

Job Description

Job title: Specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)
Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence with Learning Disabilities

Scale: £20,210 - £22,221 fte

Hours: 37 hours per week
With occasional weekends and evenings as and when the organisation requires (flexi-scheme available). Fixed term contract until 31st March 2023 with possibility of extension subject to available funding

This role is subject to an enhanced DBS Check and Police Vetting

Responsible For: No staff

Responsible to: Sexual Violence Specialist Service Manager

Liaison/ communication:

- The post holder will work within a multi-agency setting and communicate regularly with other agencies.
- The post holder will communicate internally with all members of the Freeva and wider UAVA teams, and report regularly to the Service Manager and other senior managers
- The post holder will represent Freeva at various meetings or committees as deemed appropriate by the Service Manager, Head of Service, Chief Executive and/or the Board of Trustees

Main purposes of the post

We know people with Learning Disabilities (LD) have a higher propensity for being a victim of rape or sexual abuse than others in the wider community, yet the barriers they can face when trying to seek help means they often remain hidden and unsupported.

Communication difficulties can impact on whether they are understood or believed and they can sometimes be seen as unreliable witnesses so their case will rarely progress to court.

To provide pro-active services to victims of sexual violence within and outside the criminal justice to:

- a) Enable victims with learning disabilities to be heard in the way that is best for them
- b) Support clients to understand about healthy relationships and consent
- c) Support clients to access other specialist help
- d) Build reciprocal working relationships and referral pathways with other specialist LD providers
- e) Risk assess clients and help clients keep safe
- f) Ensure clients are aware of their options in relation to the recording and reporting of sexual assault
- g) Help clients access their rights that they are entitled to including access to health and other services that they require
- h) Monitor and keep clients informed of case progress
- i) To ensure that the support is working to internal and multi-agency best practice guidelines; with the aim of increasing victim satisfaction, decreasing re-victimisation, ensuring victims have access to appropriate and timely support, explore reporting options and a reduction in victim withdrawals from the criminal justice process where appropriate

Main duties

- To have a clear understanding of the myths and facts of sexual violence, rape trauma syndrome, the long term mental health effects of sexual violence, self-harm, suicidal feelings and attempts.
- Ensure the communication and information needs of LD clients is clearly and consistently recorded on client records
- Support the development of easy read resources and information
- Work within a multi-agency setting to provide institutional advocacy for the rights of the client.
- Provide support and facilitate access to clients who have reported to the police, or referred to the service by a hospital or other organisation, if possible, within 24 hours of initial attendance for forensic examination or support, and subsequently as necessary until other support is identified or at the client's request.
- Undertaking risk assessment and support needs analysis with client.
- Developing individual safety & support plans (SAS) to address risks/support needs of client.
- If assault was domestic violence related, liaise with the wider DV service. If the client is assessed as high risk, liaise with the IDVA and ensure a referral to MARAC is made following locally agreed protocols and attend and participate in meetings and follow-up on actions agreed in MARAC.
- Helping clients to access services to which they are entitled, e.g., through new and established referral pathways to sexual health follow-up services, making referrals to mental health services and local counseling organisations, assisting with the arrangement of child care and return to work or education as appropriate.
- To keep an up to date information knowledge base about appropriate and useful services to support clients who have a range of complex support needs. Liaising with team leader/service manager in developing referral routes and pathways as necessary.
- Providing face to face and telephone support (non-therapeutic) to clients and their supporters.
- Help clients to develop their own support network and access appropriate therapeutic interventions
- Explaining criminal sanctions, and if relevant, civil remedies and housing options to clients.
- Providing information and support in relation to Criminal Injuries Compensation.
- Where relevant (e.g. domestic violence cases), keep other agencies informed about important changes in client's situation.
- Ensure child protection and vulnerable adult policies and procedures are followed at all times.

If a client reports to the police:

- Support client through the criminal justice system, explaining the procedures and their role and rights within the system in a manner that is understood by the client
- Subject to local arrangements and the views of the client, support the client in the witness statement and during the trial phase in conjunction with Witness Services.
- Liaise with the police and CPS on behalf of the client, with the client's consent and adhering to confidentiality policy in relation to release of information. If local protocols can be agreed, keep the victim informed about case progress on behalf of the police in line with the requirements of the Victims Code of Practice.
- To participate in case conferences with the police, CPS and prosecuting barrister.
- To understand the need for some clients accessing special measures.

General duties

- Manage a caseload and maintain necessary case files and records including using OASIS database to report all support activity and monitoring information as required
- Evaluate the impact of the support on increased reporting and repeat victimisation on a regular basis, using a variety of methods
- Follow procedures and protocols with other services so that the safety of the clients is kept central to any process
- Note and feed back to other agencies any consistent difficulties clients are having in accessing their service and refer difficult cases as appropriate to manager and contribute to efforts to improve procedures and services.
- Contribute to the development of service policies, protocols, guidelines and strategies within area of practice as necessary

- To develop and maintain effective communication systems with key partners including the police, CPS, court service, social services, education, primary care trust (mental and sexual health) Victim Support, Witness Service, voluntary sector organizations, CAFCASS.
- To attend regular line management with the team leader, participate in team meetings and peer review
- To provide specialist advice to other workers and agencies, including participation in delivery of generic and specialist training sessions
- To be fully aware of resources available regarding interpreters, signers, etc
- Understand the legal framework relating to the protection of children including the policy and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Refer on and arrange meetings with other agencies/services as necessary, for instance, solicitors, Citizens Advice Bureau, etc.
- To support, promote and work in accordance with Freeva's aims and objectives
- To promote and develop the service in accordance with Freeva's policies, procedures and ethos and to liaise with other agencies as appropriate.
- Attend FreeVA meetings as appropriate.
- To undertake any other duties as may be required by the Board of Trustees from time to time, but which will be consistent with the role.
- Be committed to personal and professional development and undertake relevant training as appropriate.

Person Specification

Area	Criteria	Assessed by
Qualifications	<p>Essential A degree or recognised professional qualification in a related field (or alternatively a minimum of 3 years' experience of working within the sexual violence or a related field).</p> <p>Desirable Recognised Accredited ISVA-Qualification or equivalent professional qualification</p>	Application
Work Experience / Knowledge	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the dynamics of sexual violence, including knowledge of impact of sexual violence on victims and children and of current legislation and good practice. • A minimum of two-year work experience in the field of working with victims of sexual violence or related field. • Understanding of safeguarding protocols including child protection issues and legal responsibilities. • Experience of monitoring and evaluation. • Understanding of the Criminal and Civil Justice System and the agencies involved • Experience of working within multi-agency networks and settings • Able to deliver training <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the Victims Code of Practice • Knowledge of SDVC • Knowledge of benefits and housing/homelessness issues. • Experience of working within drugs, alcohol, mental health and immigration issues. • Has 1 years' experience of working with children and young people in the context of sexual violence 	Application Interview Presentation

