IMPROVING LIVES PLYMOUTH · JOB DESCRIPTION

Community Involvement Practitioner

Job	Community Involvement Practitioner
Focus Area / Work Streams	Co-production, System Change, Service Improvement, Trauma Informed Practice, Networks
Contract Type	Permanent
Salary	£23,168.60 – £24,733.80
Hours	35 hours per week (or job share considered)
Location	City Centre Wellbeing Hub, Mannamead Hub, Community and Remote Working
Reporting to	System Change and Networks Service Lead
Responsible for	Connecting with people accessing support, supporting volunteers
Key Stakeholders	Plymouth City Council, Public Health, NHS, Adult Social Care, Citizens Advice, Plymouth Community Homes, VCSE Organisations

Whilst this post is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, we are an active employer and welcome applications from people who have lived and living experience of multiple areas of disadvantage and may have had contact with the Justice System.

Role Summary and Purpose

The Community Involvement Practitioner will work as part of The Hive at Improving Lives, a collaborative and relationship-based approach that brings people, communities and services together around what matters most to an individual.

The Hive is about making better use of the support, strengths and opportunities that already exist, helping different services work together rather than expecting people to navigate complex services on their own.

You will provide practical, person-centred support to people experiencing difficult circumstances and interconnected challenges, helping them move from crisis towards greater stability, confidence, connection and resilience.

You will offer a consistent and trusted point of contact, taking time to understand the whole person rather than focusing on a single issue or service. Working alongside an individual, you will identify strengths, priorities and aspirations, co-produce a personalised plan and help call in help by bringing together the right support from health, housing, social care, advice, community and voluntary sector services.

A key part of The Hive approach is that services organise themselves around the person, rather than the person having to navigate the system.

By developing this 'Team Around Me' approach, advocacy, community connection and strong partnership relationships, the Practitioner will help coordinate joined-up action, reduce repeated storytelling and identify gaps or barriers that may be preventing someone from moving forward and getting the help they need.

The role will also focus on connection beyond formal services, recognising the importance of relationships, community, activities, interests and local opportunities in helping people to thrive.

Alongside direct work with individuals, the Practitioner will also play an important role in co-production and system learning.

They will capture themes from what they hear and learn from people's living experiences, frontline practice and partnership working, ensuring that people's experiences do not simply improve their own support but help shape how services develop and improve.

This learning will be fed back into Improving Lives Plymouth and partner organisations to support reflective practice, identify recurring barriers within services and contribute to improving service delivery for everyone.

Working as a Specialist in an Integrated Service

At Improving Lives Plymouth, we recognise that people's lives do not fit neatly into service boxes. People may be navigating housing insecurity, poor health, poverty, caring responsibilities, loneliness, trauma, discrimination or barriers to accessing support at the same time.

This role brings relational approaches and the ability to 'call in' help from services while working as part of a wider integrated team.

You will not be expected to be an expert in every service area but will develop a broad understanding of Improving Lives Plymouth and partner services so that people can access the right support when they need it without unnecessary handovers.

You will be supported in your role, and complex or specialist matters will be referred or escalated appropriately. Induction, training, reflective practice, regular 1-2-1s and continuing professional development will support you to build knowledge, skills and confidence over time.

Key Responsibilities

1 Relational, Person-Centred Practice

- Build and maintain safe, trusting and purposeful relationships with people accessing support.
- Listen to what matters most to each person and work alongside them to identify strengths, priorities, goals and the support they want.
- Co-produce personalised resilience plans and review progress with the individual.
- Use trauma-informed, strengths-based, person-centred and relational approaches in every aspect of the role.
- Balance practical support, advocacy and empowerment while maintaining clear and appropriate professional boundaries.
- Remain alongside individuals until agreed support is working effectively, with transitions and endings planned transparently and safely.

2 Coordinated Support, Navigation and Casework

- Manage a small caseload of people who require coordinated, relationship-based support.
- Coordinate practical support across health, housing, social care, advice, community and voluntary sector services.
- Help people understand their rights, options and available support so they can make informed decisions.
- Provide practical help with referrals, appointments, forms, applications and navigating services where this is within the scope of the role.
- Advocate with and for individuals across organisational boundaries, promoting choice, voice and control.
- Recognise when specialist advice or intervention is required and refer or escalate appropriately.
- Maintain momentum, follow through agreed actions and review whether support is working from the person's perspective.

3 Team Around Me and Partnership Working

- Arrange, coordinate and contribute to Team Around Me meetings where appropriate, supporting shared responsibility and joined-up action.
- Build constructive relationships with statutory, voluntary, community and healthcare partners.
- Contribute to multi-agency case discussions and support proportionate information sharing to enable people to get the help they need without repeatedly retelling their story.
- Develop and maintain knowledge of local services, community groups, resources and referral routes.
- Work across organisational boundaries to reduce duplication and the need for people to repeat their story.

4 Community Connections and Accessible Support

- Connect with groups, activities, networks, sources of advice and wider wellbeing opportunities that reflect their interests and goals, including The Hive's Space for Change Lived Experience groups.

