



February 2022

Dear Applicant,

**Reading Voice Advocate**

Thank you for your interest in the above post. This is a rewarding role that reaches out to some of the most vulnerable members of our community to help them articulate their life choices and needs and have their voices heard. Therefore, we are seeking someone who is committed to supporting local communities and is passionate about local people's rights. In addition, we will provide a full package of training to support this post holder.

To apply for this post please send us a CV and short covering letter outlining why you wish to apply for this post and how your skills and experience meet the job description and person specification. We will then invite you for an interview.

For any questions or queries please contact Maria Falzetti on 07365 519920 or email [rvmanager@healthwatchreading.co.uk](mailto:rvmanager@healthwatchreading.co.uk).

Yours sincerely

Maria Falzetti  
Advocacy Services Manager  
Reading Voice Advocacy Services

## Reading Voice Advocate Job Pack

### Who are Reading Voice?

Reading Voice provides Care Act Advocacy, NHS Complaints Advocacy, Social Care Complaints Advocacy, Independent Mental Health Advocacy and Child Protection Advocacy services for residents of Reading. Reading Voice Advocacy services is managed by Healthwatch Reading.

### Who is an advocate and what is advocacy?

Advocates are independent of the service commissioners and are someone who supports a person so that their views are heard and their rights are upheld. They can help a person to put their views and feelings across when decisions are being made about their life. An advocate can work with you to:

- Speak out at meetings or to professionals
- Find information so you can make choices and sort out problems
- Change your services if you want to
- Know about your rights and make sure they are respected
- Make difficult decisions
- Make a complaint if you are not happy about something

### What skills and training will they need?

Reading Voice offers a full training package including in-house training on NHS and Social Care Complaints and fully supported opportunities to gain qualifications in Care Act Advocacy and Independent Mental Health Advocacy. In addition, Advocates will be expected to complete Safeguarding training and other courses related to the work. Training will be provided at no cost to the advocate subject to their contract and acceptance of the pre-training agreement.

### What support will be available to an advocate?

Advocates will be part of a team in Reading and will be supported through monthly peer review meetings. They will also receive one to one supervision and quarterly professional supervision from a qualified independent senior advocate.

## Job Description & Person Specification

<b>Post:</b>	Advocate
<b>Grade:</b>	from £11 per hour
<b>Working hours/Contract:</b>	zero hours' contract
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Reading Voice Advocacy Services Manager

### Purpose of Role:

An advocate is someone who supports a person so that their views are heard and their rights are upheld. They will help a person to put their views and feelings across when decisions are being made about their life.

### Key Responsibilities:

Advocates will support clients to have their say by working with them to understand their needs. An Advocate must:

- Act in accordance with the service user's wishes and instructions;
- Act independently, without any conflict of interest;
- Act in a professional, timely way, carrying out instructions with competence and vigour;
- Keep service users well informed of progress and setbacks;
- Maintain confidentiality (see confidentiality policy for exceptions)
- Offer independent information, suited to the service user's comprehension and communication abilities and mental or physical health needs;
- Act in an anti-discriminatory, non-judgmental way;
- Working to the principles of the eight domains contained within the watching brief, act for those who cannot instruct you, involving them as far as possible and ensuring a service tailored to their individual needs;
- Act honestly and respectfully always.
- Gain experience in working with a range of different people who may need support to express their views can be valuable.

Advocates will also be required to keep appropriate records on the Reading Voice database and adhere to policies and procedures.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS**

The post holder will have relevant experience in information, advice and guidance particularly with diverse groups and communities and socially excluded families and individuals.

It is essential that applicants have good IT, organisational and communication skills.

You have an interest in/or experience of working with health and social care services.

### **PERSONAL**

#### **Work experience**

1. Experience in the use of various advocacy techniques and an ability to advocate on behalf of others.
2. Experience of dealing with statutory organisations.
3. Experience of working with diverse groups across the protected characteristics
4. Understanding of or experience of working with clients who may have a learning disability, mental health issues or other challenging conditions or disabilities.

#### **Skills**

5. Ability to communicate with and gain the confidence of diverse groups of people.
6. Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to quickly build effective working relationships and good rapport.
7. Ability to write and present evidence based reports.
8. Ability to use initiative and work unsupervised.
9. Ability to meet the administration requirements of the post.
10. Ability to work as part of a team, supporting colleagues.
11. Conflict resolution and time management.

#### **Attitude/Aptitude**

12. A commitment to equality and diversity.
13. To be creative and innovative but also willing to learn new skills.
14. To be able to work flexibly with occasional weekend and evening work.