

**NEXT LINK JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Post:** **Pilot Project – 1-year Fixed Term Contract**

**Female Support Worker**

**Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) - MASH**

**Responsible to: Senior IDVA**

**Hours 26.25 hours each week equal over 5 days**

**Flexible working including some evenings and weekends to be agreed**

**JOB PURPOSE**

The IDVA will provide an immediate support service to female and male victims of domestic abuse and their children through the South Gloucestershire MASH. Identifying the impacts of domestic abuse on the children within the household and referring them into appropriate support services.

The IDVA will provide advice and support at the point of crisis, where support is provided, and choices are offered. The IDVA will make appropriate safeguarding and MARAC referrals; provide support for up to 4 weeks and make referrals for ongoing support alongside partners whose main aim is to ensure collaborative working to deliver effective and focused services to children, young people, and their families. The IDVA will provide training, expert advice and raise awareness to support the disclosure of domestic violence and abuse.

This role involves empowering survivors to increase their options, make positive choices/decisions, and increase their confidence, safety and recovery.

**MAIN OBJECTIVES**

* To be part of the South Gloucestershire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub process working with a multi-agency group of professionals whose main aim is to ensure collaborative working to deliver effective and focused services to children, young people, and their families.
* To train and support Social Services staff to identify and refer victims of domestic/sexual abuse.
* To establish and maintain support to survivors, with a victim centred approach, focussing on safety and recovery and ensure service users:
* Are safer.
* Feel safer.
* Feel more empowered and confident.
* Have an increased understanding of DA and risk factors.
* Are more aware of safety measures; and
* Have an increased understanding of the abuse they are experiencing.
* To provide support to enable survivors to safely maintain their current accommodation, access welfare benefits, legal advice, alternative housing, and support services.
* To maintain an effective support service with the aim of enabling the survivor to develop the skills and resources necessary to move on and maintain independence and self-reliance.
* To champion service user empowerment and involvement by ensuring our services:
* Are accessible to all potential service users.
* Value and respect service users as the experts of their experience.
* Work in strength-based and solution-focused ways with clients.
* Facilitate agreed actions into practice; and
* Use service user feedback and involvement to improve our service.
* Have a Think Family approach.
* To liaise effectively and collaboratively with all appropriate agencies and community groups to ensure the best access to services and meaningful community engagement for service users.

## PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Referrals and Assessments**
   1. Promote the service through building positive relationships within the MASH and with social care teams to ensure a steady flow of appropriate referrals.
   2. To carry out risk assessments including DASH, co-produce safety plans with the service user and the children of the household (where appropriate) and regularly review the plans, enabling survivors to assess and manage risk to their own safety. Amend plans as appropriate when circumstances change and attend the MARAC and refer service users when appropriate.
   3. Carry out needs assessments which effectively establish the support needs of individuals and families and enable support to be offered as quickly as possible. Respond flexibly as the individuals or family’s needs and risks change.
2. **Support**
   1. Ensure your work with service users is recovery focused and strengths based, supporting survivors in a creative, consistent and assertive way to ensure positive outcomes are achieved. Review the support plan regularly and record changes agreed.
   2. Ensure that survivors currently living in abusive situations are aware of their rights and options. Give safety-planning advice and explain the effectiveness of criminal and civil sanctions available to them.
   3. Enable and encourage survivors to take advantage of all services relevant to their safety such as legal advice, housing and benefits rights, education, medical treatment, counselling etc. Assist clients in gaining access to solicitors, benefits agencies, housing departments, education, medical treatment, counselling etc
   4. Work in partnership with other agencies e.g. the police, local authority, health, social services, education, youth service and the voluntary sector to ensure efficient mechanisms for referrals and to advocate for survivors to ensure their needs are met
   5. To maintain knowledge of local services, encourage engagement and reduce the survivor’s isolation.
   6. Recognise, respect and address the needs of survivors who face particular barriers when seeking help to access the service, including those from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, LGBT communities, Gypsy Traveller Communities, disabled people, male survivor’s women with complex needs and other hard to reach groups.
   7. Maintain an up to date working knowledge of housing legislation, housing and welfare legislation and the welfare benefit system.
   8. Carry out a financial assessment for each service user (where appropriate) and assist them to maximise their income, address debts, budget and pay bills and support them to make appropriate welfare benefit claims.
   9. Provide support as part of an integrated approach, by working closely with specialist statutory and/or voluntary agencies such as mental health, criminal justice, homelessness, Treatment Providers, Probation, to ensure access and engagement with other services is maximised, according to the agreed support package.
   10. Provide recovery orientated support, psychologically informed interventions and practical support to individuals on caseload.
   11. Safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, working within Missing Link’s safeguarding policies, South West Child Protection Procedures and local procedures for safeguarding adults at risk. Monitor all safeguarding concerns and make appropriate referrals to First Response/Care Direct as necessary.
   12. Respond to emergency and crisis situations by providing support, advice, signposting or direct interventions as necessary.
3. **Record keeping and monitoring**
   1. Contribute to the South Gloucestershire MASH information sharing electronic process.
   2. Maintain up to date, accurate, legible and accessible records of all work and contact with service users, other agencies/professionals and others (e.g., carers, families), ensuring that they meet the requirements of data protection and confidentiality.
   3. Ensure all client records, outcome and monitoring data is accurately recorded using the organisation case management system and any other record/monitoring systems, prepare any additional information or reports used for the monitoring and evaluation of the services as required.
4. **Developing of self and others**
   1. Actively participate in regular one-to-one supervision, reflective practice groups, annual appraisals.
   2. Attend and make a positive contribution to staff / team meetings and to participate in organisational training and development events as required.
   3. Provide support and guidance to trainees, relief/agency workers and volunteers, when required.
   4. Develop your understanding of Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) approach in engaging and supporting clients and embed PIE into your day-to-day practice.
5. **General**
   1. Act as a representative of Next Link at internal and external meetings, as required, promote the organisation through building professional links with outside bodies as appropriate.
   2. Uphold the values and good name of Missing Link at all times, represent the organisation in a way that is consistent with its philosophy and ethos and within the Missing Link’s Code of Conduct.
   3. Work flexibly within a team setting; liaise with other workers as necessary and as appropriate to provide cover for holidays and staff absence.
   4. Work within a rota system including regular evening and weekend work and take part in the on-call rota as required.
   5. Work within Next Link’s Health and Safety policy and guidance and to ensure your own health and safety and that of others at all times.
   6. Ensure the service is delivered in a culturally sensitive way for all service users, including challenging stigma and discrimination.
   7. Observe organisations equal opportunities, confidentiality, data protection policies.
   8. Understand and contribute to the overall objectives of the organisation and follow all existing organisational policies and procedures.
   9. Undertake other duties and responsibilities in keeping with the nature of this post as may be required from time to time.

