



Athlone Community Services Council CLG

Esker House Domestic Abuse Support Services

Esker House Women's Refuge and Domestic Abuse Service, is a service provided by Athlone Community Service Council CLG (ACSC), operating from Athlone, Co Westmeath. Those who use our Service are women either at risk from an abusive partner or have suffered abuse at the hands of a partner in the past. Our role is to provide a safe space for each woman and her children and then to assist her in exploring options and making decisions which will lead to a better life.

The suite of services we offer is composed of a number of strands:

REFUGE – The refuge has four family units which provide short-term emergency shelter to any woman who is at risk, who is in danger and for whom no other place of safety can immediately be found. The emphasis in refuge is on safety and allowing each woman calm and time to consider her next steps.

SUPPORT SERVICE – working with women who continue to live in the community in their homes and who do not avail of refuge, whether by appointment or drop-in. We offer advocacy or referrals for engagement with other agencies, eg, Intreo, local housing authorities, social services, etc.. ACSC, Esker House offer outreach provision in Athlone and surrounding areas, including Monkland/ south Roscommon.

CHILD AND YOUTH SERVICE – this Domestic Abuse Service offers a dedicated Children's Service, working with children, to manage the impact of abuse and to support in healing and the building of resilience and feelings of safety.

COURT SUPPORT SERVICES – women using our Service often seek support in attendance at court, engagement with legal aid or legal support,

TRAINING & AWARENESS – we are committed to addressing the causes of abuse within our community and to challenging the societal norms that can appear to make abuse acceptable. This is done through our Training & Awareness programme, providing training to statutory and voluntary agencies as well as working with schools, colleges and community partners.



ADVOCACY – ACSC, Esker House Domestic Abuse Service operates from a rights-based approach, and espousing a principle of empowerment. Our work involves advocating with and for each woman, to advance her own case, in addition to providing a voice for women in respect of shared issues.

Job Title: Refuge Co-Ordinator

Location: Athlone

Salary: €42,120
A separate additional payment is paid for the On-Call Duty which forms part of your core contract.

Hours of Work: 37.5 hours per week Monday to Friday (flexible working may be required outside of normal working hours)

Holidays: 25 days per annum (pro rata)

Reporting to: Head of Service, Esker House

The Successful Candidate:

This role requires an exceptional individual who wants to make a difference. You will have proven experience of motivating staff as well as strong interpersonal and demonstrable management and coordination skills. You must be passionate about providing the highest levels of support services to women and children who have experienced domestic violence and abuse. You must have an excellent knowledge of domestic violence issues and experience of working in gender equality, a domestic violence service or another relevant setting. You will have proven experience in networking and establishing relationships with agencies and key professionals, as well as developing services. A recognised third level applied social studies degree e.g., social care, social studies, and demonstrable management experience relevant to the community/voluntary sector is essential.

The successful candidate will have proven experience of coordinating services and leading a team to meet KPI's, targets and achieve strategic objectives. Excellent interpersonal and leadership skills are required for this role. Experience working in a domestic violence support service will be advantageous.

The candidate will have an excellent knowledge and understanding of domestic



violence and the impacts this has on women, children, and families.

Our Mission: To meet the needs of women and children experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse, by providing inclusive, supportive, and confidential services that empower women and children to live life without fear.

Job Specification

The Refuge Coordinators Duties include:

Service Coordination

1. Oversee and coordinate service delivery at Esker House Refuge, with the focus on addressing the needs of the women and their children availing of the Refuge. This involves the prioritization of family's safety in all planning and interventions while operating under a Trauma informed model.
2. Lead and manage the Refuge staff team in the delivery and development of services in accordance with the vision, mission, and strategic direction of the organisation.
3. Oversee the implementation and further development of policies, procedures and practices of the Refuge focusing on achieving high standards of service delivery in line with best practice and quality standards for the sector.
4. Coordinate the Refuge Service within the annual budget allocation and promote an effective service within the available budget provision.

Staff Oversight & Management

1. Effectively manage staff, prepare work schedules, and ensure adequate supervision is available and used by Refuge team.
2. Oversee and manage the Refuge and On-Call staffing levels.
3. To be responsible for the supervision and support of the Refuge Team members to enable them to carry out their role effectively.
4. To work in collaboration with other areas of the organisation including the Head of Services, the Community Support Services, Child and Youth Service etc.
5. To ensure appropriate service evaluation procedures are in place with a view to introducing continuous improvements and developments in services offered, especially the quality of support for service users.
6. To assist in the recruitment, induction, and retention of Refuge staff.



7. To promote good communication and teamwork amongst staff including the facilitation of team meetings and other communication tools
8. To ensure that staff receive appropriate on-going training, while providing adequate cover.
9. Oversee and monitor staff performance.
10. To assess the performance of staff at regular intervals and perform annual staff appraisal for each staff member in refuge, with a view to developing all staff to reach their full potential and perform as valued and key contributors in the operation of the Refuge.
11. To set clear guidelines on the standards and management of written and electronic records for all Refuge staff and to audit these regularly.
12. To ensure the timely submission of written and verbal reports to the CEO as required, including statistical and financial analysis.
13. Implement and oversee Esker House case management system to ensure that the needs of service users are being met and Esker House Mission, Vision and Values are adhered to.

