Advocacy Lead

Employer: DATUS (Enabling Recovery)
Location: BIRCH Hub (Birmingham) with citywide outreach
Contract: Permanent
Hours: Part-time, 26.25 hours/week (0.7 FTE), Mon–Fri 9am–5pm
Salary: Circa £26,500 per annum FTE (£18,550 pro rata)
Grade: 2

Job Description

Reports to: Services Lead
Line management: None
Checks: Enhanced DBS and two references

Job Purpose

To lead DATUS' advocacy function, ensuring individuals are supported to overcome barriers to recovery and that systemic and practical obstacles are identified, challenged, and resolved.

The Advocacy Lead will provide leadership and coordination of advocacy support within DATUS, ensuring that the voices of individuals in recovery are heard and acted upon. The role will focus on empowering clients to navigate services, assert their rights, and influence decisions that affect their recovery journeys.

Working closely with staff teams and community partners, the postholder will collect information through direct client engagement, staff referrals, and service feedback, translating this into meaningful action and systemic change, ensuring that Advocacy KPIs, targets and measures are collected and relayed appropriately.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the design and delivery of advocacy services that are recovery-focused, strengths-based, and client-led.

Individual Advocacy

- Gather and act on information from a range of sources, including direct client requests and feedback, staff referrals, and community/partner organisation input.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns identified during advocacy work are addressed in line with organisational and statutory requirements.
- Provide one-to-one advocacy support, enabling clients to express their views, access services, and challenge stigma.
- Support women survivors of domestic or sexual abuse to become safe and remove barriers to their recovery.

- Ensure clients are actively involved in the design and review of their support, in line with DATUS' ethos of 'no decision about me, without me.'
- Support individuals to address barriers to recovery, including:
    - Access to treatment
    - Housing issues
    - Benefits and financial challenges
    - Family and parenting issues
    - Engagement with services

System Navigation & Problem Solving

- Work directly with services (including specialist treatment providers) to resolve issues affecting individuals
- Challenge barriers and delays within systems
- Ensure individuals are supported to access the right support at the right time
- Identify systemic barriers affecting clients and escalate concerns to DATUS leadership for inclusion in service planning, policy influence, and reports to commissioners.
- Liaise with external agencies (e.g., health, housing, employment, and criminal justice partners) to advocate on behalf of clients.

Issue Identification & Escalation

- Identify recurring themes and systemic issues affecting recovery
- Escalate and address issues within DATUS and partner systems
- Contribute to service improvement through insight and challenge

Advocacy Systems & Processes

- Develop clear, consistent approaches to advocacy support
- Ensure accurate recording and tracking of advocacy activity
- Monitor outcomes and impact

Performance & Reporting

- Monitor and report on advocacy activity and outcomes
- Ensure alignment with DATUS KPIs and targets
- Provide insight into barriers, risks, and opportunities
- Maintain effective systems for recording advocacy issues, outcomes, and themes, ensuring compliance with GDPR and confidentiality standards.

Collaboration

- Work closely with internal teams, such as Programmes, CRC, Research, Day Programme etc. fostering professional and collegiate approach to build and sustain an effective and cohesive team.

- Ensure advocacy informs service development and delivery
- Contribute to a joined-up, person-centred approach
- Collaborate with Day Program Leads, Facilitators, and other staff to integrate advocacy into all aspects of DATUS' work.

- Promote DATUS' values of inclusivity, recovery, and community empowerment through all advocacy activities.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Targets

The Advocacy Lead role is a leadership role within DATUS. KPIs and targets, contractual or non-contractual, may change over time, be referenced in DATUS' annual Business Plan and will be incorporated into the Advocacy Lead's annual appraisal objectives.

The Advocacy Lead is required to evidence how this the role supports DATUS in meeting or exceeding the following KPIs and targets, particular emphasis on **role-related KPIs** have been highlighted in **bold**:

1. Increased referrals, engagement and retention across treatment and recovery pathways.
2. **Early identification and early intervention through community, peer and partner referral routes**
3. **Delivery of evidence-based brief interventions**
4. Increased uptake of harm reduction interventions
5. Improved access to naloxone and overdose prevention
6. **Improved continuity of care between treatment, recovery and community support (no wrong door)**
7. **Improved recovery progression and sustained recovery outcomes including planned completions, sustained engagement and reduced re-presentation to treatment**
8. Increased community-based recovery support and visible recovery including growth of recovery communities, peer roles and visible recovery activity
9. **Reduced stigma and improved awareness of treatment and recovery pathways**
10. Improved access for underserved / marginalised communities with increased representation of underserved groups in access, engagement and outcomes
11. **Improved access to wider health and wellbeing support including housing, employment, mental health and physical health support**
12. **Improved data capture, pathway reporting and system intelligence including real-time data, outcome tracking and recovery intelligence to inform system planning**

Person Specification

Experience

- Lived experience of recovery (Genuine Occupational Requirement).
- Experience in advocacy, support work, or casework
- Experience working with individuals facing complex barriers
- Experience navigating health, housing, or social care systems
- Experience resolving issues and advocating on behalf of individuals
- Experience providing advocacy or support services for people affected by addiction, mental health, or social disadvantage.
- Experience gathering information from multiple sources (e.g., clients, staff referrals, and partners) and translating it into action.
- Experience of partnership working with statutory and voluntary agencies.

  Desirable:
  - Experience in a coordination role within advocacy or recovery services.

Skills and Knowledge

- Strong understanding of addiction, recovery, and the importance of advocacy in addressing barriers and stigma.
- Ability to communicate effectively with clients from diverse backgrounds, including those who may feel disempowered or excluded.
- Knowledge of safeguarding responsibilities and risk management.
- Competence in record-keeping, IT systems, and data analysis for identifying trends and outcomes.
- Ability to influence and negotiate with partner agencies to achieve positive outcomes for clients.
- Strong understanding of barriers to recovery
- Ability to problem-solve and challenge systems constructively
- Strong communication and negotiation skills
- Ability to manage complex and sensitive situations
- Ability to monitor and report on activity and outcomes

Qualifications and Training

- Relevant qualifications or training in advocacy, advice and guidance, social care, or related fields.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development and supervision.

  Desirable:
  - Training in safeguarding, equality and diversity, or trauma-informed practice.

Personal Attributes

- Lived experience of recovery used appropriately in a professional context
- Team player, able to build and sustain relationships
- Empathetic, compassionate, and committed to client-centred practice.
- Builds team cohesion and trust in teams
- Strong sense of fairness and commitment to equity
- Assertive, confident, and solution-focused
- Resilient and persistent
- Able to work autonomously and take initiative
- Confident, assertive, and able to challenge constructively on behalf of clients.
- Resilient, with the ability to manage emotionally demanding situations.
- Committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Flexible and adaptable, able to respond to changing needs and priorities.
- Aligned with DATUS' values of lived experience, recovery, and community empowerment.

Equal Opportunities

DATUS is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from all backgrounds and do not discriminate based on age, disability, gender identity, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race/ethnicity, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status or lived experience of recovery.

Being a woman is an occupational requirement for this post under Schedule 9, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010. Much of the advocacy work is with women in recovery, including women facing domestic abuse, exploitation or child protection proceedings, who need to be supported by a woman. Women are also under-represented in drug and alcohol treatment, which is a barrier to recovery in itself.

Safeguarding

We are committed to safeguarding adults at risk. All roles are subject to satisfactory references and an Enhanced DBS check. Induction includes safeguarding and boundaries training.