

## **Job Description**

**Job Title:** Advocate / Mental Health Worker

**Location:** Peggy's Place

**Reports to:** Manager, Peggy's Place

**Department:** Licensed Care & Environmental Services

**Collective Agreement:** Community Subsector Collective Agreement

**Union:** Health Sciences Association

**Benchmark:** 82302 (Advocate) and 81502 (Support Worker 2)

**Grid:** 33 (ADV – Advocate) & 34 (SW2 – Support Worker 2)

**Date Established:** March 2004

**Date sent to HEABC:** February 2019

### **Job Summary:**

Reporting to the Manager, Peggy's Place, the Advocate (Mental Health Worker) supports Members/clients by performing formal and informal advocacy representation and services. Members/clients would require advocacy services in situations such as access to government sponsored social service benefits they would be entitled to; and/or locate and utilize services available from local social services agencies; and/or the justice system; and/or health care services.

Engages with other Kettle staff to exchange information related to the Member/client(s) current health status and/or skill development in order to share relevant information to support the overall services The Kettle Society is providing the Member/client(s). Acts as a role model for Member/clients in modeling a variety of personal and social behaviours appropriate to the setting such as when interacting with government officials; law enforcements personnel etc.

Develops and documents the legal arguments being used to support the position being put forward to obtain entitlements to services and/or benefits. Develops and implements an action plan to assist the Member/client to successfully participate in the advocacy process.

### **Typical Duties:**

Represents Member/client(s) in situations requiring a formal advocacy role such as when interaction requires a significant knowledge of the legal or legislative processes and law in order facilitate the Member/client(s) obtaining their rights. This includes settings such as: the justice system; the health care system; government agencies both provincial and federal; human rights; volunteer placement; paid employment situations; tenancy issues, etc.

Advocates for Member/clients regarding a variety of issues such as landlord tenant issues, obtaining financial assistance from various government agencies (provincial or federal); accessing community resources; obtaining and keeping volunteer placement or paid employment, etc.



Interviews a Member/client to obtain relevant information and related documentation to identify the issue and/or right being denied. Assists the Member/client to obtain all relevant information and/or documents necessary to assess the Member/client's claim and case to be presented. This can include having the Member/client provide written authorization to release information and records to The Kettle Society and the Advocate. Assesses the information and materials gathered and reviews relevant information sources to determine if there is a case to be made and the likely arguments to be used to pursue the Member/client's rights.

Using plain language explains legal, legislative and other processes required to assist the Member/client to understand the advocacy process to be followed; the implications of the action being taken for them personally; reviews the format of the process including the rules and rights of each party to the process; and what might be expected of them in the process such as having to provide sworn testimony before a tribunal and the potential success or failure of the action being taken. Reviews relevant privacy legislation to inform the Member/client of information that can be provided or will be required to provide the advocacy process as well as what information should not be released.

Develops an action plan to support the Member/client to successfully participant in the advocacy process.

Under takes legal research related to relevant legislation; government policies or employer policies/procedures in order to prepare and present formal presentations which reflect a legally sound argument in support of the Member/client's rights.

Based on sound research, provides a written submission and/or verbal presentations to the applicable administrative tribunal or hearing setting. Copy of the submission is kept on The Kettle Society Member/client record.

Presents the Member/client's case at an internal case review meeting. This process will include a review of all gather documentation; reliance documents; review of pro and con jurisprudence if applicable and a written argument.

Participates in developing and maintaining a data base related to sourcing information necessary to develop legally sound arguments to promote Member/client rights.

Documents Member/client activities and behaviour related to how the Member/client deals with the processes required to support the Advocate to obtain their rights; such as how a Member/client responds to various environments and stressors. As necessary will contact other Kettle staff members to share information and seek insight and/or support to assist in modifying the Member/client's response to the situation.

Collaborates with other Kettle staff to acquire an insight into the Member/client's care plan or other goals and objectives the Member/client is working on which is focused on improving their overall ability to be successful within their communities.

