orally and in writing.
- 3.9 Ability to write in a clear and succinct manner and keep accurate records of work as required.
- 3.10 Ability to manage own administration effectively
- 3.11 Ability to work accountably within a managed service, as a member of an effective team.

4. *Attitudes*

Essential

- 4.1 Commitment to the implementation of Equal Opportunities and anti-oppressive practice in advocacy practice.
- 4.2 Commitment to the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 4.3 Commitment to the NYAS Confidentiality and Serious Concerns Reporting Policy.
- 4.4 A commitment to personal learning and development

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5. *Personal circumstances*

Essential

- 5.2 Able to work from home and from the Fairhaven Unit site or any other specified base, and be prepared to travel according to the demands of the service.

All posts are subject to receipt of satisfactory references and a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau enhanced check