Health and Safety

1. Ensure that best practice in relation to standards of health and safety are maintained at all times.
2. Ensure that systems are in place and adhered to so that Health and Safety procedures are understood by staff and clients and are fully complied with.

Information Management

1. Ensure day-to-day and ad-hoc reporting are accurately produced and presented to the Head of Services.
2. Ensure that the collection/recording of all data in the Refuge is in accordance with the relevant Data Protection legalisation
3. Ensure that all Refuge staff use the organisational software/database systems as required.

Service Development

1. Maintain an overview of the changing needs of all stakeholders and bring forward service development proposals to help address these as appropriate.

Client Participation

1. Ensure that service user feedback and participation for both women and children is integrated into practice at all levels of service activity and that this is recorded and reviewed on a regular basis.



Interagency Work

1. Represent the work and ethos of Esker House in a professional manner at all times in line with the organisation's strategic goals, vision, mission, and values.
2. Establish and maintain positive working relationships with relevant agencies focused on achieving better outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic violence.
3. To network and develop formal links with local service providers relevant to clients' situations including, gardai, schools, housing authorities, social welfare, women's groups, social work, hospitals, etc.

Other General Duties

1. To ensure that the highest standard of professional support is always provided to women and children in the Refuge.
2. To create community awareness and raise consciousness regarding the issue of Domestic Abuse and best practices in combating it.
3. To perform other duties appropriate to the office as may be assigned from time to time by the Head of Services
4. To undertake on call duties as part of the on-call team to support the refuge staff in case of emergency or critical incident outside of office hours.
5. To ensure that the work of the Refuge Team adheres to the requirements of relevant legislation and internal policy procedures and to manage and oversee this at team level e.g., GDPR, Complaints Policy and Health and Safety
6. To ensure that the Children First Guidelines and Esker House Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Procedures are adhered to and understood by all staff.
7. Ensure that the Refuge service is friendly, safe and child centered.
8. To ensure a positive working environment is maintained in the refuge with all staff engaging positively and respectfully with all service users and staff members alike.
9. To actively participate in regular management team meetings
10. To ensure all necessary data and service delivery information is collected and shared with the Head of Service and the management team.

Essential Knowledge, Skills & Experience Required:

1. Must have minimum of a BA in Applied Social Studies e.g., social care or social studies and must be working as a qualified practitioner for more than 5 years.



2. Have at least 3 years' experience of working with domestic abuse.
3. Full clean drivers' license.
4. Have excellent knowledge of current legislation and key policy developments relevant to domestic abuse and possess a deep understanding of the dynamics and impact of domestic violence and abuse.
5. Thorough knowledge of procedures and practices relating to the Safeguarding of Women, Children and Young People.
6. Understanding of and capacity to work in a non-judgmental manner and a commitment to gender equality and human rights of women, children, and young people.
7. Demonstrable experience of supervising supporting and leading staff, students, trainees in your role working with adults/ children and young people.
8. Experience of working in a support service for people with complex needs/Experience of working in other supported residential services.
9. Experience of crisis management.
10. Ability to manage, support and motivate staff, and to delegate responsibility appropriately, including the prioritisation of caseload safely and sensitively and supporting staff to do this.
11. Experience working in team settings and on own initiative, have strong self-motivation, be reliable and flexible in work practices as well as being a strong team leader.
12. Ability to assess the needs and risks to women subjected to domestic abuse in crisis situations and act appropriately and professionally, using problem solving processes that meet the needs of women experiencing domestic abuse and supporting staff to do this.
13. Demonstrable experience of interagency working and joint service provision, working with relevant agencies to advocate on behalf of women and children in refuge.
14. Excellent verbal and written communication skills including recording of data and report writing for funders, development of work plans plus ability to communicate effectively with staff in relation to the work of the organisation.
15. Excellent organisational skills and the ability to manage a varied workload with structured supervision.
16. Excellent communication skills
17. Excellent computer skills and experience of using case management systems for data collection.
18. Willingness to participate in appropriate training as required and continuous professional development in line with the expectations of the Refuge Coordinator role



This job description is intended as a summary of the primary responsibilities of and qualifications for this position. The job description is not intended as inclusive of all duties an individual in this position might be asked to perform that may be required either now or in the future.

Application Process

Please apply by sending a detailed CV and Cover letter for the attention of the Head of Services Deirdre Berry at recruitment@eskerhouse.ie Applications are by email only. Closing Date is 3rd May 2024 @5pm.

This post is funded by Cuan, Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Agency ,Department of Justice.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please note any offer of a position is subject to Garda Clearance.