Assesses Member/client behaviour to ascertain if there is potential for harmful consequences to the Member/client or others. Based on assessment of Member/client's behaviour takes reasonable action to avoid harm to themselves or to others. Actions include using various communication strategies to reduce the tension or distract the Member/client and/or contacting mental health teams, or other care providers, or calling 911 for professional assistance. Provides feedback to appropriate mental health or health care team members.



Provides advice, information and referrals to Member/clients on a range of issues including income assistance; disability benefits; landlord tenant matters; child and family matters; financial solvency issues including debt forgiveness processes. Maintains a record of advice sought and given to a Member/client.

Actively advocates Member/client's rights to access a variety of services such as government provided services or government benefits (including both provincial and federal governments); health care services; services from social service agencies. This support can include attending appointments and/or meetings when the Member/client has been refused or there has been difficulty in accessing necessary services.

Provides scientifically proven information to government and/or other agencies to educate the receiver of the information how mental illness or addiction issues impacts an individual's life and the effect it has when they apply for and/or receive services from a variety of both government and private services including services such as justice services and health services.

Demonstrates and models healthy life style behaviour and coping skills for Member/clients. Demonstrates appropriate communication techniques and behaviours when interacting with others such as landlords; employers; etc.

Provides basic first aid to clients when appropriate to do so. Maintains appropriate records of first aid provided. Will call 911 as necessary. Utilizes mental health first aid techniques when necessary.

Supports Peggy's Place Member/client to transition to more independent living. This includes developing a plan of action for the Member/client as well as directing them to appropriate services to social support in the community.

Conducts information and/or educational sessions for individual groups or representatives such as government agencies; social service agencies; employers; retail organizations; community services and groups.

Maintains records of the requests for services and what advice and services were provided to a Member/client.

Prepares and presents statistical information such as number of Member/clients requiring services on a monthly bases; details what services/programs at Peggy's Place are being utilized by which Member/client.

Provides assistance and input to the Manager in the development, implementation and evaluation of programs, projects and services presented at Peggy's Place.

Identify and refers to the Manager issues which arise from advocacy services which require further research and development of resources suitable for Peggy's Place Member/clients.

Reports to the Manager, Peggy's Place if a Member appears to represent a risk to themselves or others and/or puts The Kettle Society at risk.

Participates as a Presenter/Trainer at community forums for the purpose of representing The Kettle Society and to educate the group as to The Kettles Society's philosophy and services.



Participates as an audience member at community forums and community based advocacy education events.

Participates in staff meetings by sharing job related information and sharing ideas and suggestions.

Participates in positive/effective communication between staff and management by verbal and/or written transmission of job related information.

Participates in ensuring the work environment is positive by implementing all aspects of the Employers policies including Respect in the Workplace Policy and Violence Prevention Policy.

Participates in ensuring a safe work environment for staff and Member/clients by reporting any situations which require equipment and/or building repairs.

Participates as necessary in the performance of general household duties, such as cleaning.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

#### **Qualifications:**

##### **Education, Training, and Experience**

Grade 12

Community Social Services Diploma

Two (2) years recent related experience including working with individuals with mental illness and/or addiction and/or concurrent disorders; as well as experience in analysing legal and legislative documents to prepare an effective and legally sound argument on behalf of a client.

Or, an equivalent combination of education, training, and life and/or work experience

Class 5 BC Driver's License when applicable

Current and up to date certificates in CPR, Emergency First Aid Community Care, WHMIS 2015 and Level 1 Food Safe

##### **Skills and Abilities**

Advocacy skills

Conflict resolution and crisis intervention skills

Ability to analyze and resolve problems

Ability to work independently and in cooperation with others

Ability to operate related equipment

Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing

Ability to organize and prioritize

Ability to observe and recognize changes in clients

Ability to establish and maintain rapport with clients

Ability to instruct adults

Physical ability to carry out the duties of the position