

Job Profile, Responsibilities and Person Specification			
Post:	Development Officer (Scotland) – Lifelong Links	Responsible to:	Lifelong Links Project Director (Scotland)
Hours:	3.5 days a week (24.5 hours per week)	Contract:	Fixed term for four years
Grading:	£36,379 - £39,177 pro rata + 5% pension contribution	Location:	The Development Officer will be based in Scotland. Location to be discussed with candidates however, the post holder will be expected especially in the first year to spend a significant amount of time in Edinburgh or Glasgow.
Leave:	19 days per year (increasing to 21 days) + pro rata bank holiday entitlement		
Job Profile:			
<p>The aim of Lifelong Links is to create a life-long support network for children and young people in the care system.</p> <p>The Lifelong Links approach draws upon a combination of a family finding model, which originated in the United States and the family group conference model, which originated in New Zealand. In designing the Lifelong Links process, Family Rights Group listened to the views of children and young people in care and care leavers. We also took into account the perspective of parents, carers, social workers and other practitioners. Lifelong Links aims to identify and engage relatives and other supportive adults connected to a child in care and who are willing to make a life-long commitment to that child. Research shows that the continuity and permanence of these relationships can offer ongoing practical and emotional support, provide an explanation of historical events, and reinforce identity, belonging and a sense of self for the child.</p> <p>We are now undertaking an independently evaluated trial of Lifelong Links initially in ten localities (seven in England and three in Scotland). The trial is aimed at children and young people aged under 16 years who have entered care within the last three years and for whom there is no plan for them to live within their family or be adopted.</p> <p>Your role will be to support these localities to fully participate in the trial and then help roll out Lifelong Links to other Scottish local authorities and related organisations willing to introduce and sustain a Lifelong Links service. Given that relatively few Scottish local authorities currently run or commission family group conferences (FGCs) on any scale, part of your role will be to help develop FGC capacity in Scotland so that additional sites can be in a position to simultaneously or subsequently develop Lifelong Links services.</p>			

Job Description - Key Responsibilities:

1. To have a leading role in the development of Lifelong Links in Scotland. Working closely with FRG's Lifelong Links team.

You will be responsible for:

- Delivering consultancy sessions and ongoing support to Glasgow, Edinburgh, West Lothian and other 'second wave' local authority trial sites.
- Working with the Scottish FGC Network to influence the national policy and legislative agenda.
- Helping to run awareness-raising sessions to a range of audiences.
- Producing materials for a range of audiences.
- Ensuring that stakeholders, including care experienced young people and families are central to the development of the work, including but not limited to helping to develop stakeholder forums.
- Training those managing and delivering Lifelong Links, referrers, and others as relevant.
- Convening a learning exchange programme between the Scottish Lifelong Links trial sites.
- Working with the trial sites to support them to meet the requirements for the evaluation of Lifelong Links.
- Working with the trial sites to develop and implement an effective communications strategy in order to promote internal 'buy in' and generate wider interest in Lifelong Links.
- Organising events including policy seminars and conferences to promote the evaluation findings.
- Contributing to the development of a sustainable business plan to promote the rollout of Lifelong Links, including delivering of commissioned training and consultancy.

2. To have a leading role in helping build the capacity of local authorities to deliver family group conferences in Scotland.

This will include:

- Convening 'capacity building' events in Scotland aimed at informing Scottish local authority decision makers and other stakeholders of the benefits of FGCs.
- Providing consultancy support to local authorities wishing to develop FGC practice locally and offering a programme of continuing support to assist with the implementation of FGC services.
- Delivering training and awareness raising sessions for key stakeholders in those local authorities wishing to develop FGC practice locally.
- Working with the Scottish FGC Network to help develop quality assurance systems for FGC practice including the roll out of FRG's accreditation framework in Scotland.

- Contributing to and advising on the development of the quality assurance framework for FGC co-ordinator training in Scotland.
- Advising and helping to assess the readiness of those local authorities, who have established or have clear plans in place to establish or commission FGC services, and wish to participate in the 'second wave' of the Lifelong Links trial.

3. Management and supervision

- You will be line managed by the Lifelong Links Project Director (Scotland) and will receive supervision from them.
- You will also participate in project development meetings involving all FRG team members involved in this work in the UK and quarterly all staff meetings. This will sometimes involve travel to London.

4. Project work

- To project manage the work in collaboration with participating local authorities, contribute to monitoring reports for funders and undertake work as required and ensure that this is done within agreed time-scales.
- To contribute to project-related publications (including guides, training packs, leaflets, articles and books).
- To participate in the Scottish Lifelong Links Steering group and the UK wide Practice Development Group.
- To link to the work undertaken by FRG in the rest of the UK concerning the promotion and support of FGC and Lifelong Links practice, including lobbying, training and contributing to other FGC related work.
- Where appropriate to contribute to FRG projects which are the responsibility of other policy staff.

5. General responsibilities

To contribute and participate in FRG's work in promoting strength based work with families:

- To establish and maintain contacts with other relevant organisations in Scotland.
- To keep abreast of developments within Scotland concerning the legal and policy framework as it relates to FGC and Lifelong Links work.
- To ensure that the work responds to the experience and views of children and families involved with children's social care services.
- To ensure that all services are delivered in line with the organisation's equal opportunities policy.

- To undertake any other tasks as requested by the Chief Executive which are broadly compatible with the remit of the post.

Person Specification:

1. Professional qualifications, knowledge and experience

Experience of delivering family group conferences.

Experience of working directly with young people and with families.

Experience of developing and delivering FGC training and awareness raising sessions with referrers and other stakeholders.

Excellent understanding of the Scottish child welfare legal and policy framework and procedures in Scotland.

Experience of managing family group conference services (desirable).

You will be qualified as a social worker or lawyer with post qualifying experience of children and families work (desirable).

2. Anti-Discriminatory Practice

You will be able to demonstrate and apply a knowledge and understanding of the way in which discrimination impacts on families, including minority ethnic families, asylum seeking families and disabled parents.

3. Project Management

Able to work independently and to manage work according to the project timetable and key milestones.

Able to liaise with external agencies who are participants in the project and other partner agencies working with Family Rights Group.

Able to ensure that funds are spent as agreed with the funders and that any project work undertaken is completed within the allocated budget.

Able to demonstrate knowledge and experience of the principles and practice of supporting service user participation.

You will be competent at working within an equalities framework.

Proven experience of being an excellent team worker.

4. Training

Able to develop and deliver training courses for a wide range of participants.

Experience of writing and preparing training materials (desirable).

5. Communication Skills

Able to develop positive relationships with people from a range of organisations and backgrounds.

Able to work with and promote the interests of children, young people and families.

Able to represent Family Rights Group by presenting and discussing the organisation's work to a variety of audiences.

Able to communicate clearly, verbally and in writing, to both professional and non-professional audiences.

Experience of preparing clear written reports and verbal presentations.

Ability to work collaboratively with people from other organisations.

6. Self-Management

Highly motivated and able to organise own work. You will be skilled in handling a busy workload, meeting deadlines and managing conflicting priorities.

7. IT

You will have good IT skills and a willingness to develop these as required by the post.

8. Other Requirements

You will have an understanding of and commitment to the aims of the organisation.

You will be able to travel in the UK and occasionally stay away from home overnight and attend some early morning/ evening meetings, with notice.