

# Community Advice Worker (Welfare and Benefits)

- **Pay: £32,227 + £2,173 London Weighting**
- **Hours of work: 36 hours per week**
- **Annual leave entitlement: 26 days + Bank Holidays**
- **Responsible to: Advice Quality Manager**
- **Accountable to: Head of Advice and Quality**
- **Place of work: Whittington Hospital / other NHS sites**
- **Type of contract: Permanent**

## **Application Process:**

Please email your CV and a covering letter demonstrating how you meet the person specifications to: [sayeed.rahman@citizensadviceharingey.org.uk](mailto:sayed.rahman@citizensadviceharingey.org.uk)

**Closing Date to apply: 7th August by 3pm.**

**Interviews: 14th August 2024**

## **Job Summary:**

The Community Advice Workers (CAW) will be required to work from multiple locations with a base at Citizens Advice Haringey, covering both outreach and office based services. We are based within the local community of Haringey, providing advice and assistance to clients (outside of Haringey as required) who are marginalised and need advice to help tackle the problems they face in their daily lives. We cover a variety of subject areas, including, housing, benefits, consumer, debt and money problems, employment, education, care, immigration and family issues.

You will provide services to Citizens Advice Services Quality of Advice Standards, managing a busy caseload you will also take full part in duties within the advice centre, both face to face, digital and on the telephone. You will mentor/coach volunteers.

The CAW's will provide high quality advice and assistance to all clients and to provide specialist advice as appropriate or required.

Work in collaboration with people who use Citizens Advice Haringey services and in the statutory, voluntary and independent sector to raise the profile of the service and to develop operational protocols with appropriate agencies.

The Postholder will be employed by Citizens Advice Haringey and will be required to meet the organisational standards and duties put in place.

In conjunction with the haemoglobinopathies (also known as Red Cell) teams across North Central London, the CAW is responsible for providing a welfare and benefits advice and advocacy service, assisting patients, families, and carers affected by Sickle Cell Disorder, Thalassaemia and Rare Inherited Anaemia.

The role will also involve offering information, advice, guidance and support on learning, career, and employment opportunities.

The post holder will be expected to work with minimum supervision and will act with autonomy for the day-to-day management of their workload.

The postholder will be required to travel to all NCL sites.

### **Key Deliverables:**

- Addressing social and lifestyle factors which impact on condition management and overall quality of life and directing to appropriate local resources.
- Close working with multidisciplinary colleagues in primary, secondary, and social care.
- Provision of a high-quality welfare and benefits advice and casework service to patients and their carers on a range of welfare and benefit issues including non-secured debt, limited housing advice, and maximising welfare benefit take up.
- Prioritise referrals to determine the appropriate level and speed of response.
- Work closely with the Service Manager (NCL) to ensure the service continues to improve and develop and to utilise resources to provide an excellent patient experience.
- Targets will be set with regards to the number of Unique clients to be seen in each locality.
- Ensuring output compiles with the Citizens Advice Quality of Advice Framework.

