The Good Shepherd Centre Kilkenny CLG, Church Lane, Kilkenny, R95 PP3F
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Senior Social Worker – Homelessness, Complex Needs and Practice Development

Location: Good Shepherd Centre, Kilkenny

Contract: 3 year fixed term

Hours: 35

Reporting to: Regional Manager

Salary: €62,675 annually

1. Role Purpose

The Senior Social Worker will provide specialist social work expertise, professional guidance and practice leadership across the organisation, supporting ICM's and frontline teams in the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care and case management to individuals experiencing homelessness and complex needs.

The role will have a particular focus on individuals presenting with multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities, including mental health difficulties, substance dependency, physical health conditions, intellectual disabilities, neurodiversity, histories of trauma, safeguarding concerns and prolonged periods of homelessness.

Working collaboratively with ICM's , service managers and external statutory and voluntary agencies, the Senior Social Worker will strengthen the organisation's capacity to respond effectively to complex needs, improve care planning and case management practice, and develop pathways towards sustainable exits from homelessness.

A key function of the position will be to provide specialist support and guidance to frontline staff, facilitate structured case management reviews, identify barriers to progress and help ensure that individuals receive coordinated, appropriate and timely interventions.

The Senior Social Worker will also contribute to organisational practice development through staff training, mentoring, reflective practice, quality assurance and the promotion of evidence-informed, trauma-informed and strengths-based approaches.

The position will balance specialist direct social work intervention with organisational leadership, professional consultation and the development of staff capacity across the organisation. A small caseload will also be maintained.

2. Key Responsibilities

- To work within the Mission and Vision of the Good Shepherd Centre

- To work effectively within the policies of the Organisation.
- Specialist Social Work Support and Complex Case Management
- Provide specialist social work advice, guidance and support to ICM's managing individuals with complex and multiple health, social care and housing needs.
- Support ICM's to undertake comprehensive psychosocial assessments, identify individual needs and develop appropriate care and support interventions.
- Work collaboratively with ICM's to develop, implement and review person-centred care and support plans, ensuring that interventions are meaningful, achievable and focused on individual outcomes.
- Provide direct specialist social work intervention where the complexity of an individual's circumstances requires additional professional expertise or involvement.
- Support staff in managing cases involving co-occurring mental health difficulties, substance dependency, physical health conditions, intellectual disabilities, neurodiversity and complex trauma.
- To attend meetings, training and supervision as required.
- To be flexible in working hours as required.
- Assist ICM's to identify appropriate referral pathways and access specialist health, social care, addiction, mental health and disability services.
- Support staff in managing situations involving disengagement from services, refusal of support, challenging circumstances or complex professional and ethical dilemmas.
- Promote strengths-based, trauma informed environment, recovery-oriented and person-centred approaches that recognise individual choice, dignity, autonomy and lived experience.
- Support the development of clear, coordinated and outcome-focused care plans that address both immediate needs and longer-term housing and wellbeing goals.

B. Case Management Reviews

- Establish and coordinate structured case management reviews across the organisation, prioritising individuals with complex needs or prolonged stays in emergency accommodation.
- Work with ICM's to review care and support plans, assess progress, identify barriers and agree appropriate actions and timescales.
- Identify cases where progress has stalled, individuals have disengaged or existing support arrangements are not meeting their needs.
- Facilitate complex case conferences and multidisciplinary reviews, escalating issues where additional management or external agency intervention is required.
- Promote consistent standards of assessment, care planning, risk management, case recording and review across all projects.
- Monitor the quality of case management practice and contribute to organisational audits, quality assurance and continuous improvement.

C. Accessing Housing Exits and Specialist Support Pathways

- Support ICM's to identify and progress appropriate housing and specialist support pathways for individuals with complex needs.
- Work collaboratively with local authorities, Housing First teams, approved housing bodies and other providers to secure sustainable housing solutions.