**This job description is for guidance only and outlines the general ways in which it is expected you will meet the overall requirements of this post. The list of tasks is not exhaustive, and duties may be varied from time to time, with the job description being subject to review and periodic amendments.**

**Person Specification: South Gloucestershire MASH IDVA**

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| Skills and qualifications | Essential | | Desirable |
| IDVA qualified | **✓** | |  |
| Strong numeracy, written communication and organisational skills | **✓** | |  |
| The ability to undertake effective casework management and support planning with evidence of a methodical and well organised approach to work | **✓** | |  |
| Ability to work in partnership with a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies, to achieve outcomes for service users | **✓** | |  |
| The ability to provide respectful, non-judgemental, and confidential support to survivors and their children | **✓** | |  |
| The ability to encourage survivors and their children to take control of their lives and set realistic objectives and goals | **✓** | |  |
| Maintaining professional boundaries, show resilience and reliability under pressure | **✓** | |  |
| Ability to work as part of a team demonstrating a flexible approach including a commitment to being part of a rota and on-call system | **✓** | |  |
| Excellent level of IT literacy, operate case management systems and ability to carry out own administrative workload | **✓** | |  |
| Ability to apply psychologically informed practice |  | | **✓** |
| Ability to work with a recovery focused approach |  | | **✓** |
| Experience | Essential | | Desirable |
| Proven experience of working with women / men and children who have survived domestic abuse | **✓** | |  |
| Experience of supporting high risk victims | **✓** | |  |
| Experience working with the police, Lighthouse, MARAC and DRIVE | **✓** | |  |
| Proven experience working in homelessness / supported housing sector providing support to individuals to sustain/ manage their tenancies and avoid tenancy breakdown | **✓** | |  |
| Experience of assessing the risks and needs of vulnerable people who have experienced domestic abuse and/or complex needs | **✓** | |  |
| Experience of co-producing short and longer term risk management, safety planning and support with survivors and their children experiencing Domestic Abuse | **✓** | |  |
| Demonstrable experience of being proactive rather than reactive: focuses on preventing problems in the future rather than just resolving immediate issues | **✓** | |  |
| Experience of lone working in the community and able to work on own initiative |  | | **✓** |
| Experience of delivering group work and / or training |  | | **✓** |
| Experience of working with victims of sexual violence |  | | **✓** |
| Experience working with people with mental health needs, substance misuse, other complex needs |  | | **✓** |
| Experience of working within the civil and criminal justice system |  | | **✓** |
| Knowledge | Essential | | Desirable |
| Knowledge of criminal and civil legal remedies and housing law relating to domestic abuse | **✓** |  | |
| Demonstrable understanding of the diverse needs of families experiencing domestic violence and the discrimination issues as they relate to survivors escaping domestic violence | **✓** |  | |
| Knowledge of Domestic Abuse risk assessment tools including DASH and extensive understanding of the MARAC process | **✓** |  | |
| Knowledge of health and safety issues specific to survivors fleeing domestic abuse and lone working | **✓** |  | |
| A thorough understanding of safeguarding relating to vulnerable adults and children, including how and when to report concerns | **✓** |  | |
| Up to date knowledge of the welfare benefits system and the ability to ensure service users maximise their benefit entitlement | **✓** |  | |
| Knowledge of mental health legislation |  | **✓** | |
| Knowledge of housing legislation |  | **✓** | |
| Knowledge and understanding of the impact of working with domestic abuse and complex needs on individuals and the need for support. |  | **✓** | |
| Values | Essential | | Desirable |
| A commitment to the Victim’s Code of Practice | **✓** | |  |
| Commitment to diversity and equal opportunities at work | **✓** | |  |
| Commitment to service user participation and involvement | **✓** | |  |
| Other | Essential | | Desirable |
| Be available and committed to be part of the out of hours on call rota and work flexibly including some Saturday mornings on a rota basis | **✓** | |  |
| A current, full driving licence and access to appropriate motorised transport | **✓** | |  |