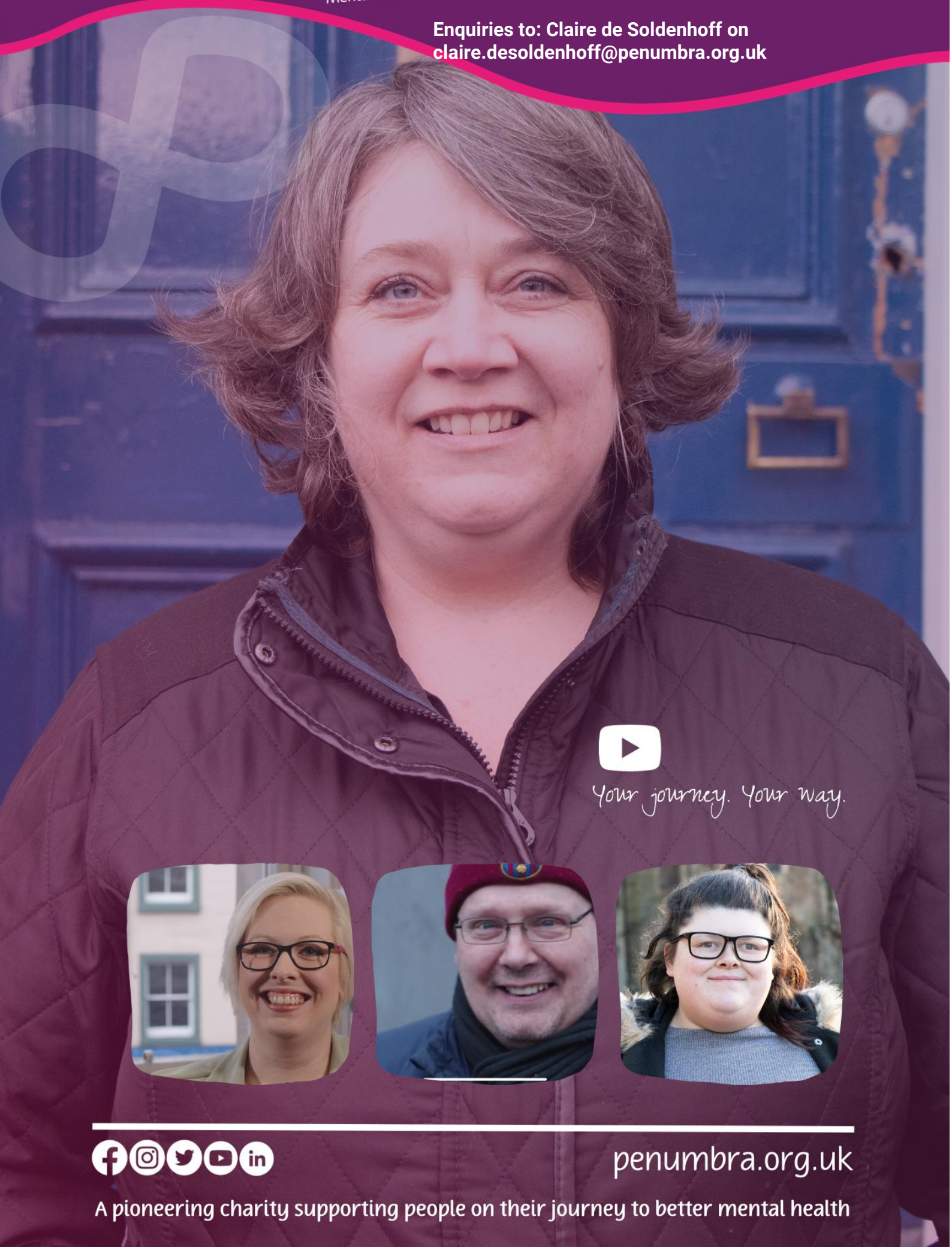
Penumbra
Mental Health

Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner (Peer)

Bipolar Peer Support

Enquiries to: Claire de Soldenhoff on claire.desoldenhoff@penumbra.org.uk



penumbra.org.uk

A pioneering charity supporting people on their journey to better mental health

Our story

We are **Penumbra Mental Health**, a pioneering charity providing dedicated services for people with mild to serious and enduring mental ill health.