- Support access to appropriate specialist placements, including supported housing, residential rehabilitation, step-down medical facilities and long-term care.
- Advocate for individuals experiencing barriers to accessing housing, health and social care services.
- Participate in interagency meetings and case conferences to coordinate support, address barriers and progress appropriate housing solutions.
- Promote continuity of care and support during transitions from emergency accommodation into independent housing or alternative placements.
- Promote effective working between local authority, HSE and voluntary services through effective shared service intervention and other arrangements.
- Liaise effectively with Housing First Regional Clinical Team.

D. Safeguarding, Risk Management and Advocacy

- Provide specialist guidance to ICM's on safeguarding, adult protection, self-neglect, exploitation and the management of complex risks.
- Support staff in navigating issues relating to consent, decision-making capacity, autonomy and duty of care, in accordance with relevant legislation and professional standards.
- Promote balanced, rights-based risk management that respects individual dignity, autonomy and positive risk-taking.
- Advise on appropriate responses, reporting and escalation of safeguarding concerns and complex vulnerabilities, including mental health and addiction-related risks.
- Advocate for individuals experiencing barriers to accessing appropriate services and promote ethical, accountable and person-centred practice across the organisation.

E. Staff Support, Mentoring and Professional Development

- Provide specialist case consultation, professional guidance and practical support to ICM's managing complex cases.
- Work alongside frontline staff to strengthen their confidence and competence in care planning, assessment, intervention and case management.
- Facilitate reflective practice sessions and complex case discussions to support learning and improve professional practice.

Identify organisational training needs and design, coordinate the development and delivery of targeted training for ICM's and support staff on specialized topics including:

- Trauma-informed care and practice.
- Complex trauma and attachment.
- Mental health and dual diagnosis.
- Addiction, harm reduction and overdose prevention.
- Safeguarding and adult protection.
- Decision-making capacity, consent and autonomy.
- Motivational interviewing.
- De-escalation and managing distressed behaviour.
- Intellectual disabilities and neurodiversity.
- Positive risk-taking and professional boundaries.
- Strengths-based and person-centred care planning.
- Promote a culture of continuous learning, reflective practice and professional curiosity.

- Provide mentoring and support to newly qualified social workers, social work students and other relevant staff, where appropriate.
- Identify opportunities to improve the consistency and quality of frontline practice across different projects.
- Support the translation of training and learning into practical improvements in day-to-day service delivery.

F. Interagency Working and Service Development

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with statutory, voluntary and community-based services, including the HSE, local authorities and specialist providers.
- Support ICM's to navigate statutory service systems and access appropriate health, mental health, addiction and social care services for individuals.
- Participate in multidisciplinary meetings and case conferences to coordinate interventions and progress outcomes for individuals.
- Advocate for improved access to services and work collaboratively with external agencies to address gaps in service provision.
- Contribute specialist social work expertise to organisational planning, policy development and continuous service improvement.

G. Practice Development, Quality Assurance and Professional Standards

- Promote consistent, high-quality social work and case management practice across the organisation.
- Contribute to the development and review of policies, procedures and practice guidance, ensuring alignment with relevant legislation, professional standards and national guidance.
- Monitor the quality of assessments, care plans, risk management and case reviews, identifying areas for improvement.
- Promote trauma-informed, inclusive, anti-oppressive and rights-based approaches throughout the organisation.
- Maintain accurate professional records in accordance with GDPR and organisational requirements, maintain CORU registration and undertake ongoing professional development.

Requirements

<u>Essential:</u>

Required Qualifications /Education:

- Third-level qualification in NFQ Level 7 Social Work degree or related field.
- Desired: NFQ8 / NFQ9 Degree in a Social Work or related degree
- Registered member of CORU – Social Worker

<u>Experience</u>

- Minimum 3 years post-qualification experience, with at least 1 year in a senior or supervisory role.
- Demonstrated expertise in safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.
- Strong knowledge of homelessness, housing systems, addiction, and mental health and Intellectual disabilities services in Ireland.

- Excellent communication, advocacy, and inter-agency collaboration skills. - Ability to lead within a multidisciplinary team and promote Housing First principles.
- Evidence continuing professional development.
- Have strong organisational and communication, IT skills (e.g.MS Office).
- Ability to coordinate and work across community and outreach settings with the Housing First case management teams and other multidisciplinary partners
- Full driving license with access to a car at all times.