

Recruitment for RVA Social Prescribing Link Workers

Reading Voluntary Action (RVA) is looking to recruit three Link Workers to provide social prescribing support for people in Tilehurst, Whitley and Reading Central.

Reading Voluntary Action and Age UK Berkshire have been delivering social prescribing in Reading for more than 4 years. Social prescribing enables people to take action to improve or sustain their quality of life based on what matters to them and their individual strengths. The Social Prescribers connect people to community groups and agencies for practical and emotional support.

The skill of the Link Worker is to motivate people to take action to improve their mental/physical health and their lives.

This is an exciting opportunity to work in a small supportive team making a big difference to the lives of people in Reading.

We encourage applications from individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, who are currently underrepresented within RVA.

Recruitment timeline

- 25 August 2020 – application process open
- 14 September 2020 – deadline for applications
- 21 September 2020 – interview day

Please specify which neighbourhood you are interested in by using the following codes on the application form:

- For Tilehurst, add code TH.
- For Reading Central, add code RC.
- For Whitley, add code W.
- If no preference, add code NP.

Job Description

Job title:	Link Worker (LW)
Tilehurst LW	27 hours a week
R. Central LW	37 hours a week
Whitley LW	27 hours a week
Flexible hours of work:	Some evening and weekend work may be necessary to carry out the duties of all posts.
Responsible for:	Volunteers when appropriate
Salary:	£28,500/an/pro rata
Annual leave:	25 days/an/pro rata
Work location:	Varied and subject to Covid-19, to include rotating between GP surgeries in the neighbourhood (a consulting room will be provided), the RVA office in Reading Central Library and home working.
Fixed term:	An initial 6-month fixed term contract with possible extension to permanent

Job Purpose

To empower people to take control of their health and wellbeing through social prescribing by giving them time to focus on what matters to them by taking a holistic approach and connecting people to community groups and charities for practical and emotional support.

The Link Worker will work as a key part of the primary care team helping to strengthen community and personal resilience and reduce health and wellbeing inequalities by addressing the wider determinants of health, such as debt, poor housing and physical activity (particularly for people with long-term conditions, including support for anxiety, for people who are lonely or isolated, or have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing).

The role will increase the capacity of the GP practices to meet the non-clinical needs of their patients through increased access to community-based services and peer support groups to:

- Improve their health and wellbeing
- Increase their ability and confidence to self-manage aspects of their lives to have positive impact on their health and wellbeing.
- Reduce their reliance on primary healthcare services.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

To meet people on a one-to-one basis, making home visits when appropriate. Giving people time to tell their stories and focus on what matters to them. Building trust and providing non-judgemental support, respecting diversity and lifestyle choices. Working from a strength-based approach focusing on a person's assets.

Using the 3 conversations model to co-produce a plan, depending on the presenting circumstances of the patient.

- **Conversation 1:** Developing a plan together, based on individual strengths and community resources.
- **Conversation 2:** Developing a plan to address immediate risk and to help the service user make changes to be safe and regain control of their life.
- **Conversation 3:** Supporting the service user to access long term support.

Working together with RVA colleagues and all local partners to ensure that local voluntary and community sector organisations are sustainable and providing support to set up new community and peer support groups where gaps are identified.

Information and Communication

- The Link Worker will carry out guided conversations/face-to-face assessments to establish what matters to the service user and co-produce a personalised care plan for each individual, to help them better manage their lifestyle and health conditions process allocated referrals in a timely and efficient manner.
- Support and motivate individuals to achieve their goals (as identified through the guided conversation) and to support them to develop self-management strategies.

- To signpost and engage people with appropriate services as required.
- To attend practice/PCN/locality level multi-disciplinary team meetings (along with other practice/locality level meetings as agreed).
- To liaise with multi-disciplinary professionals involved with the service user's care and support.
- To work with the RVA Information and Communication Officer to produce guides to 'what's on' in the neighbourhood and the Community News.

Planning and Organisation

- To self-manage workload and working times in accordance with the needs of service users, GP practices and SP service.
- To maintain google calendar with all activity such as visits, meetings, training.

