Job Title: **Patient Support Worker**

Responsible to: **Head of Operations**

Salary: **£24,958 - £31,538 per annum**

Hours: **Full time (35 hours per week)**

Location: **Base within Edinburgh Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion**

Contract: **Fixed-term 31 March 2025 (with possible extension for a further year).**

# Job description

Visibility Scotland’s Patient Support Service provides a critical service to anyone affected by visual impairment. The Patient Support Worker will be based at Edinburgh’s Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion. Patient Support is often described as the bridge from clinic to community, and although the service is based in a clinical hospital setting, the role is holistic. At Visibility Scotland, we endorse the ‘can do’ attitude.

A Patient Support Worker provides emotional support, information and practical advice, but, most importantly, listens and responds. The post-holder will be responsible for providing patient-centred support to patients, family members, and carers (of all ages) attending or being referred the Eye Departments across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

The Patient Support Worker will introduce visual strategies and aids as and when required to help patients maximise their remaining vision and build their independence and sense of well-being.

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 to access a wide range of statutory and community-based support.

The post-holder will be technology-aware and willing to learn about assistive and accessible technology. In addition, 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.

The Patient Support Worker will often meet patients, families, and carers during challenging times when they may be distressed, upset, or even angry. However, this role also offers the rewarding opportunity to provide warmth, empathy, and skilled listening in an open, non-judgemental way, making a significant positive impact on their lives.

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.

Our Patient Support Workers come from a range of different backgrounds. They are all excellent communicators with 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 the unknown and changing environment of a drop-in service and operating in varying locations and different settings. They need to be able to work alone, on their own initiative, and able to balance work priorities.

Raising 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.

Good organisational skills and the ability to manage caseload administration are vital to this role.

## Specific Duties & Responsibilities

### Patient Contact

* 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 promote falls prevention with patients, families and carers.

### Administration

* 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 act as a key point of information and advisory link in the certification and registration process for blind and partially sighted people.
* To maintain patient records by following organisational processes and Data Protection rules.
* To provide regular reports and statistics as required by the management team.
* To research, maintain and update information to ensure accuracy.
* To provide information in an accessible format.

### Team and partnership working

* To build good working relationships with hospital staff, social work staff and other appropriate agencies.
* To establish and maintain robust referral mechanisms to and from the service across statutory and voluntary agencies.
* 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 patient support worker 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 participate in team meetings, actively communicate and share information with all colleagues.

### Training delivery

* To promote and deliver training courses for health professionals and other agencies.
* To promote, organise and deliver the Positive Outlook course for patients, families and carers.
* To demonstrate assistive technology and accessibility features on handheld devices.
* To undertake and complete yearly safeguarding and first aid 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 work.

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.

## How to apply

Please complete the attached application form and equality monitoring form. CVs will not be accepted. The closing date is **Sunday, 19 May**.

Please email your application and equal opportunities forms to paul.hanlon@visibilityscotland.org.uk or posted to us at 2 Queen’s Crescent, Glasgow, G4 9BW.

Interviews are scheduled for the **week beginning 27 May**.

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