FALKIRK COUNCIL

Post: Support Worker

Service: Adult Services

Section: Dollar Park Dementia Service

Location: All areas

Proposed Grade: D

RESPONSIBLE TO:

Senior Project Worker/Team Manager.

JOB PURPOSE

Support Workers will be an essential part of the DPDS Team whose purpose will be to enable people with dementia to live in their own homes for as long as possible with the best possible quality of life. They will provide practical help, supervision and support in the home or other settings ie groups. The tasks undertaken will be dependent on the needs of the individual client.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To work with the person with dementia in the home, or other settings ie groups , to help and encourage them to practise and maintain their existing skills and interest by providing mental stimulus and practical assistance.

2. To provide care and support in accordance with an individual care programme which will take account of the person's personal, family and social history, values and beliefs, likes and dislikes, interest and hobbies, habits and patterns of daily living. Care includes such tasks as:- helping to dress/undress, assistance with toileting, helping to wash, assistance to bed etc.

3. To implement a planned programme of daily activities which will address specific needs, and identify and maximise the potential of the person being cared for while respecting their dignity and wishes.

4. To provide emotional support by listening to and communicating with the person, trying to understand their feelings, learning about their experiences and valuing them as individuals.

5. Where appropriate, to provide a respite for carers.

6. To report back to the Senior Project Worker/Team Manager any changes in circumstances affecting service users.

7. To liaise with other professional workers and carers involved in the care of individuals.

8. To undertake appropriate training.

9. To complete such administrative procedures as are required.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Support Workers are accountable for:

1. Carrying out specific work instructions as issued by the Senior Project Worker/Team Manager.

2. Use of discretion as to the manner in which such tasks are undertaken and consultation with service users as to the timing of these.

3. Advice to service users on Service Policies and Procedures and liaison about service delivery issues with the Senior Project Worker/Team Manager.

4. Maintaining confidentiality concerning service users' affairs.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE

Support Workers should either possess or be capable of developing the following range of knowledge, skills and experience:

1. Support Workers should have a friendly caring disposition, patience and an understanding of the effects of the dementia of individual abilities.

2. Experience of caring in a professional, voluntary or personal capacity would be advantageous.

3. Delivery of Personal Care Services.

4. They will require to be flexible, reliable, trustworthy and adaptable and have the ability to encourage and support service users by learning about their experiences and valuing them as individual people.

5. Good communication skills will be essential, as will the ability to listen to the person and try to understand and help them cope with feelings.

6. An understanding of ageing and disability and their effect on people's lives.

7. Support Workers must also be able and willing to work flexible hours.

DEMANDS

Support Workers must:

1. Be able to identify changes in the service user's circumstance or concerns about these and be able to discuss them with the Senior Project Worker/Team Manager.

2. Be able, in discussion with service users, to plan their work within the hours allocated for their tasks.

3. Be able to respond appropriate to emergency situations and summon assistance.

4. This job requires contact with vulnerable groups therefore you will require to gain/maintain PVG Scheme Membership.

TASKS

The tasks undertaken by the Support Worker and how often they visit will depend on an assessment of need. Based on this assessment an individual care programme is drawn up and this will form the basis of the care provided. As dementia is a progressive condition, needs will change and the Support Worker will have an important role in recognising and drawing attention to the need for consequent changes to the care programme.

The actual tasks will vary but may include:

- Help with personal care and grooming – such as help with dressing, hair etc.
- Supervision and guidance in helping clients to accomplish tasks – such as making a cup of tea or preparing a meal – that would otherwise be difficult, impossible or dangerous for them.
- Accompanying them, for example on a shopping trip or taking them on an outing.
- Providing company, conversation and listening.
- Offering motivation, encouragement and reassurance.
- Allowing them to pursue leisure or recreational activities such as a visit to the theatre or a football match.

Job Description, Support Worker,

COMMUNICATION

1. Support Workers are routinely expected to maintain effective verbal and written communication both internally and externally. The following list is indicative and illustrates the range of types of contact anticipated, although it is not exhaustive:

   Service users – constantly, in person.
   Senior Project Workers/Team Manager – regularly by telephone, in writing and in person.
   Others Carers – regularly by telephone and in person.
   Primary Health Care Team – as required.

2. Support Workers are expected to attend meetings and Case Conferences arranged to discuss the needs of individual service users.

ENVIRONMENT

1. Support Workers may be required to work in disagreeable conditions although not in conditions which are considered to be dangerous or hazardous.

2. Support Workers, by the very nature of their remit, can often work in isolation and in unsupervised settings.

3. Support Workers may be required to work in the evening and weekends in the pursuance of their duties.

Note: Where particular risks are anticipated, a preliminary risk assessment of the working situation will be undertaken. This Job Description may, with appropriate consultation, be subject to amendment in light of operational experience.