



Job Description

IDVA – DV Caseworker, Bede Starfish Domestic Abuse Project

Bede has been a lead provider of domestic abuse services in Southwark since 2001. Our Bede Starfish Project's expertise is in working with clients who have complex needs and who are often hard to reach. Our unique approach combines core casework tasks, such as safety planning, attending meetings with social services and police, and accompanying clients to court, with a holistic approach that enables wider issues, such as post trauma reactions, the cycle of abuse, and immigration status, to be addressed through our in-house counselling service and peer support through our Freedom Programme and Survivors' Group. This approach is very successful in achieving long-term change – around 90% of our clients are living safer lives as a result of our support. During coronavirus lockdown, we have continued to provide our service, adapting it to find creative ways to meet clients safely, or work with them remotely using Zoom and telephone calls.

Key to this success are:

- A casework approach, which is holistic, flexible, creative and responds to the needs of clients.
- Peer support programmes, using the Freedom Programme and Survivors' Group models, which actively involve clients in challenging and supporting each other.
- A deep and long-term involvement with the local community that nurtures effective professional relationships and the service's reputation. Over half of the referrals we receive are self-referrals who come as the result of word-of-mouth recommendations.

This is a unique opportunity for a qualified and adaptable IDVA, or an experienced Caseworker, keen to expand their expertise in long-term front facing client work with individuals at high risk and with complex needs. If you do not already have it, we will fund your training costs to achieve an IDVA qualification. You will have the opportunity to use your holistic skills to help those most vulnerable, including clients who have no recourse to public funds or are facing childcare proceedings. Working from our office in Bermondsey, you will work closely with the local Community Safety Unit and will be based once a week at Brixton police station.

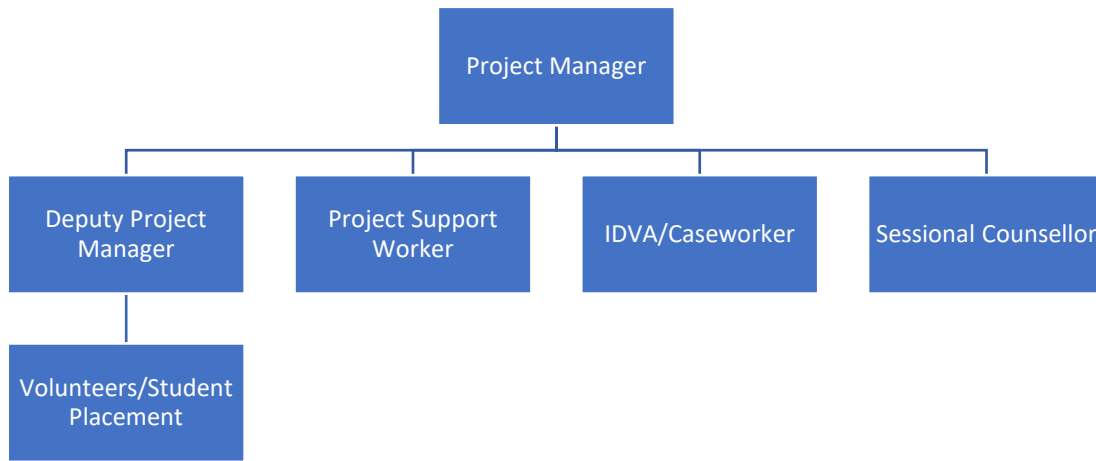
Your Role

You will join our friendly, energetic team to provide a high quality, front-line service to Southwark victims of domestic abuse. Your organisational skills will enable you to manage a busy, complex workload and prioritise according to risk. In addition, you will be adept at developing, maintaining and monitoring multi-agency links through procedures and protocols to keep victims' safety paramount. Your experience of working in a diverse London community setting will put you at ease with some of the city's most vulnerable people. You will also have a deep knowledge and understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on both victims and their children. Your proven ability to communicate will be vital when educating service users and agency partners, attending court, and working in a police environment.

This is a challenging but hugely rewarding role for someone keen to make a real impact on individuals' lives. At Bede, you can expect full support from our experienced managers in order to settle in and develop your career.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, you must have the ability to work safely, independently and confidentially from home if required.

