

Thank you for your interest in working for Options and for the post of Support Worker. It's great to be able to give you some further information about us.

We're a small but unique organisation, supporting people with disabilities to have the lives they want. We don't box people – fit them into existing homes, but develop support around each person the way they want it. That can be really challenging especially since some of the people we support have quite difficult behaviour and complex support needs from time to time. However, people's lives do dramatically improve. Working for Options you'll have the opportunity to significantly improve someone's life – to look back and say you've made a difference.

We're not looking for super heroes or for people with loads of, or any, experience. We're looking for people who:

- Make things happen
- Have a positive attitude
- Stick in there when the going gets tough
- Are keen to learn and develop
- Are great people people.

Lots of people who join Options from other support organisations say we are different. We're different because of the way we view our staff and the people we support, and because of the time and effort we take to make this a great place to work.

We're looking for individuals who will take personal responsibility for making things happen, and are passionate about people we support having a great life. So you'll need to be prepared to give it your all, and take the responsibility and privilege of our work seriously. If you're prepared to work hard then we'll support you to have a great career with Options.

If this is you then please do apply. If you're new to support work and aren't quite sure if this is for you then please do apply anyway and check it out for yourself (it might be a great opportunity lost). Go for it. We'd love to meet you.

Best wishes,



Kevin Peacock  
Chief Executive

Enc: An Introduction to Options  
Our Mission and Beliefs  
Our Working Values  
Why join Options  
Job Description and Person Specification  
Summary of Terms  
Recruitment of Staff with Criminal Records



## An Introduction to Options

Options provides innovative and flexible support to people with disabilities, with a range of support needs. We are a registered charity and therefore every penny is spent on providing great support. The organisation was one of the first of its kind in the UK, established in 1993 and has a proven track record of providing community based, supported living for people who want their own places to live with support.

Our first support was provided in Liverpool and Sefton. Each was based on the principle of finding out what each person to be supported uniquely wanted and needed, and then designing support around him/her (what is now called person centredness). Options seeks to support anyone with a learning disability, no matter how complex their support needs. We are committed to turning no-one away and to sticking with people when their lives become very difficult.

Options expanded to the Wirral in 2001. To date, across Merseyside, we support 66 people through community outreach and we support 115 people in supported living.

Outreach support now operates in Wirral, Liverpool, Sefton and Halton. We support these people who have learning disabilities by promoting community inclusion and reablement through voluntary or paid work, college and social activities and offering valuable respite for families and carers.

The support will vary from 3 hours a day to 15 hours a day, usually to someone who lives at home and is supported by their family or another provider agency, or who lives without much support.

Supported Living tends to provide support 24 hours a day (although it can be less), with waking or sleep in staff at night-time. With Supported Living, Options will usually be the main provider of support. We will often assist the person to find a house and to establish their own home from scratch.

We are committed to staying small with few management tiers and an unwavering commitment to support people with complex support needs. We have approximately 300 staff and provide £6 million of support.

Our Mission is to support,

empower, and enable people

with disabilities to live their lives to the full

## Our Aims and Beliefs

1. We believe that all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- The power, authority and resources to control our own lives
- A sense of belonging and acceptance for who we are
- Being treated with dignity and respect
- Participating as valued members of our own communities
- Having new life opportunities and enriching life experiences
- Meaningful and loving personal relationships
- The opportunity to express our own cultural and spiritual beliefs
- Good health
- Taking responsibility for what we can or ought to do for ourselves
- Caring about and helping those around us.

2. To support families and carers to in turn enable people we support to achieve the lives described above

3. To provide a challenging, rewarding and supportive work experience for staff, where they are able to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of the people we support

4. To help and engage with communities to understand how they can support people with disabilities to live valued lives in those communities

5. To provide excellent value to people we support and to those who purchase that support

6. To work in partnership with Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, specialist trusts, housing associations and others to provide excellent services

7. To share our learning, our successes and mistakes and our experiences with others, and to constantly learn from others

8. To develop and strengthen Options as an organisation in order to fulfil our mission.





## Our Working Values

### **1. Vision**

We have a clear sense of purpose and direction.

### **2. Listening**

We listen to each other, and don't jump in with our own views before considering others. This reflects our respect for each other.

