

Job Description

Job Title: Community Engagement Specialist

Responsible to: Specialist Housing Support Senior

Location: Bristol – Office Based with Outreach

Salary: £30,348

Contract: Fixed-term until end March 2026

The Organisation

We are a registered charity formed in 1987, providing structured treatment, counselling, housing support, education, training, and employment guidance, as well as many other interventions to provide hope and better lives through recovery.

Role Purpose

The role of the Community Engagement Specialist will focus on identifying community engagement opportunities including befriending services, volunteering opportunities, clubs and pastimes to enable clients to build new relationships and avoid social isolation or a return to the streets. The post holder will work with clients in-treatment and will provide an essential part of follow-on support after the main housing support services have ended. The role will additionally support those from the North, South and East of Bristol to connect with their local communities.

Key responsibilities/accountabilities

The Community Engagement Specialist is responsible for adhering to all organisational and service policies and procedures, performing at their best, and providing high quality support services to Service Users at all stages of Ara's services.

They must ensure clients receive the highest quality services that meet their individual needs, managing risk and focusing on building recovery capital and positive outcomes.

An understanding of joint outcomes and 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

- Actively engage clients with follow on support from main housing support services to build structure, new relationships and be active in the community
- Research and engage organisations within Bristol, with a view to developing enduring partnerships for clients in treatment, with a particular focus on volunteer opportunities, social clubs and hobbies.
- Develop a suite of available resources for clients.
- Work with the Senior Community Engagement Lead to build relationships with partners in line with service business plans.
- Support clients from the North, South and East of Bristol to engage directly within their local communities.
- Be an ongoing point of contact for clients.
- Develop a robust referral and assessment process for clients to receive follow on support.
- Build and maintain a database of relevant partner organisations, and what they offer.
- 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.
- Be responsible for own administrative output e.g. word-processing with the support of the central administrative & IT department where necessary.
- 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, Inclusion and Diversity Policies.
- Observe the organisation's Health and Safety at Work Policy.
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities in keeping with the nature of this post as may be required from time to time.

Skills, Experience & Knowledge

- Experience of developing relationships with external stakeholders.
- Experience of supporting vulnerable people.
- Good research skills.
- Good understanding of drug and alcohol services in Bristol.
- Experience of multi-disciplinary and inter-agency liaison.
- Experience/knowledge of community services throughout Bristol.
- Ability to deliver an empathic and can-do approach to service users.
- Ability to be self-servicing re administrative output.
- Ability to design and deliver presentations.
- Ability to work effectively in a team.
- Organisation and time management skills.
- Open to personal and professional development.
- Excellent communication skills, clear written style, concise report writing and a methodical approach to work.
- High level of literacy and numeracy and the ability to produce succinct reports and costed proposals.
- Good knowledge of health and safety, safeguarding and data protection policies.
- Good IT literacy, including excel knowledge, and an appreciation of the contribution data makes to clear reporting.

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.
- A good communicator who listens, is able to express themselves clearly and encourage clients to strive for a healthier life.
- A positive individual with a 'can do', results driven approach and attitude.

- The ability to prioritise tasks and work under pressure.
- Flexible and adaptable to changing workloads.
- Professional boundaries in place.
- 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.