

**Job Description**

**Job title: Independent Advocate/Paid Representative**

**Reports to**: **Advocacy Manager**

**Hours:** **Full time 37 hours per week**

**Salary:** **£26,511**

**Location:** **Home based with flexibility to cover Devon-wide remit**

**Contract:** **Permanent**

**NB** This post is exclusively funded through the Devon County Council (DCC) Devon Advocacy Service contract to deliver advocacy services in accordance with the DCC specification. The successful applicant will need to provide two references and a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure at enhanced level.

# Background

Living Options Devon (LOD) is a charity and a company limited by guarantee founded over 30 years ago.Our vision is of an accessible and inclusive society in which every individual has the choice and opportunity to achieve their full potential and take part as an equal and valued citizen.

We exist to ensure people with disabilities and Deaf people, using sign language can make an active and equal contribution in society. Specifically, we:

* Encourage people to feel more informed, valued and confident to take part in society through relevant training and support;
* Enable people to identify priorities and develop user-led services;
* Engage people in effective communication with local/national service commissioners and providers; and
* Empower people to raise awareness of what society needs to do to provide equality of opportunity both locally and nationally.

We believe in a fully accessible society where all people can enjoy freedom of choice and equality of opportunity. We operate a culture of open communication, empowerment and development, where individual differences and abilities are respected, and people are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Living Options Devon is a user-led organisation, and we welcome and encourage applications from diverse candidates including disabled and Deaf people.

**Service Profile**

The Devon Advocacy Consortium is commissioned by Devon County Council to provide a high quality Independent Advocacy service across Devon and Torbay for vulnerable adults with complex health or social care needs due to physical, learning or sensory disability, Deafness (for whom British Sign Language is their first or preferred language), Acquired Brain Injury and/ or general frailty.

The aim of the Devon Advocacy Consortium (which is made up of a number of local specialist providers) is to provide a joined up advocacy service which meets the needs of vulnerable people across Devon and Torbay.

**Job Profile**

* To act as a generic advocate for vulnerable adults with complex health or social care support needs due to physical, learning, and/or sensory disability or general frailty.
* To represent people who are deprived of their liberty in residential /supported living/ domestic settings.

## Key responsibilities and tasks

**Generic Advocacy:**

* Support people referred for generic non-statutory advocacy in accordance with the Advocacy Charter principles.
* Liaise with health and social care professionals, attend meetings, and provide reports.
* Ensure clear and accurate recording of case work on the service data base.

**Deprivation of Liberty Work**

* Represent and support the person in all matters relating to a Standard Authorisation or Court Order authorising a deprivation of liberty.
* Maintain regular face-to-face contact with the deprived person.
* Support the deprived person to understand the effects of the DoLS Standard Authorisation/Court Order.
* Support the deprived person to understand their right to request a review of the Standard Authorisation and/or challenge the Standard Authorisation in the Court of Protection.
* Ascertain the deprived person’s views on their care and accommodation, and the restrictions imposed on them, under the Standard Authorisation/Court Order.
* Ensure that the deprived person’s views are communicated to the residential home/supported living management, Local Authority DoLS team, other professionals, e.g. social workers, and family, as appropriate.
* Monitor compliance with any conditions attached to the Standard Authorisation/Court order bringing non-compliance issues to the attention of the DoLS team/appropriate Local Authority professional.
* Request a review of the Standard Authorisation based on any of the qualifying criteria if appropriate.
* Initiate a challenge to the Standard Authorisation, on behalf of the deprived person, in the Court of Protection if appropriate.
* Ensure clear and accurate recording of case work on the service data base.
* Prepare reports for the Local Authority at specified intervals or on request.

## General

* Ensure the requirements for internal and external monitoring and evaluation are met.
* Work in accordance with all Living Options Devon’s policies and procedures.
* Promote positive team working, ensuring good communication, cohesiveness and collaborative team working.
* Undertake any other duties commensurate with the grading of the post, as agreed with the Advocacy Manager.
* Liaise with the Advocacy Manager in the event of holidays/sickness/other absences.
* Work flexibly, supporting the LOD Advocacy team, when required.
* To undertake an initial training and induction programme.
* To take part in supervision, team development and individual performance reviews as required.
* To attend and participate in regular Advocacy team meetings and occasional LOD staff meetings.
* To actively participate in an appraisal/personal development planning process.
* To support the learning and practice of other members of the Advocacy team as appropriate.
* To perform other duties that may be required by the employer to provide effective advocacy to clients and to ensure the efficient running of the service.

## Personal Development

* Undertake mandatory initial training and induction programme.
* Undertake and complete all relevant Mental Capacity Act (MCA), Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), and Safeguarding of Adults training.
* Actively participate in LOD’s Performance Management process.
* Undertake and implement agreed training & personal development.

Due to the requirement to work in very rural areas of Devon and Torbay, it is essential that the post-holder has access to a motor vehicle which is adequately maintained and insured for the purposes of undertaking business mileage. Staff will be required to provide evidence of their driving licence, insurance and MOT (if applicable); this is checked annually. Travel expenses will be met in accordance with LOD’s Expenses Policy.

The duties described in this job description must be carried out in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity, dignity and due respect for all employees and service users and is consistent with LOD’s Equal Opportunities Policy.

All LOD job descriptions will be kept under review.

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| **Person Specification** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Knowledge and Qualifications** |
| Good general higher education | 🗸 |  |
| High level of literacy and numeracy | 🗸 |  |
| Good understanding of the principles of advocacy | 🗸 |  |
| Proven understanding of the needs of people with physical or sensory disabilities or older people | 🗸 |  |
| Good working knowledge of statutory and voluntary services |  | 🗸 |
| Ability to travel around Devon | 🗸 |  |
| Understanding of the issues around Safeguarding and confidentiality | 🗸 |  |
| Health and social care related qualification |  | 🗸 |
| Accredited Advocacy qualification |  | 🗸 |
| Knowledge of relevant current legislation (e.g. Care Act, MCA) |  | 🗸 |
| Clear understanding of the role and potential of volunteers |  | 🗸 |
| Computer literate with knowledge of Word, Excel, Outlook and use of internet | 🗸 |  |
| **Experience** |
| Previous advocacy experience |  | 🗸 |
| Experience of working with people with complex problems | 🗸 |  |
| Experience of empowering people | 🗸 |  |
| Experience of managing own caseloads and prioritising needs | 🗸 |  |
| Experience of working with health and social care |  | 🗸 |
| Experience of working to Advocacy Charter principles  |  | 🗸 |
| Skills |
| Strong problem solving skills | 🗸 |  |
| Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with service users, professionals and others | 🗸 |  |
| Excellent writing and reporting skills | 🗸 |  |
| Good creativity skills | 🗸 |  |
| Effective organisational skills | 🗸 |  |
| Other |
| Commitment to the values and policies of LOD | 🗸 |  |
| Willingness to work very occasional evenings or weekends | 🗸 |  |
| Willingness to act as a team player but motivated when working alone | 🗸 |  |
| Flexible and co-operative attitude to work routine  | 🗸 |  |
| Interest in disability and Deaf issues | 🗸 |  |
| Personal experience of disability or Deafness |  | 🗸 |