Job Title: **Patient Support Worker**

Responsible to: **Head of Operations**

Salary: **£24,231 - £30,619 per annum, pro rata**

Hours: **Part-time, 18 hours per week, six hours per day. Three days per week. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.**

Location: **St John’s Hospital, Livingston.**

 **Occasional travel to Visibility Scotland headquarters at 2 Queen’s Crescent Glasgow.**

Contract: **Fixed term until 31 March 2024. Contract extension possibly available.**

# Job description

Visibility Scotland’s Patient Support Service provides a critical service to anyone affected by sight loss. As part of a holistic team, and managed by the Head of Operations, the Patient Support Worker will be based in St John’s Hospital, Eye Department.

The Patient Support Worker will link closely with Visibility Scotland’s West Lothian Sensory Loss Services, which include rehabilitation and habilitation.

The post-holder will be responsible for providing patient-centred support to patients, family members and caregivers attending the Eye Department.

The post-holder will provide emotional support, information, and practical advice to patients experiencing significant sight loss. This advice is extended to the patient’s support network and NHS staff. As and when required, the Patient Support Worker will introduce visual strategies and aids to help patients maximise their remaining vision and build their independence and sense of wellbeing.

Those accessing the Patient Support Service will be signposted to other services and opportunities as appropriate. A key element of this work is building strong working relationships with all eye department staff to encourage referrals, thereby supporting those seen in the hospital setting with direct and seamless access to a wide range of statutory and community-based support.

The post-holder will be technology aware and or willing to learn about assistive and accessible technology. The post-holder will organise and deliver informative peer support courses that facilitate and nurture group learning.

## What kind of person should a Patient Support Worker be?

Due to the nature of this post, the Patient Support Worker will be approachable, engaging and confident in dealing with emerging situations.

They will meet patients, families and carers at a time when they are likely to be distressed, upset and often angry and as such, the Patient Support Worker needs to be empathetic and very skilled at listening in an open, non-judgmental way. The ability to build a rapport with patients and professionals is key to the role, as is the skill of encouraging people to talk about their concerns.

The current team of Patient Support Workers have a range of different backgrounds. They are all excellent communicators who have significant experience in providing one-to-one support to people facing emotional and practical difficulties due to sight loss.

The Patient Support Worker will be a confident and resilient individual. They need to be flexible and adaptable in dealing with a drop-in service's unknown and changing environment and operating in varying locations and settings. They need to be able to work alone, on their own initiative, and able to balance work priorities. Patient Support is a fast-paced environment.

The post holder will raise awareness of the service through open days, speaking at events and training is an important part of the role, as is the ability to build strong working relationships with health and social care staff.

## Specific Duties & Responsibilities

* To actively listen and offer support to people attending hospital eye departments, both face to face and over the telephone.
* To provide emotional support, impartial information, guidance and practical support to people of all ages, their families and carers to help them with any difficulties that may arise following the diagnosis of an eye condition.
* To ensure all referrals to the Patient Support Service are dealt with in a timely and effective manner.
* To act as a contact person to whom people can return for advice or help to facilitate onward referrals to services and support.
* To establish and maintain robust referral mechanisms to and from the service across statutory and voluntary agencies.
* To build good working relationships with hospital staff, social work staff and other appropriate agencies.
* To act as a key point of information and advisory link in the certification and registration process for blind and partially sighted people.
* To promote falls prevention with patients, families and carers.
* To take an active role in engagement and consultation to evaluate and improve service provision.
* To travel between hospital sites to provide cover for planned and unplanned PSW absences as required.
* To promote the benefits of the Patient Support Service to health and social care professionals through feedback, presentations, talks and networking events.
* To attend relevant steering groups and forums.
* To proactively promote Visibility Scotland services to a wide range of agencies and organisations to foster good relationships and develop new partnerships.
* To promote and deliver training courses for health professionals and other agencies.
* To promote, organise and deliver the Positive Outlook course (self management course) for patients, families and carers.
* To demonstrate assistive technology and accessibility features on handheld devices.
* To maintain patient records by following organisational processes and Data Protection rules.
* To participate in team meetings, actively communicate and share information with all colleagues.
* To provide regular reports and statistics as required by the management team.
* To research, maintain and update information to ensure accuracy
* Produce accessible information at all times.
* To provide energy efficiency information to patients who present at risk of fuel poverty.
* To undertake and complete annual training.

Any other task which may be reasonably requested of the post.

## Person specification

### Professional skills

#### Essential

Evidence of continued professional development.

#### Desirable

Qualified to Degree Level/SVQ Level 3 or 4.

Qualification in rehabilitation / Nursing/ OT/ Optometry/ Health and Social care/ Counselling.

### Experience & knowledge

#### Essential

Significant experience in 1:1 working.

#### Desirable

Experience and knowledge in health and social care.

Experience and knowledge in the field of eye health.

Experience in supporting people with specific vulnerabilities.

Undertaken adult and children protection training.

### Communication skills

#### Essential

A high degree of written and verbal skills.

Ability to influence and motivate professionals.

Ability to communicate well with a wide range of people.

Good presentation/public speaking skills.

Ability to network and build links with other organisations.

Ability to work independently on own initiative.

Ability to work in a team.

### Other skills and abilities

#### Essential

Good organisational skills with the ability to meet deadlines and prioritise work and input to project reporting.

A skilled empathetic and non-judgmental approach.

Self-motivated and strong problem-solving skills.

IT literate and competent in the use of Microsoft Office and databases.

Experience in networking with professionals and raising awareness of services.

#### Desirable

Experience in data capture and evaluation techniques.

### Personal qualities

#### Essential

Enthusiasm and ‘can do’ attitude.

The ability to seize opportunities, be flexible, adaptable and think creatively.

Drive and positivity.

## Additional information

* Annual leave entitlement: 25 days annual leave and 12 days public holidays
* Pension: Visibility Scotland employees are automatically entered into The Pensions Trust pension scheme which is a contributory scheme after 3 months in post.
* References: This appointment is subject to satisfactory references.
* PVG/Disclosure: This post is subject to a standard disclosure under the Police Act 1997 (Part V).
* Probationary procedures: This post is subject to a 6-month probationary period.
* Equal Opportunities:  Visibility Scotland is committed to Equal Opportunities and values a diverse workforce. We welcome applications from all candidates whatever their age, race, nationality, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.

### Application Notes:

Please complete the attached application form and equality monitoring form. CVs will not be accepted. The closing date is **Friday 28 July at noon**. Application forms can be emailed to paul.hanlon@visibilityscotland.org.uk or posted to us at 2 Queen’s Crescent, Glasgow, G4 9BW.

**Interviews are scheduled for Tuesday 1 August 2023. Interviews will be held at Visibility Scotland’s headquarters, 2 Queen’s Crescent, Glasgow G4 9BW.**

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