

JOB SPECIFICATION

<p>JOB TITLE</p>	<p>Information & Support Assistant</p>
<p>DETAILS OF SAGE AND ITS SERVICE</p>	<p>The development of Sage Advocacy has been influenced by the scandals of Leas Cross in 2005, and Áras Attracta and Portlaoise Hospital in 2014. First established in June 2014 as a support and advocacy service for older people by the HSE, The Atlantic Philanthropies and Third Age, it was in 2016 asked to explore how it might address some of the more systemic issues relating to people with intellectual disabilities in the South-East. Sage Advocacy clg was established in September 2017 and on March 1st 2018 it assumed full responsibility for the governance and future development of the service. On July 1st 2018 the patient advocacy services, previously provided by Patient Focus, moved to Sage Advocacy which is now a support and advocacy service for vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients.</p> <p>In circumstances where people may be vulnerable, or have to depend on others, there is a need to ensure that their rights, freedoms and dignity are promoted and protected. Through support and advocacy the will and preference of a person can be heard and acted on; independently of family, service provider or systems interests. The mission of Sage Advocacy is “To promote, protect and defend the rights and dignity of vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients”.</p> <p>Sage Advocacy aims to ensure that vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients have easy access to independent and impartial support and advocacy services in all settings: homes: day centres, respite facilities, congregated care settings / nursing homes, hospitals, hostels, hospices and in the process of transition between them. The key elements of the approach to developing the service included safety and quality, support and advocacy continuum, systemic and individual advocacy, social impact and sustainability.</p> <p>Many people face challenges to their independence due to physical or mental illness, intellectual, physical or sensory disability, lack of family and community supports or an inability to access public services that meet their needs. Some people communicate differently and with difficulty and some people slowly lose their ability to make and communicate decisions as a condition, such as dementia, develops over time. Some are abused and exploited because of their vulnerability. Others feel disregarded or let down by healthcare services while some are harmed through adverse events or medical negligence.</p> <p>Patient advocacy services are most often sought by individual patients or family members who have experienced difficulties in acute hospital settings. Support is also provided to people in community settings who experience difficulty in accessing or engaging with health and social care services.</p>
<p>REPORTING RELATIONSHIP</p>	<p>The Information & Support Assistant will report to the Administrator for the first six months, working closely with the Service Manager and the Information & Support Coordinator and thereafter reporting to the Information & Support Coordinator.</p> <p>Key Relationships: Members of the public, clients of Sage Advocacy, service providers. Sage Advocacy colleagues in regional and central roles including Regional Managers, Legal Adviser, Information & Support Coordinator and others. Members of the Board and Committees of Sage Advocacy clg and related work groups.</p>

<p>PURPOSE OF THE POST</p>	<p>The primary purpose of the Information & Support Assistant (ISA) is to directly provide an information and support service to callers to Sage and to assist in the development and coordination of the support services of Sage Advocacy in relation to both general and patient advocacy. The ISA will act as a first point of contact with Sage Advocacy, answering and screening calls to the National Office, gathering and recording necessary key information as quickly as possible, providing basic information and support immediately, and, as necessary, referring on to Patient Advocates, Regional Coordinators and Sage Representatives with issue-specific knowledge and skills. The ISA will be managed by the Administrator and supported by the Service Manager and the Information & Support Coordinator. The ISA also contributes to maximising the level of service available to deal with support (Green) issues while referring advocacy (Amber & Red) issues on to Patient Advocates and Regional Coordinators.</p>
<p>PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	<p>SUPPORT WORK</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as a first point of contact for people calling by phone to the National Office during office hours in collaboration with other staff and volunteers • Subject to developments led by the Service Manager, overseeing the operation of a rota system for the 1850 line / Rapid Response Service including fielding calls and responding to calls, ensuring a timely response to callers (between 8:00 – 22:00), and monitoring and reporting on the operation of the service generally • Working with colleagues to develop a group of Sage Representatives with relevant skills to ensure the necessary level of cover at times of greatest demand or in anticipation of increased demand in relation to both mainline and 1850 Information / Rapid Response Service calls • Gathering and recording necessary key information in order to identify the appropriate level of support or advocacy that might be required in relation to both mainline and 1850 Information / Rapid Response Service calls • Providing first response information to callers to Sage Advocacy on a range of issues typically of concern to users of Sage Advocacy’s services and referring on for support or advocacy as necessary • Recording all calls and referrals in such a way as to enable effective reporting on issues and trends. <p>INFORMATION & PROMOTION</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Sage Advocacy and its services to callers by, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring callers are aware of the 1850 service and of its availability and of the information and resources available on the website • Providing ‘signposts’ and links to relevant information sources or contact details of other services such as Complaints Officers, Citizens Information Services, National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities, Irish Advocacy Network, etc. • Sending out relevant information by post. <p>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to developments led by the Service Manager, organising the roster of staff and volunteers to ensure a timely and quality response to calls to both the mainline and 1850 Information / Rapid Response Service across the respective hours of operation • Coordinating, contributing to and developing training for volunteers for mainline and 1850 as required • Coordinating any Sage Advocacy Representatives who are providing volunteer support in or via the National Office during daytime hours • Ensuring the quality of own work, and reporting on performance based on the Sage Performance Framework • Contributing to resource development e.g. website • Using ICT as efficiently as possible to capture and support all aspects of the business • Administration tasks as required.

