



Job Description

Job title: Policy and Research Officer (Scottish Community Link Worker Network)

Reporting to: Network Development Coordinator (Scottish Community Link Worker Network)

Salary: £16,800 (equivalent to £28,000 full-time)

Hours: 21 per week

Flexible location: 18 York Place, Edinburgh EH1 3EP and/or home working (to be agreed with the successful applicant).

Benefits: 15 days annual leave, 6 public holidays and floating days, 6% pension contribution, death in service insurance.

Contract: 12 months initially, with potentially a further 12 to 24 months, subject to funding.

Secondment possibility: VHS is open to offering this post on a secondment basis.

Who we are

VHS is the national voice, intermediary and network for voluntary health organisations in Scotland. We work with our members and others to address health inequalities and to create better health and wellbeing for people and communities. Our purpose is to create a healthier, fairer Scotland served by a thriving voluntary health sector. We are a registered Scottish charity and a company limited by guarantee, governed by our Board of Trustees/Directors.

The Scottish Community Link Worker Network

Since April 2021, VHS has been funded by Scottish Government's Primary Care Directorate to support the establishment of the Scottish Community Link Worker Network, which is a national network for primary care community link working in Scotland. The Network's aim is to create a space for community link workers in primary care settings in Scotland to come together to share learning and to develop, network and support each other in order to improve outcomes for their patients and communities. The network has a number of key objectives:

- Provide a forum to enable peer-to-peer support for primary care community link working across Scotland
- Raise awareness of the community link worker role in tackling health inequalities
- Strengthen the contribution of community link workers to primary care teams and enable greater understanding of community link working within primary care settings
- Identify and maximise training, learning and development opportunities to professionalise the community link worker role

- Provide a collective voice to influence policy regarding community link working

The Network is supported by an advisory group of CLW Programme Leads from NHS Boards and Scottish Government and a working group of Community Link Workers.

Purpose of role

The Policy and Research Officer is a new role, designed to further develop and strengthen the profile, capacity, impact and influence of the Scottish Community Link Worker Network. The role will champion the community link worker agenda at a national level and be a resource that supports and enables the Network to engage with policy opportunities.

Key results areas

1. Identify and maintain awareness of current and future developments in policy and practice, and assess the relevance for community link workers (including mental health link workers) and for their work with patients, primary care and their community.
2. Gather and communicate evidence, expertise and perspectives to the development of national policy. Develop and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament.
3. Prepare and submit consultation responses and parliamentary evidence, and contribute to policy working/advisory groups.
4. Support the Scottish Community Link Worker Network to identify shared strategic policy and practice priorities for research, evaluation, evidence gathering and data collection relevant to link working.
5. Carry out small research projects directly and/or commission research.
6. Contribute to external stakeholders' research projects, for example as co-investigator or research steering group member.
7. Actively engage the Scottish Community Link Worker Network in relevant policy and public affairs work, using a wide range of communication methods, including face to face, written and digital.
8. Produce high quality reports, infographics and summaries for partner and public consumption on policy and practice developments relevant to link working
9. Take responsibility for administration of own work and communications, including electronic filing, data input to Salesforce (VHS relationship management system), and posting content to website and social media.
10. Be actively committed to your own development and learning. Contribute constructively at your support and appraisal meetings.
11. Be a collaborative, supportive and flexible team player. Carry out other tasks and duties as required.

Key Relationships

- VHS Network Development Coordinator (Scottish Community Link Worker Network)
- VHS Policy Engagement Lead
- VHS Events and Engagement Lead
- VHS Chief Executive
- Scottish Community Link Worker Network and in particular the Network's Working Group of CLWs

Other key stakeholders include

- Scottish Government Primary Care Directorate

- Relevant Scottish Parliamentary Committees including:
 - Health, Social Care and Sport
 - Covid 19 Recovery
 - Social Justice and Social Security
- Relevant Cross Party Groups

Person Specification

This post requires the following experience, competences and knowledge:

1. Educated to degree level, or an equivalent level of experience
2. Direct experience in designing and conducting research projects
3. An understanding of the Scottish policy landscape
4. Excellent interpersonal skills: able to communicate effectively (face to face as well as electronically) with a wide range of stakeholders, to build positive working relationships and to achieve positive results through other people
5. A good team player: able and willing to work collaboratively, flexibly and responsively in a fast paced working environment
6. High degree of self-motivation: ability to take the initiative, to prioritise and manage own workload and to learn fast
7. Ability to stay calm under pressure, work to tight deadlines and find flexible solutions to problems
8. Conscientious and committed to producing accurate work and high quality services at all times
9. Able to write high quality material that communicates content/ideas clearly and compellingly
10. Competence and confidence in using IT applications, including Microsoft programmes, digital and social media
11. Numerate: able to gather, analyse and use data

Experience and knowledge in the following areas would be an advantage:

1. Knowledge and understanding of community link working and/or primary care.
2. Knowledge and understanding of current health and social care issues in Scotland.
3. Knowledge of formal research and evaluation methodologies.

Closing date for applications: 9.00 am on Monday 6th June 2022. Shortlisted applicants will be notified by Monday 20th June 2022.

Interviews will be held in person at 18 York Place, Edinburgh on Wednesday 6th July 2022.