We support people on their journey to better mental health, by working with each person to find their own way forward. The power of people's lived experience enables us to deliver pioneering services which transform lives.

From being there for people in crisis to suicide prevention, supported living to self-harm management and peer support. We are with those we support every step of their journey to a better place. People's experiences are at the centre of everything that we do. **We champion peer workers**; they know that recovery is possible, because they've been there too.

Of course, **everyone's journey is different**, so we work with people to identify, believe in, and reach their goals, whatever they may be. Often, it's about hope, but we know that's not always easy for people to hold on to. And so, when times are tough, we hold it for them, keeping it safe - just until the time is right.

You see, Penumbra has always been about people; listening and learning, challenging, encouraging and enabling. It's why we're trusted to provide services across Scotland, supporting thousands of people every month, because when people need us, we're there.

Our vision is that people live with positive mental wellbeing and can easily access the best support when they need it.

Our mission is to provide exceptional mental health and wellbeing support and activities, guided by people's own lived experience, their recovery journeys and their hopes and aspirations.

We live and breathe our values

- Compassion: we will listen and respond with hope, kindness and respect
- Courage: we will do the right thing, standing up got people, their rights, wellbeing and recovery
- Curiosity: we will explore, reflect, learn and adapt to create solutions that are best for people's wellbeing
- Collaboration: we will work with those who share our vision and values

12,649
The number of people we supported in 2022/23

579
Colleagues working across Scotland

26%
Of our colleagues are employed in peer support roles

92%
Of our colleagues feel proud to work for Penumbra

77
Services across

23
Health and Social Care Partnership areas

95%
Of people said that Penumbra had a positive impact on their lives

93%
Of people we asked agreed Penumbra treats people with respect and compassion

92%
Of our partners say our teams recognise equality and diversity

Welcome

Want to spark real change?

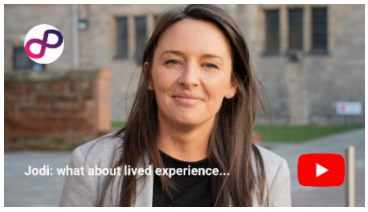
First of all, thank you for being interested in joining the Penumbra Mental Health team. We pride ourselves on being a great place to work where colleagues have space to grow and thrive. And we're always looking for kind people like you who share our values and who want to spark real change.

