

**Helpline Support Officer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reporting to: | Family Support Manager |
| Base: | Autism NI, Unit 3 Forestgrove Business Park, Newtownbreda Road, Belfast, BT8 6AW. |
| Hours: Full Time – 37.5 hrs  Salary £26,409 | |
| Main purpose of job: | * Maintain a helpline service for autistic individuals, parents/carers and professionals. * Signpost and connect to a full range of services. * be a point of contact for autistic individuals and their families to offer support * Assist with administration support for the Family Support department. |

1. **Specific Responsibilities**

* Provide telephone support and signpost to a range of services for the autism community.
* Link parents/carers with Autism NI Support Groups in the community. Be a point of contact for autistic individuals and their families to offer support before they meet with local support groups.
* Build up a portfolio of contacts, services, training, events and activities for the autism community. Contribute to development of a local resource of information and updating of information packs/leaflets where appropriate
* Contribute towards an effective family support service within the local community and work to reduce the isolation that autistic individuals and their families may experience
* Maintain records of activity and provide regular monitoring and evaluation data as required by Family Support Manager.
* Assist with Family Support administration as required.

1. **Confidentiality**

Maintain confidentiality for all areas of Autism NI, its staff and its work. The nature of the work within the charity entrusts people with confidential information about autistic people, their families, carers and staff. Any breach of confidentiality will constitute gross misconduct.

1. **General Responsibilities**

* Co-operate with all Autism NI staff in maintaining good relationships with outside agencies and the general public to uphold the charity’s image and win increased support for its work.
* Promote a positive image of autism and Autism NI.
* Ensure that conduct within and outside work does not conflict with professional expectations of Autism NI.
* Actively support, promote and ensure awareness and observation of Autism NI policies including Equal Opportunities, Data Protection, Fire, Health & Safety and Safeguarding Children & Adults.
* Co-operate with all Autism NI staff in maintaining harmonious inter-personal relations.
* Attend staff meetings and training as required.
* Ensure the respect, dignity and rights of privacy of service users/clients as far as possible.
* Participate in regular management, support and development sessions with the Family Support Manager.
* Carry out any other duties as are within scope, spirit and purpose of the job, the title of the post and it’s grading as requested by the Family Support Manager.

# NOTE: The job description reflects the present requirements of the post. As duties and responsibilities change and develop the job description will be reviewed and subject to amendment in consultation with the post holder.



**EMPLOYEE SPECIFICATION**

**Helpline Support Officer**

**Essential qualifications and experience:**

* A degree qualification or equivalent in a relevant social care or educational discipline
* Experience of working with the voluntary and community sectors
* **At least 1 year of full-time experience in providing telephone support (or equivalent part-time experience),** including a strong understanding of the needs and challenges faced.
* A sound understanding of autism and related interventions
* Competent in the use of Microsoft Office, email and the internet
* Good communication skills and telephone manner

**Desirable qualifications and experience:**

* Awareness of requirements for parents following diagnosis
* A recognised qualification in autism

**Personal qualities:**

* Time management and call management
* Self-motivation and ability to work on own initiative
* Empathy
* Tact and diplomacy
* Ability to manage boundaries
* Confidentiality
* Commitment to Equal Opportunities

**Working conditions of this post are indicated below: -**

**Travel**

Will be required to travel at times within the local area to attend meetings, training, conferences, etc.

**Anti-social hours**

Occasionally may be required to work outside usual working hours. There is a “Time Off in Lieu” policy and procedure.

**Working environment**

Based at Autism NI, Unit 3 Forestgrove Business Park, Newtownbreda Road, Belfast, BT8 6AW.

**Pressures inherent in job**

* Dealing with raised expectations of families
* Distress and uncertainty of families/callers