

Housing and Social Support Navigator

ORGANISATION SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POST

Mind in Croydon (MiC) is a mental health charity founded in 1967 to promote good mental health. Our vision is a world where everyone with mental health issues receives support and respect, and where inequality and stigma are eliminated. We are a voluntary sector organisation, a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity, with over 50 members of staff working across multiple sites and outreach locations in the London borough of Croydon.

We provide a wide range of services to support, inform and empower people experiencing mental health problems, including advocacy, social networking, welfare benefits advice, counselling, peer support, crisis services, physical activity programmes and wellbeing support. In the past year alone, we supported over 10,000 individuals across the borough. As demand for services continues to grow and the organisation evolves, Mind in Croydon is strengthening its operational leadership capacity to ensure services remain safe, consistent, compliant and responsive to the needs of service users, staff and commissioners.

CONTEXT OF THE POST

Mind in Croydon is a voluntary organisation, a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity concerned with the welfare of people experiencing mental health difficulties across the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas. We deliver a range of community mental health, advice, advocacy, social support and wellbeing services.

The Housing and Social Support Navigation Service provides practical, person-centred support to adults whose mental health and wellbeing are affected by housing insecurity, the risk of homelessness, tenancy issues, financial pressures, social isolation, or difficulties accessing appropriate support.

The service supports individuals to understand their housing options, sustain tenancies, engage effectively with landlords and housing providers, access welfare and financial support, connect with mental health services, and navigate statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations. Through a coordinated and holistic approach, the service aims to address barriers that impact wellbeing and promote greater stability, independence and social inclusion.

Working within a trauma-informed and strengths-based framework, the service focuses on early intervention and prevention, helping clients avoid housing-related crises, sustain stable accommodation, and access the support they need to maintain their wellbeing and empower independence.

HOUSING AND SOCIAL SUPPORT NAVIGATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Salary: £30,719 per annum

Terms: Fixed Term until 31st August 2028 with possible extension

Hours: 36 hours per week – Monday to Friday (Full Time)

Reports to: Housing and Social Support Navigation Service Manager

Location: Across the London Borough of Croydon, Mind in Croydon premises and hospital settings

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Housing and Social Support Navigator will work with patients within inpatient and community mental health settings across Croydon, including Jeanette Wallace House and Bethlem Royal Hospital, where housing-related issues may contribute to mental health crises, delay hospital discharge, or impact an individual's recovery and wellbeing.

The postholder will work closely with multidisciplinary teams, including ward staff, discharge coordinators, advocacy services, housing departments, housing providers, supported accommodation services, and other professionals involved in discharge planning and ongoing support. The role will also develop effective working relationships with Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs), Croydon Talking Therapies, Home Treatment Teams, Assessment and Liaison services, GPs, and other community-based statutory and voluntary sector services.

The primary purpose of the role is to provide early intervention, practical housing advice, advocacy and navigation support to individuals whose housing circumstances are having a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing. This includes supporting clients to understand their housing options, prevent homelessness, sustain tenancies, access welfare and financial support, and connect with appropriate services before difficulties escalate into crisis.

The Housing and Social Support Navigator will support individuals experiencing a range of housing-related challenges, including homelessness or the risk of homelessness, unsuitable accommodation, tenancy difficulties, eviction risk, and barriers to accessing housing and support services. Through a person-centred, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach, the role will empower individuals to make informed decisions and access the support needed to achieve greater housing stability and independence.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work as part of a team comprising the Housing and Social Support Navigation Service Manager, NHS Mental Health/ Housing Teams and other Housing and Social Support

Navigators, providing day-to-day operational delivery of the Housing and Social Support Service.

- Work to ensure all contractual and reporting obligations are met, including representing the Housing and Social Support Service at meetings and supporting the collection and recording of statistical information on client outcomes through information management systems (including Views and NHS EPJS databases) to support monthly and quarterly reporting requirements.
- Meet monthly, quarterly and annual targets against agreed KPIs.
- Manage a caseload of up to 15 clients dependent on service need.
- Receive referrals and act as the named Housing and Social Support Navigator for allocated individuals.
- Promote the highest quality of service by working collaboratively with clients to identify support needs, liaising with multidisciplinary teams, external agencies and voluntary sector organisations as required.
- Adopt a person-centred and empathetic approach to co-produce individual development plans with clear, realistic and measurable outcomes.
- Work within safe practice parameters and professional boundaries at all times.
- Gradually reduce support where appropriate to promote independence, confidence and self-management.
- Maintain regular contact with clients and multidisciplinary teams to review progress and adapt support plans as needed. Promote clients' views and needs throughout all aspects of the service, including undertaking follow-up contact and collating satisfaction surveys.
- Assist the Housing and Social Support Navigation Service Manager to monitor, respond to and report on complaints, compliments, incidents, serious incidents, safeguarding concerns and onward referrals in line with service delivery protocols.
- Provide advice and support to colleagues on matters relating to the post holder's specialist knowledge and experience, including mental health, benefits, housing, education, training and employment.
- Attend staff meetings and contribute to the planning, development and continuous improvement of the service in line with organisational aims and objectives.
- Provide guidance, advice and practical assistance with housing applications, including local authority housing register applications, sheltered accommodation, extra care housing, specialist sheltered accommodation, housing transfer applications and homelessness applications.
- Provide guidance, advice and practical assistance with welfare benefit applications, supporting clients to access financial entitlements and maximise income.
- Liaise with housing providers, local authorities, the Department for Work and Pensions and other relevant agencies to obtain updates on housing and benefit applications, ensuring arrangements appropriately reflect clients' housing, welfare and financial needs.
- Provide guidance, advice and practical assistance to clients experiencing housing difficulties, including housing suitability reviews, housing application appeals, requests for priority housing status, and accessing emergency, temporary and longer-term accommodation where appropriate.