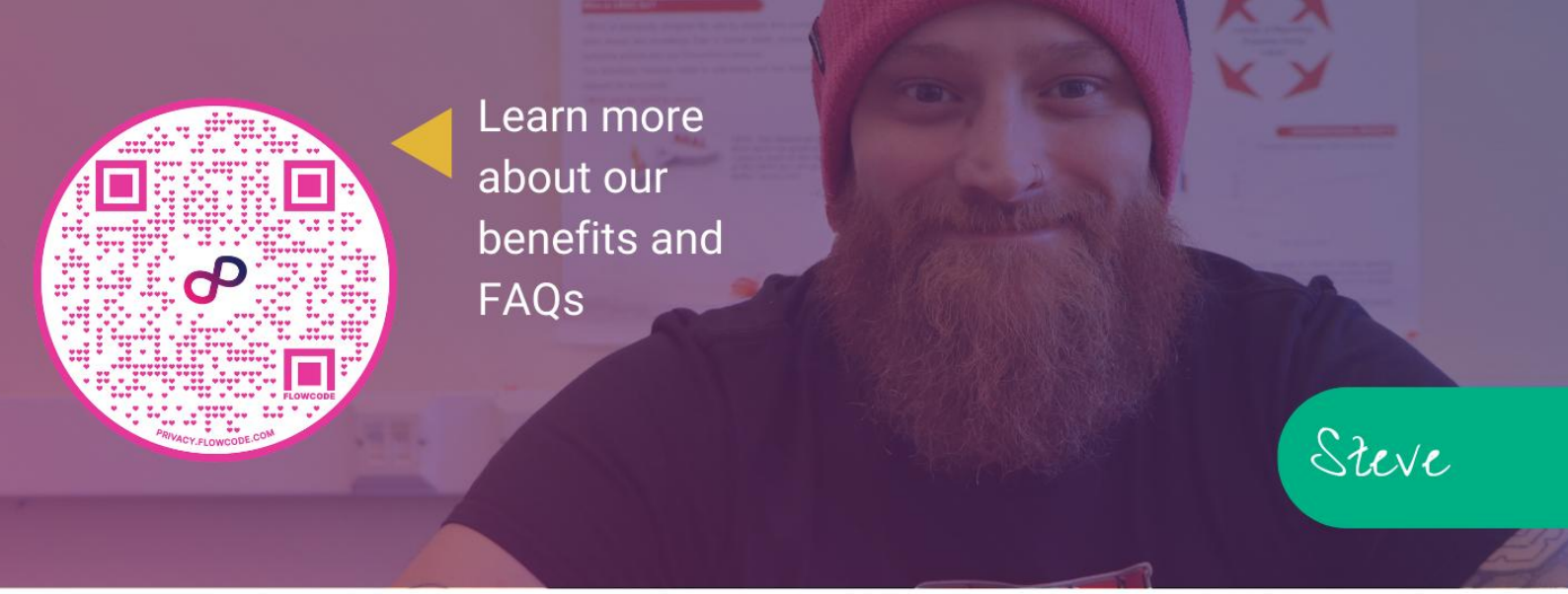
You might already be working in a supporting role and looking to expand your skills into mental health recovery, or you might be looking for a new challenge altogether. Maybe you're looking for a career where you can use your lived and living experience to support others on their journey (did you know 26% of our colleagues are employed in peer roles?).

Whatever your career or life experience, you're in the right place if you want to make a difference and build your working life around meaningful connections with people who will inspire you every single day. Our promise to you? We can offer you a salary above the living wage, a tonne of employee benefits, and space to grow your skills and qualifications in a supportive and creative team. Don't just take our word for it, click on the images below to hear from our colleagues, Jamie, Martin, Nick and Jodi.

We know that applying for a new role can be daunting. That's why we encourage applications from everyone even if you're not sure if you meet all the person specifications. What's important to us are your values, kindness, willingness to learn, and your passion for quality mental health support.

We hope you find everything you need in this application pack. If you have any questions, you might want to check out our careers page where you'll find some FAQs and interview tips.





33 Days of annual leave each year	(increasing by 1 day for every year of service up to 5 years)
45p Mileage payment	(we pay 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles)
£126.75 Sleepover payment	(sleepover payments of £126.75 and time + 1/3 waking nights allowance, as well as double payment over Christmas and New Year)
Fully funded SVQ	(we will fully fund your SVQ and give you paid time to complete assignments)
24/7 Employee Assistance Programme	(with discounts, salary sacrifice, and 24/7 confidential telephone support)
Enhanced leave	(we will give you enhanced leave and pay for family leave and sickness)

Advertisement

Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner **(Peer)**

Location: Edinburgh area

Salary: £24,618 - £25,944 pro rata (£12.62 - £13.30 p/h equivalent)

Part time – Fixed term until 31st March 2026

If you are looking for a rewarding career and to work within an epic team that will help you grow and thrive, then you have come to the right place. Working within our Bipolar Peer Support Service you can start your day knowing what you do really does make a difference!

Are you looking for a new Career?

We have a vacancy for a Peer Practitioner in our Bipolar Peer Support Service and looking to recruit someone with lived/living experience of Mental Ill Health, ideally with a Bipolar diagnosis. This is an opportunity for you to use your lived experience of recovery and self-management to provide Hope and Belief for others, through equal relationships and shared experiences.

