

Services

Loneliness & Support Officer

The job, in a nutshell

You'll be taking calls on our national Silver Line Helpline service, which operates 24 hours a day, providing older people with friendly conversation and support. You'll simultaneously expertly use a range of systems to record data about callers, and to communicate with colleagues, whilst actively listening and conversing with callers, ensuring you provide a consistent and fantastic experience on every single call.

A confident communicator, you'll be spending almost all your working time on the phone, so you'll need have excellent listening skills and be able to have friendly conversations about a wide range of topics. Although The Silver Line is a friendship service, many of our callers are in vulnerable situations, and the calls we receive are very challenging, with high levels of older people experiencing severe loneliness and isolation and complex mental health issues, including suicidal ideation. You'll need to have high levels of emotional intelligence, resilience and empathy to manage the wide range of calls we receive, ensuring callers are always well supported. You'll need to be able to independently assess and manage any potential safeguarding risks on calls, taking action to keep callers safe.

www.ageuk.org.uk

Age UK, 7th Floor, One America Square, 17 Crosswall, London EC3N 2LB.
Registered charity number 1128267. Company number 6825798.

Our values

-  Collaborative
-  Ambitious
-  Impactful
-  Inclusive

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What you'll do for us:

- Adhere to Age UK and The Silver Line's safeguarding procedures, ensuring all calls are managed safely. On every single call you'll need to be able to independently ask appropriate questions, accurately assess risk, and identify any potential safeguarding issues or other risks. You'll need to make decisions and respond appropriately to keep callers safe, responding to any emergency or urgent issues quickly. You will directly seek the right support for callers – either through escalation to a Team Leader, or through contacting emergency support or other third parties directly in the absence of a Team Leader.
- Provide support to distressed callers, including those experiencing suicidal ideation, in a calm and empathetic manner, using appropriate call handling techniques
- Competently use a wide range of IT systems, including a CRM system (Salesforce), Twilio Flex, and all Microsoft Applications, during calls. Simultaneously take calls and seamlessly use multiple systems to record data whilst actively listening and conversing with callers, ensuring this has no impact on your focus, the quality of the call, or the needs of the caller.
- Communicate continually throughout calls and shifts with colleagues through Microsoft Teams, proactively flagging any complex issues to Team Leaders as needed, using it to keep up to date with essential updates throughout shifts, and to both provide and receive support to colleagues
- Keep up to date with all service updates, and policies and procedures, which are shared through multiple channels, in a timely manner. Always work in line with these, responding and adapting quickly to any changes
- Practice active listening skills, be an expert in managing and leading conversations on a wide variety of topics and always respond to all callers in a kind, respectful, empathetic and non-judgemental manner. Recognise when statements or comments need further exploration or

Location

Hybrid/Blackpool

People management

No

Division

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raise concerns and ask appropriate questions to ascertain potential risk.

- Maintain appropriate boundaries and standards of conduct with callers at all times, including regular callers, and respect the confidentiality of callers, in line with service policies. Be able to confidently and calmly address any inappropriate behaviour or any breaches of Age UK's DEI policy.
- Identify potential storytellers for the service, asking appropriate consent questions and completing the storyteller procedure.
 - Meet service KPIs on utilisation and call times, ensuring calls are handled efficiently and effectively – while keeping within service remit and boundaries.
- Expertly identify when the caller needs more support than we can offer and be able to clearly explain our remit, consider and triage the needs of the caller, and share a range of alternative options for support.
- Signpost and refer callers directly into local and national Age UK services and other approved signposts, considering caller's needs in a holistic way. Have a competent understanding of what these organisations can provide and be able to explain this in a clear and concise way to callers.
- Attend training sessions and other staff development forums as required, contributing in a positive and constructive way and sharing ideas and knowledge with colleagues. Implement knowledge gained through the role to improve skills and inform the handling of future calls.
- Build and maintain good working relationships with colleagues and volunteers, and proactively communicate with Team Leaders and Managers, helping to create a positive team environment
- Provide volunteers and colleagues with peer-to-peer support, including providing call shadowing and assisting with training as requested.

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- Escalate any complaints or complex/challenging enquiries about the service appropriately.
- Identify and support frequent and complex callers to the service.
- Work flexibly during shifts – offering support to peers as needed and ensuring any information is shared and escalated appropriately during any shift handovers.

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Services

Must have

The letters after each competency indicates at what stage in the selection process this area will be assessed.

Application = A, Interview = I, Test = T, Presentation = P

Experience

- High levels of personal and emotional resilience and the ability to stay calm during challenging and pressured situations. **A, I**
- Ability to manage a busy workload and adapt to change in a fast-paced service. **A, I**

Skills and knowledge

- Knowledge of safeguarding with the ability to assess and manage risk independently. **A, I**
- Understanding and knowledge of mental health issues. **A, I**
- The resilience to work shifts when almost all time is spent on the phone remaining engaged, active and responsive on every call. **I**
- Excellent IT skills including Microsoft Office, call handling, and CRM systems. **A, I, T**
- Ability to learn and become competent with new technology and systems. **I, T**
- Data entry skills. **A, I, T**
- Ability to multitask and focus on calls, whilst entering data and communicating effectively via IT systems. **A, I, T**
- Ability to work within and meet service KPIs on call length, utilisation and other key targets. **I, T**
- Ability to maintain clear boundaries with callers. **I**
- Understanding of the issues facing older people, particularly the impact of loneliness and isolation on older people. **A, I**

Personal attributes

- Ability to respond in a non-judgemental, empathetic, respectful and

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friendly manner in all situations. **A, I**

- Excellent interpersonal, customer service and communication skills, with the ability to adapt communication style to meet the needs of the caller. **A, I**
- Ability to navigate challenging topics of conversation with good listening skills and excellent conversational skills. **A, I**
- Ability to adhere to policies and procedures. **A, I**
- Being a positive team player. **A, I**
- A commitment to promoting equality and diversity. **A, I**
- A passion for supporting older people. **A, I**

Great to have

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Experience

- Experience in working in services to support older people. **A, I**
- Experience working with colleagues remotely. **A, I**
- Experience working within services that operate outside of normal working hours. **A, I**

Any other details

Example rota's will be provided during the recruitment process. We reserve the right to cancel interviews if shift patterns are not feasible. If successful, the first 2 days of your induction process will be in the Blackpool office.

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