- Support clients to navigate and access health, social care and community-based services, including promoting continuity of care following hospital discharge through engagement with mental health teams, care coordinators, adult social care, primary care services and other relevant support agencies.
- Liaise with statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations to coordinate timely support, advocate on behalf of clients, and ensure services are responsive to individual housing, health, social care and wellbeing needs.
- Provide guidance, advice and practical assistance to clients to secure and sustain suitable private rented accommodation, including identifying and engaging with landlords and letting agents, supporting applications for local authority financial assistance schemes (including Crisis and Resilience Fund applications), and facilitating access to welfare benefits and other sources of financial support.
- Support clients to assess housing options and secure accommodation that is safe, affordable, sustainable and appropriate to their individual needs, circumstances and long-term housing goals.
- Maintain knowledge of local housing, health, social care, welfare and community services to provide accurate information, signposting and onward referrals that meet clients' individual needs and circumstances.

HOUSING, ADVICE AND SOCIAL SUPPORT NAVIGATION

- Support clients to provide effective navigation around housing, homelessness prevention, tenancy sustainment, benefits, debt, social support and mental health.
- Undertake an ongoing caseload of up to 15 clients dependent on service need.
- Build and maintain effective relationships with housing providers, landlords, advice agencies, Croydon Council, NHS Services, voluntary sector organisations and community partners.
- Ensure the service supports clients to access the right advice, advocacy, welfare, benefits support, mental health support, social connection and community resources.
- To advocate appropriately for clients while maintaining clear professional boundaries and realistic expectations about the role of the service.
- Identify gaps, barriers and recurring issues in local housing and mental health pathways and share learning with line management and team members.
- Ensure working with clients using a strengths-based approach that supports clients to build confidence, independence and connection.
- Undertake welfare benefit and entitlement checks, supporting clients to complete claims and liaising with relevant agencies, including the Department for Work and Pensions and Local Authorities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- Develop and maintain links with community organisations, cultural groups, faith groups, sports providers, education providers and other mainstream opportunities.

- Liaise with professionals including care co-ordinators, GPs, social workers and voluntary sector partners.
- Advocate on behalf of clients where appropriate.

GENERAL

- Work as a member of a team, communicating with others in writing and face to face, taking part in team meetings, staff meetings and training days.
- Maintain quality standards in accordance with Mind in Croydon's policies and procedures.
- Accept line management and supervision from the post holder's designated line manager and to engage constructively in this process.
- Accept the need to learn from experience, to actively take part in reflective practice, attend staff meetings to develop where necessary, adapt new skills and keep up to date with current practice and undertake training as directed by the post holder's designated line manager.
- In addition to the tasks and duties outlined in this job description, to undertake such duties as may be identified and which are generally compatible with the functions of the post.

SAFEGUARDING, RISK AND PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

- Staff will be responsible for respecting and maintaining personal and professional boundaries concerning relationships with clients, volunteers and other staff.
- Staff to act in a professional and responsible manner which does not have a negative impact on the service or the organisation as a whole and which is in accordance with the policies and procedures of Mind in Croydon Ltd and NHS SLaM.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to inform a member of the senior management team immediately if service users, volunteers or staff do not comply with the above, and to uphold ethical practice standards.
- Work within Mind in Croydon's safeguarding policies and procedure at all times
- Identify, assess and manage risk appropriately, escalating concerns in line with organisational processes.

MIND IN CROYDON POLICIES

a. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The post holder may only submit written material or speak to the press in accordance with the Mind in Croydon guidelines for contact with the media.

b. USER PARTICIPATION

Mind in Croydon is committed to encouraging full participation of clients in the planning and running of all aspects of its work. All staff are expected to assist and encourage clients to take full responsibility in the day-to-day activities of the project.

c. CONFIDENTIALITY

All employees of Mind in Croydon are expected to respect the rights of clients to privacy and confidentiality as far as possible within the constraints of legal requirements and the safety of other people.

ADMINISTRATION AND RECORD KEEPING

- Maintain accurate and timely case records using the charity databases (e.g. Views) and partnership organisations such as NHS EPJS database and IT systems, including MS Excel.
- Use outcome measurement tools, including introductory and end of case 'Talking Points' scale to set goals and encourage reflective practice.
- Prepare client highlights and client feedback using MS Word, MS Excel and other IT systems.
- Contribute to monitoring and reporting requirements linked to contracts and service performance and contracts.