This peer role requires someone who is emotionally resilient and would be confident to appropriately share the tools and coping mechanisms that has got them to this point in their journey in being able to support others.

The team is made up of three practitioners, working in Partnership with Bipolar Edinburgh. You would be expected to manage your own caseload, and see approximately 3 people per day for face to face support providing the skills and tools to self-manage in their Bipolar recovery journey.

As a mental health charity, we really value the wellbeing of our staff. That's why we want you to know that you'll be joining a friendly team, who will give you a supportive environment to help you thrive in your role, including all the training you need to feel confident and equipped.

We can offer you a tonne of employee benefits, and we can promise you'll be inspired by some pretty amazing humans every single day. We will support you on your own career path; developing new skills, accessing formal and informal learning experiences, and providing opportunities to put your continual progress into practice.

Job Description

Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner (Peer)

Service:	Bipolar Peer Support Service
Responsible to:	Operations Manager
Salary:	£24,618 - £25,944 pro rata (£12.62 - £13.30 p/h equivalent)
Working hours:	15 per week
Location:	Edinburgh
Closing:	Sunday 5th October at 7pm
Interview:	Thursday 23rd October
Special condition:	Diagnosis of Bipolar, lone working, local travel.

Job summary:

If you're looking to use your lived experience of recovery and work in a rewarding career within an inspirational team that really does make a difference, then this is an exciting opportunity for you to be part of a partnership approach, working alongside Bipolar Edinburgh offering support specifically to people with a diagnosis of Bipolar. In this role, you will work collaboratively with both organisations at various locations, across Edinburgh and the Lothians, providing 1 to 1 support for those affected by Bipolar. Support is to be provided in an appropriate environment where supported people can expect to be treated with respect, be given the time and space to discuss issues at their own pace, to explore skill development and tools to support them to self-manage through using your lived experience.

As a Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner (Peer), you'll make a difference to people's lives every day. Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioners work in small collaborative teams to provide people with recovery focused support to enhance their mental wellbeing.

In line with Penumbra's values, Mental Health & Wellbeing practitioners assist people who use the service to work towards their individual outcomes and identified goals, as identified through their Initial conversation and IROC at the start of support.

We want you to grow and thrive! We will support you on your own career path; developing new skills, accessing formal and informal learning experiences, and providing opportunities to put your continual progress into practice.

As a practitioner you will support people through three stages:

- At times of distress/ when seeking help to improve their mental wellbeing
- Ongoing support for approximately 6 to 12 individual sessions
- Providing a clear and structured ending to support

You will also support Bipolar Edinburgh's facilitators to deliver group work periodically, and be required to develop, build, and maintain professional links in order to deliver outcome focussed support.

Main duties and responsibilities

- To use both Penumbra systems and Bipolar Edinburgh systems electronically
- To monitor enquires and referrals coming into the service and contacting people to explain about what the partnership has to offer.
- To oversee the waiting list
- To have initial 1:1 conversations with people, this is where you can identify support goals with the person and check if the service will be able to meet the persons current needs.
- To work with autonomy and manage your own caseload/diary
- To establish a supportive relationship with each supported person, enabling them to maximise their own resources in order to improve their quality of life. This would also include mutuality, empathy and a focus on the persons strengths
- To use own lived experience to inspire hope in people who use the service.
- To share/teach coping and self-management techniques.
- To be flexible and responsive to meet the changing needs of supported people and the organisation, within the agreed criteria.
- To participate in training activities and meetings as required.
- To be able to take minutes as part of team and partnership meetings
- To be responsible for maintaining the relevant systems of paper-based and electronic documentation.
- To reconnect people to their support network in the community, including Bipolar Edinburgh's self-help groups
- To connect people to positive activities
- To ensure people can access specialist mental health interventions.
- To meet people in community settings
- To model personal responsibility, self-awareness, self-belief, self-advocacy and hopefulness.
- Develop effective relationships with other groups and agencies in your area and take opportunities to promote mental health awareness in the wider community
- Work effectively with other members of the team, and liaise effectively with families, agencies, colleagues, and other stakeholders.

