

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	HARP Connect worker
Directorate:	Rough Sleepers, Ex-Offenders and Migrants
Location:	North East London, South East, South West, North West
Reporting to:	Manager, HARP- Offender Services
Responsible for:	N/A

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

A pan-London Housing Advice, Resettlement and Prevention Connect Service (HARP Connect). A through the gate service working with ex-offenders who are at risk of homelessness or are NFA on release from Prisons across London.

The HARP Connect Worker is an integral part of a team, supporting and enabling client by providing housing advice and support with housing related issues, finding accommodation, setting up tenancies, addressing issues that impact housing, working alongside volunteers to provide ongoing tenancy sustainment, putting relevant support in place, advocacy, and access to training and employment opportunities.

You will work with volunteers to provide maintain a helpline and support to service users to become active members in the community by supporting clients with mental health issues, Physical health, substance misuse, family breakdown and various benefits issues. (All HARP Connect staff will be allocated a Region which includes Prisons, CRC's, GP's and a local authorities) You will be expected to build, develop and maintain links with key stakeholders within Local Authorities as identified by London Councils

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide advice and guidance in a prison setting
- Develop an individual plan of support with the service users, which will enable them to address housing issues, sustain their tenancies, to use their time in meaningful occupation, and to support them to engage with other services such as probation or treatment.
- Working closely with Prison, Probation, CRC and Local Authority teams as identified by London Councils and support service users for up to 2 years dependant on the varying needs
- Carrying out a comprehensive assessment of needs and strengths with the client and other agencies involved in their care, creating an in-depth action plan of support and intervention personalised to address their housing needs and any other issues that contribute to homelessness and offending behaviour
- Provision of housing support and advice to clients that meet the criteria, referred in custody and through CRC and Probation including interventions aimed at preserving existing tenancies or referral into suitable accommodation according to the targets set

- Address accommodation issues by seeking solutions to homelessness by using all resources available. Workers will be targeted against the following outcomes – PRS, return to family, placement in suitable accommodation
- Provision of benefits advice, income maximisation and assistance with claiming benefits to prevent the loss of existing tenancies, debt, budget advice and encourage the use of recreational, educational, and vocational facilities
- Ensure the effective use of needs and risk assessment, support and safety planning tools are utilised when engaging clients in the community.
- Working alongside volunteers providing advice and guidance to help support their professional development
- Working with volunteers, support them to deliver a tenancy sustainment helpline
- Providing links to specialist services including St Mungo's services such as; Lifeworks psychotherapy service; children and families reconnection service; Routes Home and Street Legal expert services for people with no recourse to public funds; specialist housing such as LGBTQ* Housing, housing schemes for Muslim men and women; and welfare/benefit advice service.
- Liaison with housing providers including local authorities central referral systems, Housing Options Team's and with prisoners existing support network e.g. outreach teams, RaPT Teams, CPN's, Social Services; where that exists.
- To liaise with staff from all departments within the prison / probation office and to fully cooperate with prison / probation security requirements in all the establishments
- To liaise with all Criminal Justice System key agencies, mental health teams, drug and alcohol teams and other specialist services across London
- Staff will be allocated a regions/ prisons however, restructure of area and allocated prisons may change according to service requirements.
- To liaise with P2, ensuring service delivery is offered to their clients
- To ensure service users are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities
- To undertake staff supervision as necessary
- Ability to provide case studies and produce statistics on a monthly/ quarterly basis
- To provide evidence as and when required
- To represent the organisation at all times
- To adhere to the organisations code of conduct

POST RELEASE/ IN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Administrative

- Recording data on Opal and clients files in a way that facilitates abstraction for statistical purposes
- Providing follow up support in addressing the action plan drawn up and agreed whilst in custody
- Appropriate use of P-Nomis/ Delius when required
- Completion of monthly and quarterly STATs, weekly completion of housing keeping duties relation to Cascade.

Community

- Adhere to policies and procedures in respect of Risk Assessment and Lone working, and maintain professional boundaries.
- Adhere to Prison/CRC Policies & Procedures and safety requirements at all times.
- Contribute to innovations/ development projects in relation to ex-offenders HARP Connect contract including the development of Service user involvement.

GENERAL

- Adhere to St Mungo's Policies and Procedures at all times.
- Cover for other members of the team and division as necessary.
- Being proactive in reviewing and evaluating own performance and identifying and acting upon areas for improvement and development.
- Undertaking, as required, any other duties compatible with the level and nature of the post and/or reasonably required by more senior members of staff.
- Attend and participate in training, team meetings, and other meetings as required.

This job description covers the current range of duties and will be reviewed from time to time. It is St Mungo's aim to reach agreement on changes, but if agreement is not possible, St Mungo's reserves the right to change this job description.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

HARP Connect worker

Although we are keeping direct experience/knowledge requirements to a minimum, we do need you to use the application form or covering letter to demonstrate your capabilities, in relation to each point listed under essential requirements in the person specification. Where relevant use your answers to illustrate how your competences have helped you achieve positive results.

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

Experience

1. Experience of working with clients who are ex-offenders or have been involved in the criminal justice system
2. Experience of working as a floating support worker (lone working), community support or social work position.

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

3. Knowledge of the Criminal Justice System, confidentiality issues, resettlement and tenancy rescue
4. Knowledge of the welfare benefit system, employment opportunities, training, finance and debt management
5. Knowledge of housing options and housing legislation including accessing private rented accommodation.
6. Ability to demonstrate understanding of data protection issues relating to ex-offenders
7. Ability to work using own initiative, as part of a team and under pressure to meet required deadlines
8. Ability to manage a full and varied workload effectively, remain calm under pressure and find creative solutions to problems
9. Ability to communicate effectively, in writing (including letters) and verbally, with clients, team members, internal colleagues, other agencies and services
10. Good computer literacy skills, and a willingness and ability to learn to new I.T systems.

The following are required of all roles with St Mungo's. However, you do not need to address these in your application.

- Genuine interest in and commitment to St Mungo's work and client group.
- An understanding of and commitment to diversity & equality
- Willingness and ability to work hours outside of normal office hours on occasion (time off in lieu will be granted).
- Willingness to work flexibly in response to changing organisational requirements.

In the selection and interview process, we will be assessing candidates against the following competencies:

COMPETENCY	PRIMARY INDICATORS
Improving and Innovating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is client and customer focused <input type="checkbox"/> Is open to new ideas, improvement and change <input type="checkbox"/> Handles situations and problems with innovation and creativity <input type="checkbox"/> Shows commercial and financial awareness
Interacting and Influencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Takes responsibility and demonstrates values-driven leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Shows self-awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Works well with other people <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborates and networks effectively internally and externally <input type="checkbox"/> Shows sound communication and influencing skills
Understanding and Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Able to find and analyse relevant written and numerical information and use it to make sound judgements <input type="checkbox"/> Able to think strategically <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates the necessary technical skills and aptitudes at the level that are required for the role <input type="checkbox"/> Has good writing skills at the level required for the job <input type="checkbox"/> Plans, organises and manages time well <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates compliance and accountability
Involving and Including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Builds client/stakeholder involvement into all activities <input type="checkbox"/> Aware of own level of cultural competence and proactively seeks to develop <input type="checkbox"/> Actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion among colleagues and clients.
Managing and Empowering (for managers only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Builds a high performing team <input type="checkbox"/> Provides staff with clear direction and support <input type="checkbox"/> Motivates, supports, enables and promotes the wellbeing of their team <input type="checkbox"/> Manages the operational aspects of their function efficiently <input type="checkbox"/> Implements plans, strategies and services effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Actively contributes to service growth