JOB DESCRIPTION AND AGREEMENT

Job Description Agreement

The Job Description is not exhaustive and is subject to change considering the service, work, priorities, or requirements. Such change will be discussed and consulted on with the post holder. Mind in Croydon Ltd reserves the right to vary or amend the duties and responsibilities of the post holder at any time in accordance with the needs of the service. The statements contained in this description reflect general details as necessary to describe the principal functions of the job, the level of knowledge and skill typically required to undertake the role.

It should not be considered an all-inclusive listing of work requirements. Individuals may perform other duties as assigned, including work in other functional areas to cover absences, peak working periods or otherwise to balance the workload.

The dated signature of the current post holder is an agreement that the Job Description provides an accurate outline and picture of the job as it currently exists.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and Experience / Skills / Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Demonstrable evidence of equivalent learning, training or relevant professional experience in housing, homelessness, mental health, social care, welfare rights, community support, employment support, tenancy sustainment, safeguarding or person-centred support	E	
Relevant mental health, housing, social care or psychology training or qualifications.	E	
Knowledge and Experience		
Demonstrable lived, learned or professional experience and understanding of mental health and related issues and difficulties or challenges	E	
Experience of working with people experiencing housing insecurity, homelessness risk, tenancy issues, social isolation, poverty or complex support needs.	E	
Working knowledge and experience of person-centred approaches.		D
Experience of working in voluntary, hospital, health or community settings and building relationships with local groups and organisations		D
Experiencing of working within a multi-disciplinary or partnership-based approach to service delivery.		D
Experience of creating, managing and maintaining high-quality records of contact and interaction with people, working within a caseload.	E	
Experience of peer support approaches and asset/strengths-based care and support systems.		D
Good knowledge of housing, homelessness prevention, tenancy sustainment, welfare benefits, advice pathways and community support systems.	E	
Extensive knowledge and experience of person-centred, strengths-based and recovery-focused approaches	E	
Experience of appropriately managing safeguarding, risk assessment and escalation processes.	E	
Experience of working or living in diverse communities and knowledge of cultural and societal context to mental health, housing and wellbeing		D

Knowledge, Skills and Capabilities

Knowledge and Experience / Skills / Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Ability to work alongside people in non-directive ways, helping them find solutions that work for them.	E	
Ability to focus on and build a person's strengths and their ability to use resources available to them.	E	

Ability to remain recovery-focused, working with empathy, supporting autonomy, empowering the person to define, lead and own their recovery.	E	
Ability to build effective, safe and trusting relationships with people using services and with professional's in multi-disciplinary teams.	E	
Excellent written and verbal communication skills.	E	
Excellent IT and literacy skills.	E	
Ability to travel around the borough in a timely manner as the role requires attendance at in-person meetings.	E	
Ability to work effectively and maintain boundaries when faced with challenging situations.	E	
Experience of working with teams to promote positive wellbeing.	E	
Ability to work Monday – Friday and flexibly across localities as required by the service.	E	
Detailed and up-to-date knowledge of welfare benefits, housing and mental health legislation.	E	
Ability to write and record clear and concise case records and letters and understanding of the need for detailed case recording using database.	E	
Ability to deal in an impartial, courteous, and culturally competent manner, with people from diverse background and with various levels of communication skills.	E	
Ability to make people feel heard and understood throughout the case workload.	E	
Ability to maintain excellent standards of work under pressure.	E	
Ability to work independently on specific tasks, to prioritise tasks and time effectively, and manage workload to meet appropriate standards and performance measures	E	
Understand the implications that a confidentiality policy has for the service.	E	
In negotiating and advocating successfully on behalf of clients with their professionals	E	
Actively acquiring knowledge of services available to clients, forging links with local agencies and other providers and being innovative in seeking out services.	E	
Experience of providing information to assist the Manager in producing comprehensive reports, including on achieving KPIs	E	
Ability to provide effective help to people who may be withdrawn, distressed and/or confused and to manage exposure to dealing with difficult and emotional circumstances/situations.	E	
Be willing to work in and travel to any other place within the community to fulfil the Service Level Agreement Requirements.	E	

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND APPROACH

Knowledge and Experience / Skills / Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Values people and sees their potential, worth and strengths	E	
Develops effective and trusting relationships characterised by respect, non-judgemental and curiosity.	E	

Works inclusively, respecting the diversity of each person's experience, background and cultural context.	E	
Highly motivated and able to learn quickly.	E	
Willing to seek advice appropriately and accept supervision and training as required.	E	
Shares responsibility for their own personal development.	E	
Calm, reflective and confident in managing risk, safeguarding and complex situations.	E	
Collaborative and solution-focused in working with partners around housing, mental health and social support.	E	
Use own initiative to problem solve issues as they present.	E	
Committed to Mind in Croydon's values and to reducing barriers to housing, support and mental health services	E	