- Support people to strengthen informal networks, community connections and sources of mutual support.
- Deliver support flexibly across home, office, community and remote settings according to agreed needs and safe working arrangements.
- Promote equality, inclusion and accessibility, including support for people who experience digital exclusion.
- Contribute to community engagement activities that strengthen awareness and accessibility of local support.

5 Learning, Co-production and Service Improvement

- Create formal and informal opportunities for people's experiences to shape The Hive and improve services, including the lived experience groups Space for Change.
- Capture learning from frontline practice, lived experience and partnership working in a way that respects confidentiality and consent.
- Contribute to reflective practice, supervision, the project community of practice and wider partnership learning.
- Work with the service lead, colleagues and partners on project planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.
- Identify recurring barriers, gaps and opportunities for system improvement and communicate these constructively.
- Value lived experience as expertise and support meaningful co-production rather than consultation alone.

6 Operational Delivery and Professional Practice

- Manage referrals, appointments, caseload activity and records using organisational systems and databases, which you will be trained in.
- Maintain accurate, confidential and timely records in line with organisational policy, contractual requirements and data protection legislation.
- Undertake safeguarding, risk assessment and lone-working responsibilities in accordance with policy and best practice.
- Monitor outcomes and contribute to quality assurance, evaluation and continuous improvement.
- Participate in induction, training, supervision and continuing professional development.
- Support volunteers and students where appropriate and within agreed arrangements.
- Work flexibly across locations and service areas to meet project needs and champion Improving Lives Plymouth's values of honesty, kindness, respect and listening.

Person Specification

Experience

We welcome applications from people with a range of backgrounds. The following experience would be beneficial:

- Working alongside people experiencing complex, multiple or interconnected challenges.
- Providing one-to-one support, information and advice, support planning or casework.
- Building trusted relationships while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- Either achieving positive outcomes with individuals within social care, health, housing, advice, community, education, public or voluntary sector settings, or having experienced this yourself.
- Working collaboratively with professionals and organisations from different sectors.
- Coordinating support, advocating for individuals and contributing to multi-agency meetings.
- Involving people with lived experience in shaping and improving services.
- Managing a varied workload, maintaining accurate records and working to agreed standards or outcomes.

Knowledge and Skills

- A person-centred, strengths-based, trauma-informed and relational approach to supporting individuals and communities.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including active listening and the ability to explain information clearly and accessibly.
- The ability to build constructive relationships with people accessing services, colleagues, volunteers and partner professionals.
- The ability to coordinate actions across organisations and keep the person's priorities central.
- The ability to balance support, advocacy, empowerment and professional boundaries.
- An understanding of the impact of poverty, health inequalities, trauma, discrimination and multiple disadvantage.
- An understanding of safeguarding adults, confidentiality, consent, lawful information sharing and professional practice, or a willingness to develop this knowledge.
- Well-developed organisation, time-management and case-management skills, including the ability to balance competing priorities.
- The ability to work independently, use initiative and contribute positively as part of a wider team.
- The ability to reflect on practice, receive supervision and use learning to improve support.
- Good IT skills, including Microsoft 365, online meetings, databases and CRM or case-recording systems.
- An understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, including the barriers created by digital exclusion.

Values and Attributes

- A warm, respectful, compassionate and non-judgemental approach.
- A belief that people are the experts in their own lives and should be supported to identify solutions that work for them.

- Curiosity, humility and a willingness to learn from people with lived or living experience, colleagues and partners.
- Calm, reflective and resilient when working in complex or stressful situations.
- Positive, proactive and solutions-focused, with the confidence to use initiative and follow through agreed actions.
- Collaborative and committed to shared responsibility, psychologically informed practice and joined-up working.
- Adaptable and flexible in response to individual, community and project needs.
- Committed to co-production, anti-discriminatory practice and reducing barriers to support.
- Committed to Improving Lives Plymouth's values of honesty, kindness, respect and listening.
- Committed to ongoing learning and professional development through training, supervision and reflection.

What This Role Looks Like in Practice

No two days are quite the same.

You might begin by meeting someone who has been passed between several services, is feeling overwhelmed and wants someone to listen. You will take time to understand what matters to them over a cuppa, identify what would help them most right now and then agree practical next steps together. This could be getting help to pay an energy bill or planning a week of meals with a food bank delivery that you have arranged for them.

Later, you may contact housing, health, social care, advice and community partners, coordinate agreed steps, or bring people together through a Team Around Me meeting. Your role is not to take over, but to make it easier for the person and the services around them to work towards improving their situation.

You may then support the person to attend a community group, access specialist advice, prepare for an appointment or rebuild confidence in taking the next step. You will stay involved for as long as is needed or until support is working effectively and any transition or ending can be planned safely and transparently.

You may then help host a session in one of our Wellbeing Hubs for our Space for Change community members, creating a welcoming space and making sure people with lived experience are involved in a range of ways, including taking part in events within local communities, co-designing services and speaking out about the changes we'd like to see in services.

You end your day with a catch-up with colleagues and partners, reflecting on what is helping people, where systems are creating barriers and what could change. The learning you share helps improve The Hive, strengthens partnership practice and ensures that lived and living experiences shape service development.