Safer Futures IDVA Service Cornwall

JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE OF POST:	**First Response Helpline IDVA**
RESPONSIBLE TO:	**IDVA Team Leader**
HOURS:	**37.5 hrs a week – Work pattern to be agreed across standard service hours of Mon-Fri 9am to 7pm.**
BASE:	**Bodmin**

GENERAL

The Women's Centre Cornwall are the lead provider for the Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service which is delivered in partnership with Konnect Communities, West Cornwall Women's Aid, Intercom Trust and The Olive Project.

The First Response Helpline Service provides a single point of contact for the wider Safer Futures service which includes therapeutic and behaviours change interventions delivered by a partnership led by Barnardo's. Being the first point of contact for people affected by domestic abuse, this role will play a central role in ensuring that every person who reaches out to us is heard, supported and connected with the right help at the right time. This team provides support with people concerned about their own behaviours in addition to professionals and survivors. Through trauma responsive, risk-led conversations, the First Response IDVA will listen, explore and understand individual experiences, identify risks, and ensure a safe and supportive pathway into the most suitable Safer Futures service or elsewhere if more appropriate.

PURPOSE

The main purpose of this role is to ensure that any individual contacting the Safer Futures Service receives a warm, professional, risk-aware and trauma-informed response. This position involves you clearly explaining our role and services and ensuring that people are able to access the right support at the right time.
You will receive contact from, or make prompt initial contact with survivors, professionals and those concerned about their own behaviors.

As a First Response Helpline IDVA you will provide pro-active, high quality, frontline service to survivors of domestic abuse through risk assessment, survivors individual safety planning, trauma-informed support, guidance, and information, enabling survivors to access the services they need in the aftermath of the abuse and trauma they have experienced. Within this role you will undertake risk assessments to assess level of risk of harm being faced by the survivor and any children or other family members.

The support that you provide will include 'referring on' survivors to Locality and/or Specialist IDVAS or providing short-term safety planning for emergency situations. For those at a lower risk, you will provide a menu of support options including referrals to partner organisations and/or community organisations, practical or emotional resources, short-term interventions, or other specialist information relevant to individual needs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Key Responsibilities:

- Receive and respond to incoming calls into the Safer Futures central point of access, offering immediate emotional support, advice and guidance
- Review and process referrals received via our online portal and access system.
- Enter new referrals into HALO and make initial contact with survivors in line with set timescales
- Assess risks (and needs) using evidence-based checklists
- Assist high-risk survivors experiencing immediate risk to access safety services.
- Refer individuals to the most appropriate service within agreed timeframes
- Deliver short- term tailored support and information.
- Support survivors to understand key domestic abuse dynamics to support their safety
- Input and maintain accurate case records in the HALO Database system
- Identify and escalate any immediate safeguarding concerns through the appropriate pathways.
- Build and maintain strong, positive relationships with partner agencies to ensure smooth referral pathways.
- Work closely with the Team Leader to identify trends, opportunities, and areas for development within the service
- Providing face-to-face support in the community

Organisational

- To participate in regular line management and external supervision.
- To attend Team Meetings and Professional Development Days.
- To take appropriate responsibility under current Health and Safety legislation.
- To flexibly cover 'out of hours' where necessary and when required provide direct support to survivors, including interim cover during staff absences.

- To work at all times within the policies, procedures and ethos of Safer Futures IDVA Service and The Women's Centre Cornwall.

- To carry out such other duties as may be requested by the Service Manager that are deemed reasonably consistent with the post holder's position.

Please note this list provides an outline of the key responsibilities and duties for this role. It is not exhaustive, and a flexible approach will be needed in order to provide a responsive, service-user led service.

Genuine Occupational Requirement: 'This post is open to women only in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Schedule 9, Part 1'.

Safer Futures values diversity and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community, especially from groups with a protected characteristic such as black and minoritised women, who are currently under-represented in the service.

The Women's Centre Cornwall's Bodmin premises are fully wheelchair accessible.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Excellent telephone and communication skills, including the ability to build rapport quickly	✓	
A good standard of written communication	✓	
Experience of maintaining accurate and confidential case records including experience of using case management databases such as HALO		✓
Strong IT skills, including Microsoft office suite.	✓	
Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team	✓	
Experience of working in a helpline, call handling, triage, or first response environment		✓
To act with integrity and professionalism in all interactions with survivors, agencies and colleagues	✓	
Ability to respond calmly and effectively in crisis situations	✓	
Understanding and application of trauma-informed practice		✓
Experience of providing emotional support, advice, and advocacy		✓
Knowledge of safeguarding procedures for adults and children		✓
Ability to undertake safety planning with individuals experiencing risk	✓	
Understanding of domestic abuse, coercive control, stalking, harassment, and related risks		✓
Experience of conducting risk and needs assessments		✓

Experience of supporting vulnerable adults, survivors of domestic abuse, or individuals experiencing trauma		✓
Ability to maintain professional boundaries while offering compassionate and empowering support and compliance with policies and procedures	✓	
Ability to manage a high-volume workload and prioritise effectively	✓	
IDVA Accreditation (SafeLives) or willingness to work towards accreditation	✓	
Commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and anti-discriminatory practice	✓	
Willingness to participate in supervision, training, and continuous professional development	✓	
Ability to understand, empathise and uphold the organisation's ethos, aims, principles and policies	✓	