Information for the post of Volunteer Counsellor

MumsAid is a non-profit organisation providing free counselling for women experiencing mental or emotional difficulties during pregnancy or after having a baby. We are committed to removing the barriers that often prevent women seeking help by challenging the stigma that surrounds postnatal depression (PND) and by raising awareness about the symptoms, impact and treatment. We also provide consultancy, clinical supervision and training to professionals on all aspects of perinatal mental health as well as support on providing non-stigmatising services.

We offer perinatal and postnatal counselling to women living within the Royal Borough of Greenwich. We offer a 12-week intervention based on a recommended therapeutic approach (NICE Guidelines 2007) that has been shown to be effective in:

- Increasing the well-being of mothers who are experiencing PND
- Increasing confidence in parenting skills
- Improving the bond between mother and baby (if this is an issue)

We are committed to challenging the stigma that often surrounds PND and is responsible for many women not seeking the help and support they need.

We accept referrals from all health and social care professionals. We also accept self-referrals.

Most of our Counselling sessions are currently held on Tuesday afternoons at various locations throughout Greenwich. Volunteer Counsellors must attend clinical supervision once a fortnight on Tuesday mornings at the MumsAid office in Blackheath. The supervision is conducted in small groups of 2 or 3.

If you are currently not available on a Tuesday please indicate when you are available in your cover letter to us. Our service is constantly developing and it might be possible to organise other days for placements and supervision.

Volunteer Counsellors can claim travel expenses within a 20-mile radius of their place of work. This includes public transport or mileage. An expense claim form
is to be completed with relevant tickets/receipts attached for the claim. Travel expenses may also be claimed for attending supervision/training sessions/meetings.

All volunteers will be offered an induction and required to have a DBS check the cost of which will be covered by MumsAid. Currently all volunteer counsellors are responsible to and will be supervised by, the CEO Miriam Donaghy.

A Board of Trustees supports the CEO and MumsAid.

Volunteer Counsellor Role Description

Main Duties:

- To provide weekly counselling to mothers with babies under 2yrs of age and living in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
- To commit half a day per week to counselling duties. This will involve seeing up three mothers on a weekly basis for up to 12 weeks as well as offering family consultations as and when necessary.
- To commit to volunteering for at least 18 months and to give adequate notice (4 weeks) for any leave of absence.

Additional Duties:

- To commit to fortnightly supervision at MumsAid office, Blackheath.
- Abide by MumsAid policies and procedures, in particular understand and follow confidentiality and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Undertake the necessary administrative procedures and complete appropriate paperwork.
- To facilitate referrals to other services, when appropriate and agreed in supervision.
- To attend any MumsAid training events and meetings when appropriate.
- To attend a six-month probationary review and thereafter an annual appraisal.
Person Specification

Essential Qualifications:

You must either:
Have passed or be currently undertaking a counselling Level 4 Diploma course, or the equivalent.

The course completed / in progress must be counselling or psychotherapy core practitioner training and meet BACP accreditation criteria.

Essential Experience:

You must have already completed a supervised counselling placement or have previous relevant counselling experience and have acquired a minimum of 50 supervised clinical hours with adults.

Because of the specialist nature of the placement we require our counsellors to be engaged in or to have experienced personal therapy at some depth.

Essential Knowledge:

You must have: an understanding and awareness of perinatal mental health issues and an understanding of professional boundaries, confidentiality and safeguarding, equal opportunities and diversity.

Desirable Experience, Skills, knowledge & Aptitude:

Previous experience of working with complex families.

Previous experience of working with clients suffering from perinatal mental health problems.

In depth knowledge of perinatal mental health issues.

Previous experience of working in a Children's Centre or similar setting.

Non-judgemental attitude and ability to understand the complex pressures of motherhood.

Ability to assess level of risk and to share information appropriately.

Ability to work positively in a team

Ability to take on new ideas and have a commitment to personal development

Ability and willingness to follow required administrative procedures.
Recruitment Procedure for Volunteer Counsellors

Please send us a C.V. Covering the following information:

• All relevant qualifications, experience, skills and knowledge.
• How you meet the person specification.
• How many years experience you have.
• What client groups you have worked with, how many supervised counselling hours you have accrued and in what settings.
• Your understanding of and interest in perinatal issues.
• Your current availability.
• Contact details for 2 referees who have current or recent knowledge of your clinical experience i.e. a tutor or supervisor.

Following acknowledgement of your application we will contact you to either:

• Invite you to attend for an interview to take up one of the volunteer counselling posts.
• Ask your permission to keep your details on our volunteer database so that we can contact you about future counselling opportunities with us, as and when they arise.
• To say we do not feel you have the appropriate experience at this point in your counselling career. We will be happy to give feedback on our decision.

www.mums-aid.org
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