Service Engagement Manager

Job description and person specification

Main purpose of job: To manage three key aspects of CARA's service:

- New referrals into CARA
- Counselling waiting lists and allocation to a counsellor
- CARA's client database

Reporting to: Head of Operations.

Start date: As soon as possible (subject to Enhanced DBS Check and satisfactory references).

Salary: £37,411 – £39,261 per annum, pro-rata.

Hours: 35 hours per week, with some flexibility possible.

Contract: This is a permanent contract.

Place of work: CARA premises in Colchester and some remote home working. Some travel to other locations in Essex may be necessary.

Holiday: 25 days per year pro-rata, plus additional closure days between Christmas and New Year.

To apply: Please complete the application form, which can be downloaded from our website www.caraessex.org.uk, explaining how your skills and experience relate to the person specification.

Applications must specifically address **each essential and desirable criteria**, giving evidence from previous experience or qualifications.

Application deadline: 9am on Wednesday 26th November 2025
Interviews: Tuesday 2nd December 2025
Start date: As soon as possible, subject to receipt of satisfactory references and enhanced DBS check.
Mandatory Training Dates: To be confirmed.

This post is restricted to women applicants under the Equality Act 2010, Schedule 9, Part 1.

About CARA

CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse) works with victims and survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse, providing independent, specialist support and promoting and representing their rights and needs.

CARA is a registered charity working with adults of all genders, young people and children from across mid and north Essex. We have a head office in Colchester and outreach premises in Braintree, Chelmsford, Clacton-on-Sea, Great Dunmow and Harwich. We also provide remote services.

CARA seeks to be an inclusive organisation that actively encourages, supports and values diversity amongst both our service-users and our workers. We wish to create a culture in which discrimination, in all its forms, is recognised and addressed.

You can read more about CARA's commitment to diversity and inclusion here. We encourage and welcome applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds.

About Synergy East

CARA is part of Synergy East. We work closely with SERICC Rape and Sexual Abuse Specialist Service and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SOS Rape Crisis) to deliver the contract for the Office for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex for services for victims and survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse across Essex.

Job Description

This is an exciting and varied role, and we are looking for a proactive post holder who will manage three key aspects of CARA's service provision:

- Manage new referrals into our service, overseeing the work of our team of First Contact Navigators and our Information and Referrals Co-ordinator.
- Manage our counselling waiting lists and the allocation of clients to a counsellor, overseeing the work of our Allocations Team.
- Act as the main lead and point of contact for managing CARA's client database and resolving any data queries.

This role will lead a talented and committed team of six, supporting their work and assisting them to develop their key roles. As well as overseeing day-to-day operations of the team, the post holder will be part of CARA's management team and will have the opportunity to play a key role in CARA's wider development, working closely with CARA's Senior Leadership Team and Team Managers.

The First Contact Navigator project is a shared project with our sister centres, SERICC and SOS Rape Crisis, so the post holder will liaise closely with colleagues in those centres.

Main Responsibilities

Line management and team support

- To line manage CARA's Information and Referrals Co-ordinator, First Contact Navigators and Allocations Co-ordinators, providing day-to-day support, monitoring performance and identifying training and development needs. This will include keeping up to date notes of line management meetings and conducting and recording annual staff appraisals.
- To support CARA's Information and Referrals Co-ordinator, First Contact Navigators and Allocations Co-ordinators, working alongside them where necessary, and covering these roles during annual leave and other absences.

- To work with CARA's Head of Operations to recruit and train new staff and volunteers, as required.
- To liaise with CARA's other teams and more widely with Synergy East teams, resolving problems and ensuring good communication and mutual understanding of respective roles and ways of operating.
- To be part of the CARA management team and attend regular management team meetings, contributing to CARA's ongoing development.

Service development

- To work with CARA's Information and Referrals Co-ordinator, First Contact Navigators, Allocations Co-ordinators, Head of Operations, CEO, and our four team Managers to refine and develop CARA's referrals and allocations processes.
- To oversee and update CARA's counselling waiting lists, working with the Allocations Co-ordinators, and leading regular meetings to review waiting times, pushing forwards actions to reduce these wherever possible.
- To oversee and update the CARA map of service delivery ensuring we have an accurate picture of client sessions across our therapy teams.
- To develop expertise in our purpose-designed client database, ensuring the team are fully trained in its use and working with the CEO, Head of Operations, Head of Finance and Income Development and Synergy Partners to ensure client data is kept up to date.
- Working with the CEO, Head of Operations and Information and Referrals Co-ordinator to represent CARA at meetings, making presentations about our work.

General

- To work flexible hours, including some evening work and occasional weekends.
- To participate in CARA team meetings, supervision, training and development.
- To provide specialist advice to other workers and agencies, including participation in delivery of training sessions.
- To raise awareness of sexual violence and its impact in the community and within other agencies.
- To keep appropriate records in accordance with CARA policies and procedures.
- To adhere in full to all CARA's organisational policies and procedures, including safeguarding procedures.
- To be administratively self-servicing.
- To report to the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees as required, including the production of regular written reports and verbal reports.
- To undertake any other related activities as required by the Senior Leadership Team or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
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Person specification

This describes the knowledge, skills and experience required to perform the job effectively. You will be required to address each criterion when completing the application form and will be required to produce evidence, where appropriate. Experience can be gained in paid work or volunteering roles. We welcome applicants who can demonstrate transferable skills.

Essential

1. Extremely organised approach and ability to manage a varied and challenging workload and prioritise competing demands.
2. Experience of line management with the ability to support and motivate others.

3. Experience of working with clients who have experienced trauma, have multiple and complex needs and/or are experiencing mental ill-health.
4. A positive, pro-active approach to work and a sense of shared responsibility for the overall running of CARA with a genuine desire to improve service provision.
5. Experience and confidence in using a client database, including experience in reading, understanding and communicating data reports.
6. A professional, flexible and creative approach, with the ability to solve problems effectively.
7. The ability to remain calm, focused and fair under pressure.
8. Excellent written, communication and presentation skills, including the ability to communicate effectively with clients, colleagues and other professionals.
9. An understanding of feminism and gender-based violence, and a strong commitment to CARA's ethos and mission.
10. A demonstrable commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
11. An understanding of safeguarding, both in relation to children and to vulnerable adults.
12. An understanding of the importance of confidentiality.
13. Excellent computer skills and demonstrable experience using the Microsoft package.
14. Willingness to work remotely from home, as a lone worker, and at different locations throughout mid and north Essex.
15. Reliability with willingness to work flexible hours, including some evenings.

Desirable

1. Experience of working with victims of sexual violence.
2. Experience of multi-agency working, and effectively resolving issues with external agencies.
3. A relevant qualification.
4. Full driving licence and access to own transport.