- Uphold Penumbra's Code of Practice, following policy and procedures
- Other duties, deemed appropriate to this grade, as and when required.

Person specification

Qualifications	**Essential** • Good level of educational attainment **Desirable** • Completion of Peer Support Worker Training • Willingness to undertake and complete the PDA in Mental Health Peer Work
Knowledge and Experience	**Essential** • Personal lived experience of mental health recovery (from Bipolar and related issues) • Demonstrate understanding of mental health and recovery, Bipolar and self-management. • To have experience of being in a supportive and enabling role • Understanding of the issues and concerns of people with a diagnosis of Bipolar and also including those people without a formal diagnosis • Understanding of the issues and concerns for people accessing mental health services • **Desirable** • Experience working with a person-centred approach • Experience of working in the mental health field
Core Competency – Working with Others	**Essential** • To work co-operatively and effectively with people who use our services, carers, professionals across the two organisations and all other agencies • Builds co-operative relationships, develops networks and promotes partnership working with other professionals. • Contribute to the service in a positive and solution focused manner • Ability to work in an enabling and creative way
Core Competency – Learn and Apply	**Essential** • Willingness to reflect on work practice and be open to constructive feedback

	• To identify personal development needs through recovery focused supervision facilitated by the line management structure • Demonstrates commitment to keeping own and others knowledge, understanding and skills up to date.
Core Competency – Communication	**Essential** • To be computer / technology literate • Speaks and writes clearly and accurately and ensures the message is understood. • Ability and willingness to share personal story of recovery in a professional manner • Explains clearly and accurately issues, policies, procedures and other pertinent information. • Conveys sensitive or contentious information tactfully.
Core Competency – Managing Self	**Essential** • Is open to change and continually improving practice. • Has the awareness of when to ask for help and has the confidence to do so, where appropriate. • Ability to manage own mental health and wellbeing and to lead by example • Ability to plan and prioritise own workload • Is open to change and continually improving practice • Awareness of self-help and self-management resources and the benefits they can bring to self and others • Sustains effort to overcome obstacles and feelings of frustration, and is able to maintain a positive view • Engages in open and reflective debate and provides constructive comments about proposed changes • Takes responsibility for managing own work life balance
Core Competency – Professionalism	**Essential** • Demonstrate a commitment to Penumbra, Bipolar Edinburgh and partnership principles and values. • Work to policies, procedures and relevant legislation. • Maintain sound ethical and professional standards at all times • Understanding and maintaining professional boundaries at all times

	• Has a clear understanding of confidentiality, disclosing information only to those who have the right and need to know? • Project a positive image of Penumbra and associated partners at all times • Is proactive in identifying areas for improvement and share these with the team. • Manages time effectively to ensure tasks are completed and deadlines are met • Plans ahead for meetings and busy periods • Ensures the delivery of efficient, effective, high quality services.
Role Specific Competency – Supporting People	**Essential** • To work alongside people to encourage and enable them to achieve self-identified goals, to exercise choice and develop greater control in their lives, resulting in increased self-belief and self-esteem • Willingness to train in and use the Hope framework (I.ROC© and the Hope Toolkit) to facilitate a person-centred recovery approach • Support people's rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive • Supports people in line with organisational values, policies and procedures • Understands recovery and works with a recovery focused approach. • Promotes the right to self-determination, while protecting people, as far as possible, from danger or harm • Protects the rights and promotes the interests of people who use the service.

Conditions and Remuneration

Salary Package

£24,618 - £25,944 pro rata (£12.62 - £13.30 p/h equivalent)

Holiday

33 days per annum including public holidays, plus an extra day for each years' service, rising up to 38 days after 5 years' service.

Pension

5% employer pension contribution (salary sacrifice). Also offer auto-enrolment

pension scheme.

