

Job Title: Mental Health IDVA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor)

Service/Division: Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Reports to: Angelou Manager

Direct reports: None

*This post is open to **female applicants only** as this is deemed a genuine occupational requirement under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010.*

Advance is committed to equality and diversity and strongly encourages applications from women with diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities, BAME and LBT communities.

Job Summary

The Mental Health IDVA will work within a dynamic, fast paced, crisis intervention, advocacy and support service to ensure the voice of survivors informs every stage of the process specialising in working with clients for whom mental health is a factor. They will work within the team to make proactive contact and provide high quality advocacy and support based upon a client led needs and risk assessment to women, focusing on working with those aged 18 and over who access the domestic abuse service. They will advise women on criminal justice and civil remedies and related matters, support women to attend court where necessary, and coordinate the provision of multi-agency support.

Part of the role will be to establish positive, proactive and innovative working relationships with services providing mental health intervention and partner agencies within Angelou Partnership this will include the creation and delivery of training in partnership with other agencies. The post holder will work across the three boroughs under the guidance of the Senior IDVA and Angelou Manager.

Key responsibilities and duties

- Ensure effective access for women and girls across the Angelou Partnerships services and encourage their engagement with the service, through multi agency working and service flexibility.
- Work with mental health service providers to introduce the service and encourage practitioners to identify domestic abuse, respond appropriately and refer to the service. This may include some co-location within mental health services and offering briefings and information to upskill mental health workers and improve their response to domestic abuse.
- Work in partnership with internal and external partners to develop and deliver a program of training courses focusing on mental health and domestic abuse
- Work closely with the Angelou Manager to identify gaps in the support provided by mental health services to domestic abuse survivors across the tri-borough and to actively advocate on their behalf and raise awareness with mental health professionals around best practice.
- Work closely with the Angelou Manager to develop the Mental Health project by identifying relevant research and best practice in the sector as well as identifying new and innovative ways to work with Mental Health practitioners
- Hold a caseload and work within the team to conduct comprehensive assessments of needs and risk for women experiencing domestic abuse, carry out short- and longer-term risk management, safety planning and support; and identify and refer to services appropriate to their needs, including attendance at specialist/dedicated courts and MARAC as required.

- Develop and deliver support plans that include delivery of high-quality face to face or telephone crisis intervention, information, advocacy and support, in respect to criminal and civil remedies, housing, health, welfare rights, children’s legislation and other appropriate interventions.
- Advise women of their rights and options for seeking help and support from other agencies making referrals and co-ordinating the provision of multi-agency support where necessary, and proactively advocate ensuring barriers to accessing support and protection are minimised.
- Proactively assess the needs and safety of any children that women using the service may have, ensure that any risks/needs identified are addressed directly with the woman, and take appropriate action to safeguard them.
- Proactively assess the needs and safety of women at risk giving due regard to Adult at Risk policies and procedures.
- Participate in multi-agency conferences in respect of children and adults at risk as required, providing reports and undertaking actions as necessary.
- If a client is involved in the criminal justice system as a witness, provide them with information, advocacy and support as cases progress through the criminal justice system, supporting them to apply for special measures and to give impact statements, and maximise their safety to help them give best evidence, accompanying women to court where necessary
- Work with the Angelou Manager, Senior Services Manager and Data Insights Analyst to ensure all monitoring and evaluation for the project is accurate and fully maintained, and keep managers informed of any issues and successes.
- Ensure that agreed case recording and monitoring systems are kept up to date and secure, and write internal and external reports where required, including for safeguarding conferences, team meetings, managers and others.
- Participate in multi-agency working and focus groups when requested to do so and follow through on agreed appropriate actions that arise from these.
- Work effectively as a member of the Advance DVA team and in close collaboration with Angelou Partner services, Minerva keyworkers and mental health teams.
- Work in partnership with mental health staff and provide institutional advocacy to maximise positive outcomes and use the appropriate reporting mechanisms to highlight persistent or recurring issues that arise.
- Be responsible for your own personal learning development and keep up to date on research, relevant legislation, policy and practice, and other literature relevant to the role.
- Participate in supervision, training and meetings as required, and assist in the development of services in line with agreed development plans.

General Information

Performance and Quality: Ensure all work undertaken is aligned to the service/division’s annual plan and that all policies, processes and guidance notes are up to date and in line with best practice/current legislation.

Policies and procedure: Ensure the effective implementation of Advance’s Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity and other policies and procedures and uphold the core values of Advance.

Equality and diversity: Advance aims to create and sustain an inclusive work environment which provides equality of opportunity for everyone and reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. The postholder is required to uphold the Equality and Diversity policy and comply with the code of conduct which sets out our standards of behaviour towards those who use our services or work within them.

Confidentiality: The post holder must ensure that any information relating to employees, service users, and volunteers (future, current and past) is treated in strictest confidence and must be discussed only within the confines of the work setting with the appropriate members of the team or manager.

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time when it was drawn up and will be reviewed from time to time. Duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION: Mental Health IDVA

A= Application and I= interview

KNOWLEDGE AND QUALIFICATIONS	
A relevant qualification or training, for example in domestic violence, criminal justice, law, social work, substance misuse or related area.	A
A thorough understanding of violence against women and girls (VAWG) with a particular focus on the dynamics of domestic abuse.	A/I
An excellent understanding of the criminal justice system and relevant legislation with a particular regard to legal and civil options, housing and benefits.	A/I
Thorough knowledge of safeguarding practice, procedures and legislation.	A/I
Knowledge and understanding of the dynamics and effects of mental health issues	A/I
EXPERIENCE	
At least one year's experience of supporting women who have experienced domestic violence, forced marriage or 'honour-based violence'.	A
Experience of risk and needs assessment, safety and support planning, particularly with clients with complex/multiple needs.	A/I
Experience of partnership working and of maintaining excellent working relationships with a range of stakeholders.	A/I
Experience of developing and delivering training	A/I
Experience of working with mental health agencies or in a mental health setting	A/I
TECHNICAL/WORK BASED SKILLS	
Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate well with a wide range of people of all ages and backgrounds.	A/I

Excellent risk assessment, support and advocacy skills and the ability to advocate successfully using evidence and professional experience.	A/I
Ability to network, influence, and problem solve and apply solution focused approaches to increase access and safety and facilitate positive outcomes for women and children.	A/I
Ability to work well within a team and responsibly on your own initiative, and of maintaining professional boundaries with clients and partner agencies.	A/I
Flexible, proactive approach and a good ability to prioritise work.	A/I
Good crisis management skills and the ability to work effectively under pressure and to deadlines.	A/I
Good data collection, monitoring and IT skills, including word processing and using databases and spreadsheets.	A/I
Good report writing skills, including preparing reports for courts, case conference and information for Multi agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS).	A/I
GENERAL SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES	
Committed to Advance's charity ethos and key values which are Listen and Support, Empower, Innovate, Collaborate, Quality and Accountability	A/I
Work co-operatively with colleagues, in statutory and non-statutory agencies.	A/I
A firm commitment to women, children's and young people's rights.	A/I