### **Key Working Relationships:**

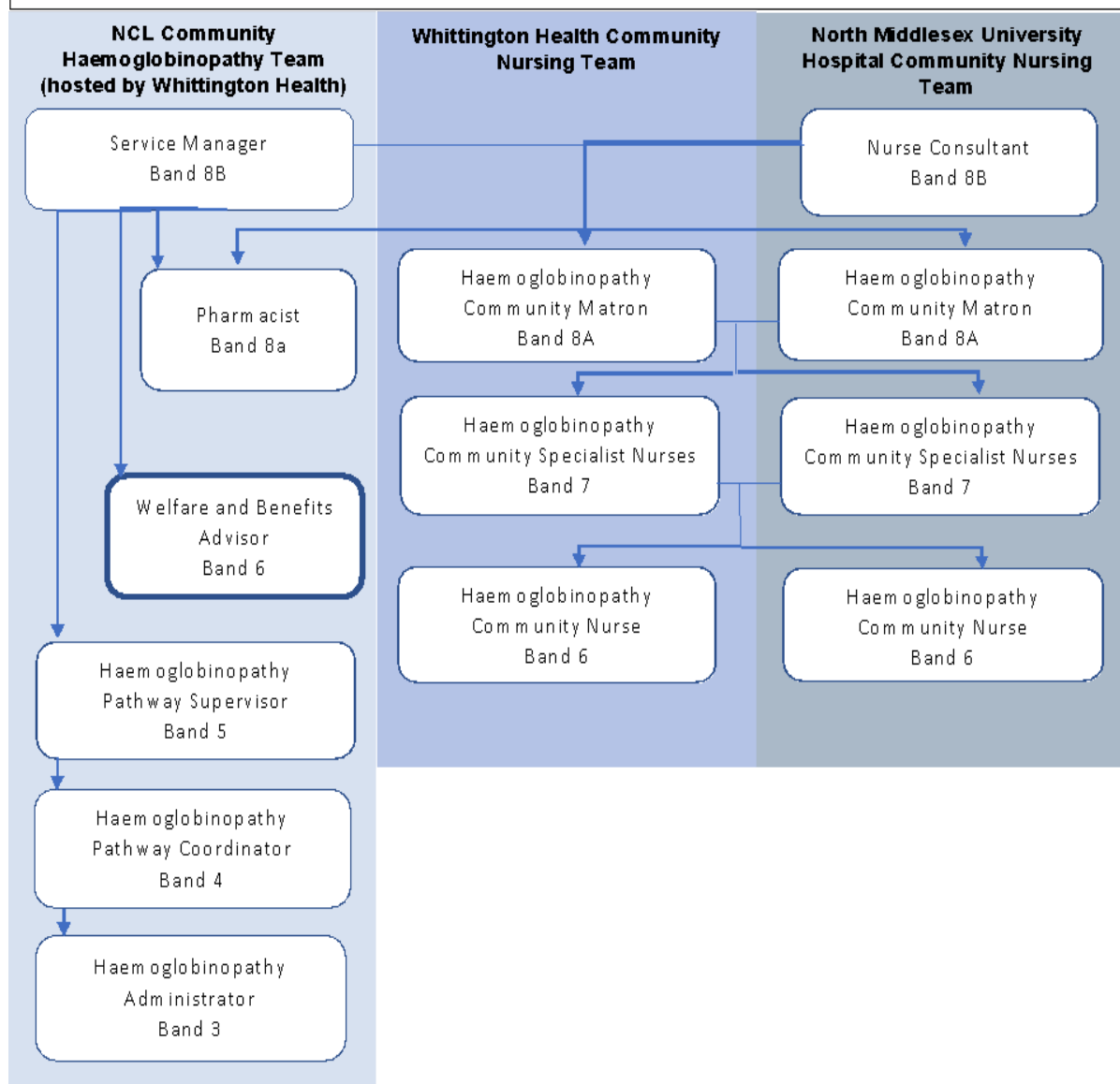
The post holder is expected to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships with other staff members characterised by trust, mutual respect, and open, honest communication. This will include:

- Multidisciplinary teams in both community and acute haemoglobinopathy settings
- Service users, families and carers
- Haemoglobinopathy Coordinating Centre (HCC) team
- General Practitioners and other primary care colleagues in relevant localities
- Equivalent colleagues across HCC and ICS footprint and wider region as appropriate
- Social Workers, Housing Teams and Department for Work and Pensions
- Welfare benefit office
- Citizens Advice Bureau (North London Offices)
- Job centre plus
- Local further education colleges
- Voluntary sector organisations

### **Team Structure and Organisation Chart of the NCL:**

North Central London (NCL) comprises of the boroughs Camden, Islington, Haringey, Islington, and Barnet. Within NCL, there are Haemoglobinopathy Teams at University College London Hospitals, North Middlesex University Hospital, Whittington Hospital and Royal Free Hospital.

**NCL Community Red Cell Team is jointly provided by Whittington Health and North Middlesex University Hospital but functions as one team with collective responsibility for delivering services to residents of NCL living with haemoglobinopathies.**



## Duties and Responsibilities:

### Advice Giving and Casework

Address social and lifestyle factors which impact on condition management and overall quality of life, directing to appropriate local support services and external agencies.

Act as a client advocate through the application of ethical, legal, and professional knowledge and skills, considering the multicultural needs of the patient by identifying demographic factors that influence their needs.

Initiate and contribute towards a multi-professional approach for the management of patients referred to the community service.

Interview clients using sensitive listening and questioning skills in order to allow clients to explain their problem(s) and empower them to set their own priorities. Research and explore options and implications so that clients can make informed decisions, using the Citizens Advice AdviserNet website to find, interpret and communicate the relevant information.

Act for the client where necessary by calculating, negotiating, drafting or writing letters and telephoning. Negotiate with third parties such as statutory and non-statutory bodies as appropriate. Refer to other specialist agencies as appropriate.

Ensure that all work conforms to the bureau's office manual and the Advice Quality Standard.

