

Job title: Information & Advocacy Community Support Worker – Scotland (North)

Two year fixed-term part-time post

Location: Home based in North Scotland (Inverness area due to travel requirements and location of NHS services)

Department: Care, Campaigns and Support

Reporting to: Head of Regional Support, Outreach, and Information

Salary: £24,000 to £25,000 (pro rata for 24.5 hours)

Main purpose of role:

Muscular Dystrophy UK (MDUK) is the charity for the 110,000 people living with muscle-wasting conditions in the UK. We bring together people affected by more than 60 rare and very rare progressive muscle-weakening and wasting conditions. We provide vital information, advice, resources and support for people with these conditions, their families and the professionals who work with them. Our care, information and advocacy service coordinate our support for families, providing advice and practical support to enable individuals to access the services, benefits and equipment they are entitled to. As part of our support, we also connect individuals with others affected by these rare conditions through our peer support networks.

The Information & Advocacy Community Support Worker in Scotland will ensure that service users (children and adults) and their families, receive high quality support, from the point of diagnosis and throughout their journey, and will assist them to access funding, equipment and care and support that they are entitled to. The Information & Advocacy Community Support Worker will join a team that makes a real difference to the lives of the people living with muscle-wasting conditions, and their families, in Scotland. The role will be primarily home based, but there will also be a requirement to attend outpatient clinics within the region, attend home visits where appropriate and to support responding to queries through the helpline and information inbox. Some travel will be required to attend meetings and events outside of Scotland. You will work with both statutory and voluntary organisations, clinicians, and health and social care professionals to ensure that people living with muscle wasting conditions get the care and support they need to live well and independently.

Main tasks and responsibilities:

1. Deliver the care and support services to reach more people living with muscle-wasting conditions, and their families, in the region.

- Deliver services which increase the number of people with muscle-wasting conditions supported and known to the charity. This will involve contacting new and existing supporters, as well as professionals who work with them.
- Working with clinical leads and other health professionals to proactively support individuals under the care of NHS neuromuscular services. Support clinical teams in organising support group events locally, and sometimes attending clinics.
- Proactively identify ways to engage with individuals and families who contact the charity, providing a local contact point for resources and information from the charity. Working across the Campaigns, Care and Support teams as well as other departments to make this effective.
- Organise small support events or information days in the region (1 to 2 per year).

2. Support the development of the charity's advocacy and information service in the region, and across the UK by taking on individual advocacy cases.

- Taking on 'advocacy cases' by supporting individuals and families to overcome difficulties in accessing services, housing, adaptations, equipment, care and benefits,
- Attend meetings as necessary to provide advocacy support to individuals and families.
- Write letters and undertake casework involving statutory authorities, health professionals, and local MSP's.
- Be aware of and identify safeguarding issues when interacting with individuals and families. Adhere to MDUK safeguarding policies, raising concerns and ensuring support is accessed as indicated.

3. Ensure service users always receive high quality support, locally and through the helpline and support services

- Respond to queries with knowledge, sensitivity and professionalism.
- Provide emotional support to individuals and families at diagnosis and throughout their journey.
- Escalate any safeguarding concerns accordingly and as soon as possible, following MDUK's safeguarding procedures
- Log all requests for support on the CRM database and keep accurate and up to date written records.
- Answer helpline calls during opening hours and respond to any voicemails outside these hours.

4. Recruit and empower volunteers to manage and lead local Muscle Groups and peer support groups.

- Identify individuals, family members and or friends who would be keen to volunteer with MDUK.
- Support the MDUK Volunteer Manager in running activities or local events to improve recruitment of volunteers for different roles.
- Identify volunteers to manage and lead local 'Muscle Groups' engaging with and supporting families and individuals living with muscle wasting conditions.
- Identify people living with muscle-wasting conditions, and family members, who would be suited to offer peer to peer support to others living with muscle-wasting conditions.

Values and behaviours

- To behave in accordance with the Charity's values at all times
- To behave in accordance with the hospital trusts where honorary contracts are held.
- To prepare progress reports for line manager and others as agreed
- To attend monthly supervision sessions, team and project meetings as required
- To undertake any other such tasks as requested by the line manager.

Experience	
Experience of casework, advocacy and promoting the rights of individuals.	Essential
An understanding of statutory services and benefits system in Scotland.	Essential
Good understanding of current changes to welfare	Desirable
Experience of group facilitation and public speaking	Desirable
Some experience of working in partnership with other groups	Essential
Knowledge of muscle wasting conditions	Desirable
Knowledge of GDPR and relevant safeguarding legislation.	Essential
Skills and Personal Qualities	
Understanding of the issues and the needs of people with disabilities	Essential
Strong telephone skills – key communication skills (such as active listening and empathy)	Essential
Able to always represent the charity in a professional manner	Essential
IT literate (MS Office preferable) including an understanding of relationship databases and their use in information management	Essential
Good analytical skills	Essential
Very good written and verbal communication skills	Essential
Able to work as effective member of a team	Essential
Able to carry out office administration tasks as part of role	Essential
Professional conduct at all times with a positive and flexible attitude	Essential
Clean Driving licence (use of own car, business insurance and mileage allowance)	Essential
Good time management and organisational skills - The ability to manage own time and tasks effectively. Taking an approach that is outcomes focused and systematic making you personally effective in managing own workload.	Essential
The ability to accept responsibility for own area of work, identifying critical elements and working in a pro-active/solution focused way to achieve.	Essential
The ability to represent Muscular Dystrophy UK effectively and professionally. Produces clear and effective communications appropriate to the audience, using the most appropriate channel and in keeping with brand guidelines.	Essential
Self-Development - The ability to constantly challenge and improve self and others demonstrating ambition for self and charity to achieve goals.	Essential
Able to offer appropriate emotional support to adults and children	Essential
Details	
Hours – 24.5 per week, some evening and weekends required.	
Holidays – 25 days (pro rata)	
To attend two team meetings in London a year and other ad hoc events across the UK	