

Job title: Benefits Advice Worker

Hours: Part time 23 hours per week

Salary £33,727.72 pro rata (£17.53 p/h)

Responsible to: The Manager

Location: Hybrid – you will be required to visit our office base for team meetings and briefings, and for longer periods during your induction. You will be expected to do some home working and you will be required to travel to clients' homes throughout the West Midlands region and neighbouring counties.

Purpose of the Role:

The focus of the role is to provide advice and assistance with a range of welfare benefits to people who have terminal and/or chronic asbestos related diseases, their families and carers, whilst also ensuring a holistic approach to the service user's circumstances and ongoing support. This may include assistance with reconsiderations of welfare benefits decisions, and representation at Tribunal appeals, the provision of support and assistance for families at Coroner inquests, if required, and occasional assistance with the delivery of our support group.

About us: We are an independent charity for people with asbestos related conditions and their carers. Since 2007 Asbestos Support Central England has offered help and support across the West Midlands conurbation, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Herefordshire to anyone living in the region who is affected primarily by asbestos related diseases or silicosis. We are a home-visiting service providing expert benefits advice, support and legal signposting to a panel of carefully vetted solicitors, for an average of 230 service users per year. We also campaign for the strictest possible enforcement of regulations and legislation to protect current workers and communities, as part of a national Forum of independent asbestos charities around the UK.

For you:

Hybrid working: our advisers work from home and travel to visit clients in their homes in person, typically twice a week. Our office is based in central Birmingham and attendance is required on average twice a month to collect post or attend team meetings, following a satisfactory probation.

Wellbeing: We offer a wellbeing budget for each member of staff (subject to funding) to pay for wellbeing activities.

Pension scheme: 6% Employer contribution / 4% minimum employee contribution

Annual leave: FTE 29 days holiday. After 5 years continuous service, 1 day extra, and after 10 years continuous service a further day (both pro-rata for part-time). In addition, paid statutory Bank Holidays (pro-rata for part-time).

Closing date: 10am Friday 10th January 2025

Interview: Thursday 16th January 2025

Please download the job description, person specification, application form and monitoring form and submit them to kathryn@asbestosupportce.org by the closing date and time. Please note that if you email over the Christmas period, our office may be closed and you may not receive a reply straight away.

For more info visit www.asbestosupportce.org

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

Interview service users, usually in their home face to face, but occasionally on the telephone, providing advice and assistance on welfare benefits, access to compensation and other areas of support.

Communicate effectively with service users, in order to gather facts to enable the best advice to be offered

Carry out basic calculations to work out the service user's entitlement to particular benefits and signpost complex cases for further advice where appropriate

Explain the range of compensation options available to the service user and what they mean for them

Carry out basic research where necessary to find out more in-depth information, (e.g. about the likelihood of asbestos exposure in certain occupations or at certain times)

Provide practical help such as completing Department for Work and Pension (DWP) benefit applications, applying for a Blue Badge, writing letters and – where appropriate – making phone calls Signpost/refer clients to other services and sources of help where appropriate, for example to a health care worker, or solicitor, or for specialist benefits advice

On occasion to attend our support group to provide advice/information around benefits, if required.

Represent the service user where necessary - this may include at Tribunal hearings, and to attend a Coroner's court in support of the service user or their family

Be organised and able to prioritise and manage an ongoing and developing caseload (some cases may take many months to resolve)

Keep timely, accurate and confidential records of client cases through use of our customised online database

Promote the services on offer and distribute publicity materials

Liaise internally with our team of Benefits Advisors, the Manager and our Follow-up Worker Competent with written skills and use of Microsoft Office (or equivalent)

Liaise with external organisations such as hospital staff, the DWP, solicitors and other benefits agencies and local authorities

Identify safeguarding concerns, and in consultation with the manager, report to appropriate channels

Undertake Continuing Professional Development and relevant training, plus keep up to date with changes in the benefits system

Undertake any other duties that are commensurate with your role and support the overall aims of the organisation at the direction of the Manager.

Terms and conditions of work

Salary £33,727.72 pro rata

Hours 23 hours per week - actual salary £20,965.88 (£17.53 p/h)

Permanent subject to funding

Pension 6% Employer contribution / 4% minimum employee contribution

Holidays 29 days holiday. After 5 years continuous service, 31 days, and after 10 years continuous service 32 days. In addition, paid statutory Bank Holidays. For part-time employees, all holiday entitlement is calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Probationary period. This post is subject to a probationary period of six months.

Enhanced DBS Check

The postholder will be working with, and may be asked to supervise volunteers who work with, vulnerable adults and providing them with financial advice. An enhanced DBS check is a statutory requirement for this role and will be carried out when you accept the job and during your induction.

Other terms

Flexible working is a requirement of this role because some evening and weekend work may be required from time to time. It is not possible to pay overtime but Time Off in Lieu will be applied where appropriate. Flexibility around your personal circumstances is possible and we will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate them, but only in so far as this being consistent day-to-day with the smooth running of the organisation and its helpline.

100 word summary

Benefits Advice Worker to join our small team helping those affected by asbestos-related illnesses. Part time, home working, travel in West Midlands