Access to Healthcare volunteer

Ideal time commitment: 1 day a week; ideally minimum 6 months

Reports to: Housing and Welfare Manager

Location: Flexible

About the Helen Bamber Foundation Group

The Helen Bamber Foundation (HBF) is a human rights charity based in London which was founded in 2005. HBF grew from the recognition that people who have suffered prolonged inter-personal violence – whether from human trafficking; war; community, domestic or gender-based violence – present with similar physical and psychological symptoms to torture survivors and experience the same complex and enduring responses to their trauma.

We offer our clients a Model of Integrated Care, providing legal, medical, psychological, counter-trafficking, integration and welfare support. Our specialist team of therapists, doctors and legal experts have an international reputation for providing therapeutic care, medical consultation, legal protection and practical support to survivors of human rights violations.

Asylum Aid, (previously merged with Migrants Resource Centre under Consonant) is, and has long been, a leader in the Immigration and NGO sector, providing high-level legal and welfare support to ensure the protection of vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Since August 2020, Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid have combined efforts to support the vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees who need us the most, operating as two separate entities under a group structure, known as the Helen Bamber Foundation Group.

About the role

Access to healthcare is a vital part of our clients’ recovery. Many of our clients have ongoing physical and mental health needs arising from their experiences in their home countries, their journey to and life in the UK. Unfortunately, our clients encounter numerous barriers to accessing the healthcare they need including bureaucratic delays, language barriers and miscommunication as well as problems accessing online services.

The Access to Healthcare Volunteer will work with and advocate for clients to ensure they overcome these barriers and get the healthcare support they need and are entitled to as soon as possible. The role is situated within the Housing and Welfare team but will support clients across the organisation who need support.

Main tasks and activities

* Support clients to register for a new GP / dentist if they change area
* Help clients who are eligible to apply for HC2 certificates either online or via paper form
* Liaise with healthcare services to ensure that interpreters are available for appointments
* Apply for reimbursement of appointment travel costs for any clients who are eligible
* Keep clear and detailed notes on client records, including uploading any medical documents sent by the client

Skills, knowledge and experience needed

* Understanding of, and commitment to, the objectives of the Helen Bamber Foundation
* A demonstrable empathy for our vulnerable clients, including asylum seekers, refugees and survivors of torture and trafficking
* An understanding of the challenges facing our client group
* Basic knowledge of UK healthcare systems
* Experience working with vulnerable people
* Experience of administrative systems
* Excellent organisational skills and ability to manage own time and workload, and to prioritise a range of competing demands
* Punctual, reliable and self-motivated
* Excellent teamwork skills
* Willingness to complete any necessary training (eg working with interpreters)

What you will get out of the role:

* A strong understanding of how HBF’s MOIC contributes to the well-being of our clients and an insight into the needs of our clients
* An appreciation of the processes and systems that asylum seekers and refugees deal within the UK
* An understanding of the barriers that asylum seekers and refugees face
* New skills in working with vulnerable people, people from different cultures
* An ability to multi-task between competing priorities.
* Knowledge and experience working within a multidisciplinary team and the charity sector

Equal Opportunities

The Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid is an equal opportunities and Living Wage employer. We are committed to attracting and recruiting diverse candidates as we are keen to make sure that our staff, trustees, volunteers and ambassadors reflect the communities we serve and the wider community we work in at every level within the organisation. We particularly welcome applications from those with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

Please note that successful candidates will be offered the volunteer position subject to a DBS check.