

Job Description

Job Title:	Substance Misuse and Mental Health Specialist
Responsible To:	Specialist Housing Support Manager
Direct Reports:	None
Based:	Kings Court Bristol
Salary:	£27,529 - Fixed-term until end March '25

The Organisation

For over 30 years, Ara has provided structured treatment, counselling, housing support, education, training and employment guidance, as well as many other interventions to promote recovery and a healthier life for its clients. In 2021/22, we supported over 12,000 people for the first time in our history, and by 2028 we aim to be working with 50% more beneficiaries.

The Specialist Housing Support service will work with people across the city in supported accommodation, the private rented sector, hostel and emergency accommodation, as well as clients being discharged from residential rehab, prison, or hospital. There will be specialist provision to ensure safe and appropriate housing for women.

Role Purpose

The role of the Substance Misuse and Mental Health Specialist is to work within supported accommodation helping people to access structured drug and alcohol treatment and to move onto independent living. A group work programme will be set up within supported accommodation settings, bringing mutual aid sessions into community settings, doing 1:1s with people and plugging clients into wider support such as IPS, DWP, health, into ROADS drug and alcohol services. The post holders will be proactive in ensuring clients are getting help in-situ but also accessing wider services where appropriate and in line with their recovery plan. They will additionally offer bespoke support to specific groups such as women and those with compound trauma. Drop-ins will be provided and relationships built over time, and a schedule of activities and support devised.

Substance Misuse and Mental Health Specialist will work as part of the Specialist Housing Support Team in the development, implementation and evaluation of Ara's Recovery and Resettlement Services.

Key responsibilities/accountabilities

The Substance Misuse and Mental Health Specialist will be responsible for providing high quality support services to Service Users at all stages of Ara's services. They must ensure clients receive interventions that meet their individual needs, managing risk and focusing on building recovery capital and positive outcomes.

An understanding of positive outcomes for clients, and an ability to provide advocacy on behalf of vulnerable people is essential, as is a pro-active nature, and the ability to engage with a range of stakeholders at all levels in a positive and professional manner.

Specific duties

- Deliver high quality group work programmes, mental health interventions, and evidence based drug and alcohol treatment to get excellent outcomes for clients within the service.
- Work within supported accommodation helping people to access structured drug and alcohol treatment and to move onto independent living.
- Organising mutual aid sessions for community settings, doing 1:1s with people and plugging clients into wider support such as IPS, DWP, health & ROADS drug and alcohol services.
- Offer bespoke support to specific groups such as women and those with compound trauma.
- Provide Drop-ins and a schedule of activities for clients.
- Advocate on behalf of Ara clients, ensuring the highest quality interventions for them with partners
- Build and maintain relationships with partner organisations relevant to the role and in line with service business plans
- Work with relevant services to develop a robust referral and assessment process for clients
- Work closely with colleagues within the Specialist Housing Support Service to ensure the offering is relevant, up-to-date, and reflects the needs of lived experience.
- Promote Ara's Specialist Housing Support Service with external stakeholders as required.
- Develop own knowledge and practice by: (1) undertaking training as required and agreed with line manager; (2) meeting regularly with line manager for supervision and support; (3) participating in staff and team meetings throughout Ara as required.
- Maintain accurate records and provide statistical information on levels and types of client engagement, to assist delivery and evaluation of the Specialist Housing Support Service and allow informed decision making about future initiatives.

Other Activities

- In consultation with the Specialist Housing Support Manager, fully adhere to all aspects of Ara's safeguarding policies in relation to all advice, support, interventions and services.
- To present as an appropriate role model to Ara volunteers & clients, and to maintain professional boundaries in the workplace at all times.
- Represent Ara in a way that is consistent with our philosophy, and always work within Ara's agreed policies and procedures.

- Observe at all times Ara's Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Data Protection, Health & Safety, Inclusion and Diversity Policies.
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities in keeping with the nature of this post as may be required from time to time.

Skills, Experience & Knowledge

- Significant experience of Mental Health & Drug and Alcohol best practice
- Experience of delivering group work and 1-1 support
- Experience of developing relationships with external stakeholders
- Experience of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency liaison
- Good understanding of current provision in housing/homelessness
- Ability to work effectively in a team
- Ability to input to commissioner-owned and other IT systems as required
- Excellent organisation and time management skills, with the ability to work under pressure
- Flexible and adaptable to changing workloads
- Excellent communication skills, clear written style, concise report writing and a methodical approach to work.
- High level of literacy and numeracy
- Good knowledge of health and safety, safeguarding, equal opportunities and data protection policies
- Good IT literacy, including excel knowledge, and an appreciation of the contribution data makes to clear reporting
- Professional boundaries in place

Personal qualities

- Confidence to work with autonomy and minimal supervision to deliver tangible results
- Self-motivated and able to work under pressure
- Friendly, approachable, helpful, patient and passionate about supporting people
- Demonstrates trust, openness and respect in dealings with people, treating everyone with compassion and kindness promoting equality and diversity
- Open to personal and professional development
- A good communicator who listens, is able to express themselves clearly and encourage Service Users to strive for a healthier life
- A commitment to Ara's overall aims and objectives with an ability to present Ara in a way that is consistent with its philosophy
- Embodies the Ara values of being Aspiring, Brave, Competent and Determined