### **3. Enabling**

We support each other to develop our skills and abilities, and to use them effectively for the benefit of those we support. Therefore we don't jump in to do everything ourselves, but look to developing and using the skills of others.

### **4. Integrity**

We seek in our actions, in what we do, to reflect what we say and believe. We say what we mean and mean what we say.

### **5. Teamwork**

We recognise each other's different skills, experiences and abilities and seek to use each to work as a team, and to support each other in good and in bad times.

### **6. Recognition and Encouragement**

Appreciation and encouragement are great motivators. We seek to identify opportunities to praise and encourage each other, and we celebrate success.

### **7. Challenge**

We rigorously debate our differences of opinion and see such debates as healthy and positive. Once a decision is made we work wholeheartedly towards the agreed decision

### **8. Commitment**

We work hard to enable people we support to achieve their goals. When the going gets tough we stick in there. But we are also committed to balanced lives. As we seek full lives for the people we support so we seek to ensure staff do not work excessive hours, and have time for themselves and others outside of work.

### **9. Confidentiality**

We share specific, private information on a need to know basis, and within supervision systems. We do not gossip about others, and we do not create negative reputations for people we support.

### **10. Rigour**

We act and make decisions on what makes a real difference to the quality of life of those we support. When necessary we take hard and painful decisions.

### **11. Risk Taking**

We are willing and keen to take thought through risks and make productive mistakes.

### **12. Learning**

We are creative and try different ways of doing things. We make mistakes, but after they occur we learn from them to ensure they do not happen again.

# Why join Options?

- An opportunity to make a real difference to someone's life
- You care passionately about people
- The chance to work for the best-supported living agency in the world (work in progress!)
- As much responsibility you can take
- Regular support and supervision (which helps you to grow and develop)
- Excellent training and development (you'll have the opportunity to learn from some of the best trainers from around the world)
- A real voice and say in the organisation
- An opportunity to develop your skills as part of a team.
- Recognition for doing a great job (from a simple thank you to more formal recognition)



# Support Worker

## Job Description

### Reports to: Team Leader

Role: To provide effective support to enable people with learning disabilities to live their lives to the full.

### People Supported:

1. Enable people to achieve their full potential
2. Support people to fulfil their wishes expressed day-by-day and identified in their Essential Lifestyle Plans
3. Support people in the day-to-day tasks involved in ordinary living
4. To support people through difficult times when they may injure themselves, be verbally abusive to staff and others around them, or attempt to hurt those around them
5. Very occasionally restraint may be required
6. Support and encourage people to take part in the things that they enjoy
7. Understand and respect the relationships which are important to people supported
8. Maximise the safety of people supported, staff and the community with the overall goal of supporting people to achieve positive outcomes in their life
9. Work consistently within Guidelines for Support, which ensure people are well supported, when anxious, worried or angry
10. To provide personal care for the people we support who need it. This means supporting a person bathing, washing, shaving, drinking, eating, going to the toilet and including intimate personal care
11. Ensure safe administration of medication and completion of full and accurate records
12. To maintain records necessary to support people effectively
13. May include some aspects of physical activity i.e. using hoists, pushing wheelchairs or supporting people to take long walks, or any other exercise.

## Staff Team:

1. Contribute to and participate in a team-based approach
2. Attend training, development and team meetings, which may be additional to contracted hours
3. Take part in regular support and supervision
4. Act as a role model for those around you
5. Work within the organisation's Working Values (copy attached).

## Finances and Administration:

1. Keep full records of all income and expenditure
2. Fully comply with the financial and administrative procedures of the organisation.

## Management and Organisation:

1. Participate in the On-call system (when suitably experienced) and to work sleep-ins or waking nights when required
2. Work to all Policies and Procedures
3. Promote positive relationships with those closest to people supported, and all others helping to support them
4. Shape the organisation by expressing your views and contributing to how it develops.

## Self-Development:

1. Attend and participate in all training and development as identified to develop one's own skills, and abilities
2. Maintain a constant desire to learn and develop.



# Support Worker

## Person Specification

### **Positive Value Base and Person Centred Approach**

Must be committed to ensuring that people with learning disabilities are valued and enabled to take control of their own lives. To champion this when the going gets tough.

