



Role Description – Volunteer Therapeutic Community Caseworker

Minimum Commitment: 2 days per weeks, 6 months minimum

Baobab Supporter / Reports to: Head of Casework

Context of the Role

The Baobab Centre works as a non-residential therapeutic community and as a volunteer Caseworker you will work within our multidisciplinary team. **Please read this Role Description in the light of our [Clinical context and model of work](#)** as this also applies to volunteers working with us.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

The role of a Volunteer Therapeutic Community Caseworker at the Baobab Centre is to support unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee adolescents and young adults to access care, basic rights and entitlements and to support their social development and rehabilitation. This role involves working closely with the clinical key worker of each young person and with our wider multidisciplinary team. As a Caseworker you will aim to empower individuals to build stable, independent lives in the UK, including by supporting them to communicate their views, needs and experiences in decision-making processes, and supporting them to make challenges when necessary. Caseworkers assist young people to make effective choices about what happens in their lives and encourage them to speak up and build agency.

Baobab aims to be a non-residential therapeutic community with a holistic and integrated perspective. As a Volunteer Caseworker, you will play a key role within our multidisciplinary team. We aim to be a thinking organisation and place a high value on shared thinking time and shared responsibilities. Our team work together with each other and with agencies and key individuals in young people's lives, both within and outside of Baobab. A key aspect of the role is communicating with members of the clinical and admin staff team within the Baobab Centre and with other workers in the network around each young person including social workers, teachers, foster carers, lawyers, hospital consultants, housing and benefits workers. etc. You will strive to develop relationships across networks and advocate access to rights and entitlements for our community members.

It is critical that as a Caseworker:

- you have an insight to the backgrounds and experiences of both the internal and external factors impacting on the lives of unaccompanied young people attending our centre and an understanding of the broader context in our society as it impacts on young asylum seekers (including invisibility, marginalisation, discrimination and the fact of waiting in uncertainty for a long time).
- You have an insight in how trauma and the many human rights violations and persecution that most members of our community have experienced impact on all aspects of a young person's internal and external world.
- You have an insight in how current immigration rules and social care system procedures act as barriers to rehabilitation, including by restricting access to education, adequate benefits, housing and healthcare provision.

To guarantee stability of service this Volunteer Casework role asks for a minimum commitment of 2 days per week over 6 months minimum. As a full member of our multidisciplinary team and our therapeutic community you would be expected to volunteer regular hours, with the understanding and appreciation that you give your time freely and that there is flexibility to review with your Baobab supporter.

Main Responsibilities and Tasks

Direct casework

1. Provide face to face and online (video) casework advocacy support to young people who are located across London. Casework will be in a language of their choice, utilising translators where required. Casework advocacy may include navigating and applying for relevant benefits, support in homeless assessments, assisting with college and university applications and enrolments, attending GP and health specialist appointments, preparing applications for home office asylum support and meeting with local authority social care teams regarding care plans.
2. Engage in outreach support to young people, including for healthcare visits, benefits appointments, accommodation visits, or appointments at other support organisations and being available to attend meetings as an independent advocate to ensure young people's voices are heard and actions are followed up.
3. Complete individual grant applications to secure resources which may be relevant to supporting young person's mental health and wellbeing such as education items, sports, leisure and arts activities.
4. Signpost and refer young people to local organisations, diverse opportunities and cultural activities and events which support their needs and interests.

Multidisciplinary Team Working

5. Work alongside the young person's key work clinician at Baobab to assess needs, develop personal support plans and participate in regular case reviews with young person and their networks
6. Active participation in meetings with the Baobab multidisciplinary team of professionals (clinicians, social workers, caseworkers and administrators), and attending meetings with external professional networks connected to young people and their communities
7. Meet regularly with your Baobab support (line manager) to monitor caseload, reflect on practice and identify areas for personal development.
8. Contribute to Baobab's advocacy work, practice evaluation and research by providing case studies, encouraging young people's contributions, identifying examples of good practice and highlighting areas for improvement.

Community Model

9. To practice as a part of our holistic and integrated model of working, adhering to Baobab policy and procedures such as for example those relating to safeguarding, child and young adult protection and confidentiality
10. Maintaining a focus on multidisciplinary teamwork within our non-residential therapeutic community model.
11. When possible as part of your time commitment, participate as a member of the Baobab community by developing and attending community activities along with other staff members and young people with a focus on ensuring that the voices and lived experience of our community members are held in mind and on building relationships of trust with community members.

Advocacy

12. To keep updated about the current socio-political context in which we work, including changes in law which would affect our community and our work with young asylum seekers in the UK .
13. To build and share knowledge in relation to welfare rights, housing, support and community care issues wherever possible with the Baobab team and across networks.
14. To attend internal trainings in relation to our integrated model of work.

PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Please provide practice examples to demonstrate how you meet the following criteria.

Essential Skills, Abilities, Experiences and Qualities

- At least 2 years post qualification work experience as a caseworker, advocating and supporting young people to access their rights and entitlements
- Experience of work with young people who have mental health and developmental difficulties
- Experience of direct, face to face outreach work with young people in their communities
- Knowledge and understanding of key international agreements, legislation and statutory guidance relevant to the care and protection of unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children and young people.
- Experience of building relationships and working together with multi-disciplinary professional networks and key organisations responsible for supporting children and young people
- Commitment to advocacy and promoting justice and rehabilitation for unaccompanied young people seeking asylum and refugee status.
- Proven computer literacy skills and organisational abilities.
- Ability to keep detailed records and adhere to organisational policies and procedures
- Ability to make use of team meetings, individual and group supervision
- Ability to maintain a flexible, creative and safe approach to assessing and meeting the needs of our population of young people.

Desirable Skills

- Experience of casework with unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children and young people
- Ability to speak English and a second language compatible to diverse languages spoken by children and young people attending the Baobab Centre
- Lived experience as an asylum seeker/ refugee and or personal experience of the UK social care system
- Experience working in clinical settings or with clinical practitioners.

Challenges of the Post

These are some of the main challenges of the post:

1. To engage in reflective spaces to hold young people's and your own anxieties and manage painful feelings.
2. To be able to respond to crisis and manage safeguarding risks.
3. To be flexible enough to adapt to a regularly changing context for children, adolescents and young people seeking asylum.
4. To work in a team with many part time staff and maintain good communication and team working.