Recording and Monitoring

- To accurately record all relevant information on NHS GP Clinical IT systems and other systems as required in a timely manner.
- To keep all records up to date to allow the production of accurate reports and management information for submission to NHS commissioners for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- To ensure all standard forms for the service (paper records, NHS systems or other as required) are completed and maintained in line with the latest GDPR requirements.

Quality

- To accept and process referrals into the service in a timely and efficient manner that meet the quality requirements within the service specification.
- To ensure information recorded in patient records meet the required quality standards.
- To ensure a detailed and up-to-date knowledge of local community-based and generic county wide services is maintained, to include knowledge of access arrangements, eligibility criteria and service content.
- To ensure your line manager is kept informed of any significant developments or issues which may impact service delivery and fully participate in all supervision arrangements.
- To undertake training when requested.

Team Work

- Take reasonable care for own safety while working in the community and comply with lone working procedures.
- To have a positive, professional and flexible attitude to your work and to support colleagues to successfully plan and deliver the service, prioritising the needs of patients at all times.
- To ensure that your line manager, other colleagues and volunteers have access to the information they require to complete their roles whilst being mindful of patient confidentiality.
- To provide for your line manager regular timesheets, and any other reports or information as required.
- To attend supervision/ line management meetings as required.
- To support the coordination of the Social Prescribing Partnership Forums.

- To work with RVA's volunteer brokerage service to recruit, train and support volunteers to contribute to the scheme as appropriate.
- You will carry out any other specified tasks that may be reasonably required by the relevant Manager, with the proviso that any changes of a permanent nature will be included in the job description.

Place of Work

All posts require a flexible approach to working locations:

- Rotate consulting times at each GP practice – to ensure the service is easily accessed by the patients of each GP Surgery in the neighbourhood.
- RVA office in Reading Central Library – to coordinate with colleagues, attend meetings, supervision, training and events.
- Home working – when required to comply with guidance related to Covid-19.

Person specification

Skills

Essential

- Ability to actively listen, empathise with people and provide person-centred support in a non-judgemental way.
- Able to provide a culturally sensitive service by supporting people from all backgrounds and communities respecting lifestyles and diversity.
- Commitment to reducing health inequalities and proactively working to reach people from diverse communities.
- Able to support people in a way that inspires trust and confidence, motivating others to reach their potential.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, with people, their families, carers, community groups, partner agencies and stakeholders.
- Ability to identify risk and assess/manage risk and maintain appropriate boundaries when working with individuals.
- Have a strong awareness and understanding of when it is appropriate or necessary to refer people back to other health professionals/agencies, when what the person needs is beyond the scope the link worker role e.g. when there is a mental health need requiring a qualified practitioner.
- Able to work from an asset-based approach, building on existing community and personal assets.
- Commitment to collaborative working with all local agencies (including VCS organisations and community groups).
- Able to work with others to reduce hierarchies and find creative solutions.
- Ability to organise, plan, and prioritise on own initiative including when under pressure and meeting deadlines.
- Able to provide motivational coaching to support people's behaviour change.

Desirable

- Able to communicate in one or more languages in addition to English.

Experience

Essential

- Experience of working directly in community development context, adult health and social care, learning support or public health/health improvement (including unpaid work), and or
- Experience of supporting people who have or are experiencing significant mental and physical health issues their families and carers in a related role (including unpaid work).
- Experience of working with the VCS sector (in a paid or unpaid capacity) including with volunteers and small community groups.

Desirable

- Experience of data collection and using tools to measure the impact of services.
- Experience of partnership/collaborative working and of building relationships across a variety of organisations.

Knowledge

Essential

- Understanding of the wider determinants of health including social, economic and environmental factors and their impact on communities, individuals, their families and carers.
- Understanding of and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Knowledge of IT systems including ability to use word processing skills, email and the internet to create simple plans and reports.

Desirable

- Local knowledge of the VCS and community services in the locality.
- Knowledge of how the NHS / social care works, including primary care.

Other

- Meet DBS reference standards and criminal record checks.
- Willingness to work flexible hours.
- Access to own transport and ability to travel across the locality on a regular basis including to visit people in their own homes.