### **Relationship Skills**

To get on well with people supported and others around them. To be comfortable and relaxed in their presence, supporting them and helping them to get to know others in their community.

### **Positive Role Model**

Must be hard-working, motivated, flexible and pro-active. Someone who understands what needs to be done but can be relaxed about the pace at which some things will happen.

### **Integrity**

Have a clear desire and commitment to working out one's values openly and honestly.

### **Problem Solving Skills**

Demonstrate skills in understanding complex situations and difficulties, and work thoughtfully, sensitively, creatively and purposefully to solve these.

### **Team Focus**

Committed to working in a team dynamic rather than individually, to develop and fully use the skills of all team members.

### **Listening Skills**

Able to listen to what people supported are communicating verbally, by action and emotionally.

### **Personal Learning and Development**

Show a desire and openness to learn and develop evidenced through continuous training and development. Be prepared to ask when help is needed.

### **Driver (for some posts)**

Needs to have a clean driving licence.

# Summary of Terms

**Hourly rate of Pay** £10.00

## **Full Time Contract**

40 hours per week.

## **Part Time Contract**

Working 5 – 39 hours per week.

## **Sleep-in payments**

Where the person we support requires a sleep in, an allowance will be paid per night details of which are held by the Finance Department. Not everyone we support requires a sleep in; therefore, sleep-in payments are not always applicable.

## **Sick Pay**

5 days (one calendar week) full pay per year (after the first 6 months of service) and after a waiting period of 3 days.

## **Pension Scheme**

Subject to eligibility, we will automatically enrol you into our nominated pension scheme after you have worked for us for three months. You can opt-out if you do not wish to be in Scheme. If you do not opt out, we will deduct your contributions to the pension scheme from what we pay you. Current details of the Scheme and your rights relating to it, and of your and our contributions, will be provided to you separately.

## **Holidays**

28 days, pro rata.

## **Training**

Four year training programme.

# Recruiting staff with Criminal Records

Options is committed to people – people we support with learning disabilities and people who work for Options – our staff. We recognise that sometimes people commit crimes, but then develop beyond that, with the potential to be great at supporting people with disabilities.

Options is committed to providing opportunities for employment for people who have a criminal record or have been the subject of police enquiries. What we must do is to ensure this happens safely, without putting people we support at risk – financially, physically or emotionally.

Options, therefore has a policy of carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) on all of its employees. DBS checks examine people's police records and other national registers that may indicate someone's unsuitability to work with people who are vulnerable. We do this because:

- a) We want to ensure the safety of people we support
- b) We want to get the right staff (who may have committed offences but have developed beyond that)
- c) We are legally obliged to.

We comply with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants fairly. A copy of the code of practice is available from the office if you would like one. We are keen to give a 'second chance' to people no longer likely to commit offences. Potential employees are advised at application stage i.e. in the application form, that they must disclose any cautions / convictions / warnings / court appearances which they have and that failure to do so will result in dismissal should the cautions / convictions / warnings be revealed subsequently, this is true of all civil and criminal offences. Should a candidate disclose cautions / convictions / warnings / court appearances at the interview stage, the chair of the interview panel should ask the person for more details. The decision as to whether or not to appoint should then be made bearing any of the information that has been disclosed in mind.

Should a successful candidate not reveal any cautions / convictions / warnings / court appearances which he/she have at application, Options will terminate that person's employment, based on non-disclosure, and the need for honesty and integrity in the service. Applicants are always appointed subject to a satisfactory DBS check.

Options reserves the right to refuse employment to anyone who has a conviction for the following, should the circumstances of that conviction indicate that the employee may pose a potential threat to any of the people we support.

- Fraud
- Obtaining money by deception
- Crimes of a violent nature
- Burglary
- Theft
- Actual Bodily Harm
- Drug Related Offences.

No offence whatsoever is regarded as spent as Options work and appointments are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 due to the nature of the work that we do.

Options also reserves the right to refuse employment to anyone who has a number of convictions over a period of time, where the crime itself may not warrant either not appointing a candidate or termination of employment but the frequency and the pattern of crime indicate the person may re-offend.

Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily bar you from working for us. That will depend on the nature of the conviction and the circumstances and background of your offences. Dishonesty regarding convictions, cautions or court appearances will lead to non-appointment.



*Living life to the full!*