Team Structure



Main Duties

- Provide proactive support and advice to victims of domestic abuse
- Spend one day a week at Police CSU to provide support and advice to Police and Service users
- Conduct outreach and intervention work at multiple locations, such as GP surgeries, police and Sure Start Centres
- Liaise with external partners and attend weekly MARAC meetings
- Attend Social Services meetings
- Risk assess clients' circumstances using the Safer Lives Risk Assessment toolkit and deliver an appropriate service according to the result
- Explain housing, civil and criminal legal options to clients
- Conduct safety planning with clients to secure practical safety measures
- Understand the legal framework relating to the protection of children including the policy and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board
- Support clients through the CJS system, explaining the procedures and their role and rights within that system and attend hearings at court and meetings with them as necessary
- Refer on/advocate and arrange meetings with other agencies/services as necessary, for instance, solicitors, benefit agency, housing, etc
- Develop and maintain good and effective relationships with all project stakeholders, including referral agencies, and funders
 - Foster an atmosphere, which supports and motivates colleagues
 - Attend internal and external meetings as directed and participate in regular supervision and appraisal meetings with the Manager
 - Complete all monitoring and record keeping requirements as directed by the Manager.
 - Comply with Bede House Association's policies and procedures
 - Keep up-to-date with developments in legislation and practice and regularly review in supervision on performance in this area
 - Carry out other duties and activities reasonably requested by the Project Manager

Person Specification

IDVA or DV Caseworker, Bede Starfish Domestic Abuse Project

Essential Qualifications

- Good standard of tertiary level education
- For IDVA candidates: Safer Lives IDVA qualification
- For Caseworker candidates: completion of reputable domestic abuse training (eg Women's Aid or a module within a DipSW)

Essential Experience

- At least 1 years' experience (full time equivalent) of working with high risk clients experiencing domestic abuse or similar crises
- At least 1 years' experience (full time equivalent) managing and reviewing own caseload

Essential Knowledge

Working understanding of relevant legislation as it applies to day-to-day casework including: Family Law Act 1996, the Protection from Harassment Act 1998, the Children's Act, the Asylum and Immigration Act 2002, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 the Domestic Violence Bill 2004 and the draft Domestic Abuse bill (2019)

- Working understanding of civil remedies available to domestic abuse victims
- How to access services available to women and men in the statutory and voluntary sectors in London
- Understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on victims, especially women and children
- Practical grasp of the day to day application of equal opportunities principles and practice
- Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Practices and Procedures

Essential Skills

You are able to:

- listen and respond empathetically to individuals in crisis, and appropriately empower them to change their situation
- analyse and identify risk and develop creative problem-solving solutions
- write and speak excellent English
- Effectively use motivational interview techniques and understand stages of change
- read, write and understand professional reports, letters and case notes
- use Microsoft Word, Excel, email and in-house case notes database
- work as part of a small team
- work effectively from different locations, including working remotely from home as required
- plan and prioritise own workload
- positively influence others in the team to plan and achieve agreed goals
- enhance the reach and reputation of the charity as a best practice provider

Desirable Qualifications and Experience

- Facilitating Domestic Abuse support groups
- Presenting and organising training programmes
- Working as a Police IDVA

Terms and Conditions

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- Salary:** The posts are on a scale equivalent to NJC 15-23, £26,452 - £30,540. Qualified IDVA would start at £27,854, DV Caseworker would start at £26,452 and progression capped to NJC17 until qualified. Appointment is expected to be at the lower end of the scale, depending on experience and qualifications. Further increments may be awarded for long service from April 2022 subject to satisfactory performance and attendance.
- Contract:** This is a permanent contract subject to continued funding in the future.
- Pension:** You will benefit from our Bede auto-enrolment pension scheme. Bede will match an employee's contribution into the scheme up to a maximum of 5% of salary.
- Hours:** 35 hours (plus minimum 30-minute unpaid lunch break), Monday to Friday around a core period of 9 am to 4.30pm. Some work will happen outside normal office hours including occasional weekend work. There is a rota to ensure the office is staffed each day from 9am. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, you must have the ability to work safely, independently and confidentially from home if required. You will be responsible for managing your diary to provide a reliable yet flexible service within the 35 hours available each week.
- Annual Leave:** 25 days per year, plus Public Holidays.
- DBS:** You must have an up-to-date DBS check at enhanced level. Bede will arrange this.