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**Essex Citizens Advice Macmillan Welfare Benefits Service**

**Welfare Benefits Caseworker**

**Salary:** Circa £27,000 gross per annum (actual salary will be determined by employing Local Citizens Advice Office but is expected to be in this region)

As part of our commitment to being a flexible employer, applications are welcomed from candidates who can offer either full time 37 hours a week or part time with a minimum of 18.5 hours may be available – please state on your application form your preference.

Whilst employed by Uttlesford Citizen Advice, post holders will be part of the wider team of Macmillan funded caseworkers.

**Responsible to:** CEO, Uttlesford Citizens Advice

**Location**: “Place of Work” will be defined as the HQ of the employing Local Citizens Advice – a mixed model of home/office working is expected to apply.

**Travel:** Subject to local travel expenses policies, postholders will be expected to undertake home visits and provide services in hospitals or other health settings.

**Job Description:** This post is to support the start-up, development and delivery of a new pan county service (also covering Southend and Thurrock) to provide intensive, expert, welfare benefit advice and casework to clients diagnosed with cancer and their immediate families. Posts are funded by Macmillan Cancer Support until at least March 2025.

**For further information please contact:**

Kate Robson

CEO, Uttlesford Citizens Advice

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**Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. Advice and casework

* Provide a full casework service in welfare benefits with a particular responsibility for supporting people affected by cancer.
* Deliver the service by a range of methods as required including telephone/digital channels, appointments, outreach work and home visits.
* Act for clients where necessary by calculating entitlement, completing forms, negotiating with third parties, drafting or writing letters as appropriate.
* Assist clients with other related problems particularly employment, housing and debt related issues where they are an integral part of the case.
* Refer to other advisers as appropriate.
* Prepare and present cases to statutory bodies, tribunals and courts as required.
* Contribute to a rota (drawn from the wider Macmillan Welfare Benefits advice team) for the provision of telephone advice and support on a countywide based.
* Maintain standards of service delivery and ensure that all advice and casework conforms to the Citizens Advice membership requirements and the Advice Quality Standard.
* Maintain case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring, report preparation and quality checking.
* Ensure that all work conforms to the organisation's systems, policies and procedures.
* Comply with the systems for monitoring and reporting on client satisfaction and the outcomes of advice.
* Work in partnership with colleagues to ensure that the service meets key performance indicators and/or targets agreed with funders.
* Assist in the smooth running of the wider countywide team and the host organisation.

2. Research and campaigns

* Keep up to date with current research and campaigns issues.
* Participate in research and campaigns activity by providing information about clients' circumstances and taking action on behalf of clients.

3. Learning and development

* Provide mentoring and support to staff and volunteers delivering welfare benefits advice and undertaking form filling to increase knowledge and develop capacity.
* Read relevant publications to maintain knowledge and expertise
* Keep up to date with legislation, case law, policies and procedures and undertake training appropriate to the role.
* Identify own learning and development needs and undertake training appropriate to the role and training required by the funder.

4. Other duties

* Uphold the aims, policies and membership requirements of the Citizens Advice service and demonstrate a strong commitment to equality and diversity principles.
* Work cooperatively with colleagues to encourage good teamwork across the organisation.
* Develop and maintain links with statutory and non-statutory agencies and promote the work of the organisation in a positive and constructive way.
* Prepare for and attend relevant supervision sessions / staff meetings / trustee board meetings as required.
* Comply with all monitoring and reporting requirements and provide progress reports for managers, the trustee board, Citizens Advice and funders as required.
* Adhere to the organisation’s information assurance policies and procedures and report any breaches or incidents of non-compliance.
* Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for own safety and that of colleagues.
* Undertake any other duties that are consistent with the level of the post and ensure the effective delivery and development of the organisation’s services

**Person Specification**

1. An understanding of and commitment to the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service including a strong commitment to equality and diversity.

2. The Citizens Advice Certificate in Generalist Advice or an ability and willingness to achieve this qualification.

3. Testable knowledge of Welfare Benefits, with a focus on those affected by cancer, ideally obtained within a not-for-profit advice setting.

4. Recent experience of providing outcomes driven welfare benefits casework to the Advice Quality Standard or the ability and willingness to undergo intensive training to provide this.

5. A good understanding of the skills and techniques used in interviewing clients through a range of channels including telephone, digital and face-to-face.

6. The emotional resilience necessary to work empathetically and professionally to support people affected by cancer.

7. The ability to monitor and maintain own standards, prioritise work and meet deadlines and targets.

8. An organised approach to work and the ability and willingness to follow set procedures concerning casework and file management.

9. Good numeracy skills and the ability to check benefit calculations, prepare budgets and financial statements and understand statistics.

10. The ability to analyse and interpret complex information and to communicate effectively in writing with particular emphasis on negotiation and representation skills and on preparing letters and reports.

10 Good oral communication skills and the ability to communicate well with a wide cross section of people including members of the public, statutory and non-statutory agencies.

11. The ability to work flexibly with a variety of individuals and organisations and to earn and maintain the trust of those people with whom the organisation works.

12. The ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively and a willingness to challenge constructively.

13. A flexible approach and the ability to work as part of a small County-wide team.

14. A commitment to continuing professional development including a willingness to develop knowledge and skills.

15. Good ICT skills and the ability to ensure the best use of IT systems and packages in the provision of advice services.

16. The regular use of a car for work purposes including outreach and home-visiting or otherwise able to meet the mobility requirements of the role.