	<p>SPECIALIST SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping up to date a list of subject experts and specialist supports within Sage Advocacy who can assist in responding to requests for support.
<p>OTHER REQUIREMENTS RELEVANT TO THE POST</p>	<p>This is an office-based post whose success is dependent on good communication and interaction with the general public, vulnerable adults, older people, healthcare patients and members of their families, service providers and colleagues in the national office and working across the country. The need for ongoing support and supervision regarding the wide range of issues and how they are handled is an important aspect of this role.</p>
<p>SKILLS, COMPETENCIES, ATTRIBUTES AND KNOWLEDGE</p>	<p>COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Sage Advocacy staff should be able to communicate well with a wide range of people and professions (in writing, in person, on the phone). They should be able to give clear general information to the public, to health and social care professionals, to people with differing communication abilities and to the relatives of clients. <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ISA should be able to manage relationships with a wide range of people and elicit their trust, especially with vulnerable adults, older people, healthcare patients, distressed or bereaved relatives and with people whose attitudes and behaviours they may find challenging • The ISA should have some experience of managing volunteers with expertise relevant to the issues which arise for clients of Sage Advocacy • The ISA must be able to collaborate, negotiate and agree plans with salaried and volunteer colleagues • The ISA must be able to take guidance and manage their time and energy according to workload and priority. They should know the criteria for seeking input, for managing/prioritising issues and for making referrals. <p>PROMOTION OF SAGE ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY-BUILDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ISA must have initiative and be able to identify and take opportunities to promote Sage Advocacy and its services at any level • The ISA should be able to identify and communicate with local and national experts who may be of assistance to Sage Advocacy and its clients, e.g. clinical, social care, legal, complaints, mediation and dispute resolution experts • The ISA should be able to contribute to the building of comprehensive IT-based ‘maps’ of acute hospitals at local, group and national level • The ISA should be able to liaise regularly with acute hospitals to help keep support and advocacy ‘on their radar’ and to help identify potential support and advocacy needs. <p>KNOWLEDGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ISA should have a good understanding of the policy and legal frameworks within which Sage Advocacy operates • The ISA should be willing to become highly knowledgeable on consent and decision-making processes, complaints and review systems, enquiry and coronial procedures • The ISA should have a general awareness of the wider systems of health and social care governance and provision and how to access health and social care services and the options are generally available to people • The ISA should have good ICT skills, be able to maintain records and use the Sage Advocacy data recording/management systems and be able to keep track of and account for resources and responses to request for support and advocacy.

	<p>PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES/CHARACTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sage Advocacy staff must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Be approachable, friendly and easy to talk to; non-judgemental; sensitive to others; involving and inclusive. · Be respectful of people, their privacy and of their relationships with family members/social networks · Be self-aware and assured without being arrogant or egotistic · Value individual autonomy, self-determination and personal empowerment · Be proactive and willing to take initiative regarding raising advocacy awareness among health and social care services personnel · Be vigilant, attentive to instances of poor quality and standards and the status of vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients · Be open to self-review, to receiving feedback and accepting support, supervision and mentoring · Be independent and free from any conflicts of interest · Be compassionate as well as passionate about enabling vulnerable adults, older people and healthcare patients to have their voice heard · Be curious, creative, innovative and flexible, open to exploring different ways of doing things and problem solving whilst understanding the wider context and the possible implications of different approaches · Be resilient and able to handle challenging people and situations and supporting people who have been suddenly bereaved or are experiencing complex grieving.
<p>TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT</p>	<p>This appointment is subject to the continued availability of funding. A probation period of 6 months will apply. The salary range is €30,000 - €35,000 per year and there are 25 days annual leave. A pension scheme will be phased in as resources permit.</p>