Benefits

- Flexible working.
- Cycle to work scheme.
- Confidential Employee Assistance Programme.
- Employee Discount Scheme with Vivup – 100's of lifestyle savings.
- Payroll Pay with Vivup – pay monthly available across a variety of options including home & electronics, discounted gym memberships and more.
- Death in Service benefits – 2x annual salary.
- Full training and professional development.
- Refer a friend scheme – earn up to £400.
- Salary sacrifice pension.
- Additional day of annual leave for each year of service, up to 5 days of annual leave after 5 years of service.

And so much more!

Get in touch

If you'd like an informal chat about this role and working for Penumbra Mental Health, please contact: Claire De Soldenhoff at claire.desoldenhoff@penumbra.org.uk

For more on our who we are visit: penumbra.org.uk

For more opportunities across our teams visit: penumbra.org.uk/careers

Application & Interview Guidance

We know applying for jobs and preparing for interviews can be daunting – but we really want you to enjoy the process. It's a chance for you to showcase all of your skills and learn more about what we do at Penumbra. Everyone is really friendly, and we want your application to be a success!

That's why we have put together these tips, so you know what to include in your application and what to expect at interview.

Penumbra is committed to supporting candidates with disabilities, neurodiverse candidates, and candidates with mental health conditions throughout the recruitment process. We will make any reasonable adjustments required to ensure a fair and inclusive process for all. If you think you require reasonable adjustments, please don't hesitate to contact us at recruitment@penumbra.org.uk.

Application

The application stage allows you tell us about all the great skills and experience you've got to offer, and how they'll help you in the role you have applied for.

In your personal statement, we are looking for the skills outlined in the competencies in the person specification section of this pack. Tell us about a time when you've developed or demonstrated these skills – this could be from your work life or personal life. Using the STAR method outlined below will help to structure your points.

This is also a great opportunity to tell us about your passion for mental health, and remember if you're applying for a peer role, tell us about your lived experience and how you think you could utilise it in the role!

Interview

The interview stage is a chance for us to meet you, and for you to learn more about Penumbra or ask any questions you might have. What will be included in the interview might vary between roles and services (for example, some may include written questions) but this will be explained to you ahead of time.

All of our interviews include competency-based questions. Competency Based questions aim to find out how you have used specific skills in your previous experience and how you approach problems, tasks and challenges.

The competency based questions will be on each of the competencies outlined in the person specification of this pack. We would recommend preparing a few examples of times you have demonstrated each of these competencies in advance. When answering the questions, you should try to stick to the STAR method, outlined below.

STAR Method

The STAR method can be used to structure your answer to the competency-based questions you'll be asked – it helps you to make sure you get all of the important points across. It breaks an answer down into 4 parts:

Situation – What was the situation you had to deal with?
Task – What task were you presented with as a result of the situation?
Action – What action did you take?
Result – What was the result of this action, what did you learn from the result?

Here's an example of the STAR method in use:

Question

Tell me about a time you had to deal with a conflict. How did you handle it?

Answer

Situation I was part of a team where one colleague was regularly late for our scheduled meetings, which was causing a lot of frustration amongst the rest of the team.

Task I knew it was important someone raised the issue with him in order to keep the team working well, so I took responsibility for handling it.

Action At the end of one of our regular meetings, I asked if he had a minute to catch up. I mentioned to him that he seemed stressed, and that he had been late to quite a few of our meetings and explained the impact it was having on the team. I expressed that we all really valued his input at the meetings, and asked if there was anything causing the lateness or if there was anything the team could do to support him. He shared that he was overwhelmed with his workload, and it was impacting his ability to manage his time.

Result By handling this conflict sensitively and in a supportive manner, we were able to identify what was causing the issue, and distribute some of our colleague's extra workload amongst the team. This took the pressure off him and enabled him to manage his time more effectively. This in turn meant the team was able to work together more efficiently and we didn't miss out on anyone's input.