To ensure that all work conforms to and complies with the bureau's quality assurance and internal controls, systems and procedures and is delivered in accordance with Citizens Advice Haringey/Citizens Advice values and the relevant Board agreed strategies.

Ensure that work reflects and supports the Citizens Advice service's equality and diversity strategy.

Meets contractual performance targets

Meets agreed management performance targets

Maintain high quality detailed case records for the purpose of continuity of casework, information retrieval, statistical monitoring and report preparation.

Make home visits as necessary.

### **Professional Development:**

Identify training needs taking responsibility for maintaining own professional development, continuously reflecting on monitoring, evaluating, and improving own performance.

To undertake personal training to maintain a current working knowledge of the welfare benefits system and to develop and maintain an understanding of Red Cell conditions.

Keep up to date with changes to benefit entitlement and relevant changes to legislation affecting the provision of the service, eg Universal Credit.

Participate in addressing the training needs of other health professional involved in the service, and other relevant services.

Promote an understanding of the financial and social implications of illness for patients and their families amongst staff.

To act as a mentor to new members of the extended team as required to promote effective teamwork.

Successfully complete the Citizens Advice Adviser Learning Plan.

Attend relevant internal and external meetings or network events as agreed with the line manager.

### **Communication:**

Communicate effectively with patients ensuring an individualised and equitable approach to all, taking in to account the complex and sensitive nature of red cell condition management needs.

Good written communication skills are essential in order to draft and write correspondence on behalf of the client.

To have the ability to challenge, question and clarify issues to a satisfactory resolution.

Develop and maintain close links with multidisciplinary colleagues in primary, secondary, and social care.

Utilise interpreting services for patients with a language barrier.

To maintain accurate records of all contacts, using the Trust electronic patient record system and casebook.

Ensure that confidentiality and adherence to the Data Protection Act in relation to own practice is maintained.

### **Other Duties and Responsibilities**

Practice in an organised but flexible manner with the ability to respond to the unpredictable and challenging needs of the service including cross-site cover.

Ensure that work reflects the aims and principles of Citizens Advice Haringey's service and its equality and diversity strategy.

Carry out any other tasks that may be within the scope of the post to ensure the effective delivery and development of the service.

Demonstrate commitment to the aims and policies of the Citizens Advice service.

Abide by health and safety guidelines and share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues.

Work across Citizens Advice Haringey and out of normal office hours as required such as service events.

To maintain a professional and confidential approach to work at all times.

To carry out any other relevant duties as directed by the Operations manager and/or Head of Advice and Quality.

Support data collection to enable service evaluation, ensuring it is accurate and submitted in a timely manner.

Ensure effective and efficient use of resources, assisting with review processes where necessary.

To report and document any incident or accident to a patient or a member of staff and actively implement learning from complaints and incidents within the team.

Contribute to the investigation of patient complaints to ensure that an appropriate and timely response is given and that trends are identified and remedial action taken.

Contribute to business cases as required by the Service Manager.

### **Person Specification:**

#### **Essential**

- Appropriate professional qualification/equivalent good Advice service experience
- General knowledge of housing legislation, Equalities Act, Social Services, Social Security Act and Community Care Act
- Proven knowledge and experience of advising clients on a range of subjects including advising on options and providing assistance with negotiating with

third parties.

- Knowledge of sickle cell disorder and thalassaemia.
- Competent IT skills including Microsoft Office apps (Word, Outlook, Excel, PowerPoint).
- Have a proactive approach to prioritising own work, meeting deadlines and managing workload in a pressured environment with conflicting priorities.
- Numerate to the level required in order to accurately calculate entitlements, pro rata offers, liabilities required in the tasks.
- Can communicate effectively and sensitively both verbally and in writing with a wide range of audiences including patients, their families, colleagues both clinical and non-clinical and the DWP.
- Ability to travel independently to all sites across NCL and sites required by Citizens Advice Haringey.
- Demonstrates commitment to the aims and policies of the service.
- Monitor and maintain your own standards.
- Understanding of and commitment to the aims and principles of the Citizens Advice Haringey service and its equality and diversity policies.

### **Desirable**

- Experience of tribunal representation

### **Key Competencies:**

- Knowledge and application
- Customer/Client Focus
- Drive for results
- Collaborative working
- Interpersonal skills/Valuing others
- Effective communication
- Time and workload management



This job description may be subject to review from time to time between the position holder and the Citizens Advice Haringey board of trustees and as such is liable to amendment.

**This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act**