Female Volunteer GP

Ideal time commitment: 4 hours weekly or fortnightly; in-person and remote working

Reports to: Dr Jill O’Leary, Head of Medical Advisory Service

# About the Helen Bamber Foundation Group

The Helen Bamber Foundation (HBF) is a human rights charity based in London which was founded in 2005. 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.

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 and welfare support, as well as an Integration Programme which includes arts-based groups, and skills-based classes such as English and IT. Through this, we help our clients to develop a sustained recovery from extreme trauma.

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

Survivors of torture and human cruelty often suffer a myriad of deeply entwined physical and psychological problems. Our clients have usually had ineffective and sporadic contact with health care providers, often limited to emergency or crisis contact. Beginning to address their medical needs is extremely difficult, compounded by limitations of time and accessibility within the NHS.

In order to help clients access the medical care they need we operate a Medical Advisory Clinic. We recruit and train volunteer doctors to assess clients’ medical concerns, offer explanation and advice to clients and liaise closely with their GP. Our doctors do not treat, prescribe or refer to secondary care.

We operate the clinic from on-site treatment rooms, or remote consultations over telephone or video call as appropriate. Doctors spend as much time as they need with each client; typically, each appointment lasts between 30 and 60 minutes. The Medical Advisory Service is fully integrated into the rest of the organisation. Doctors work closely with therapists, caseworkers and the legal team to support the individual needs of each client. We have the use of specialised interpreters.

The Medical Advisory Service is run by our lead GP and a team of three to four volunteer doctors who commit to one day a week or a fortnight. This role is particularly suitable but not exclusively, for GPs. Recruitment is open and ongoing.

Training is provided on-site by our lead GP and other clinical staff, including the foundation’s clinical psychologists and psychotherapists.

# Main tasks and activities

* Seeing clients with new and ongoing medical needs to discuss their symptoms.
* Completing a Medical Needs Assessment for new clients who have been referred to the foundation.
* Liaising with each client’s GP to discuss your findings and suggest next steps.
* Helping our clients understand how to navigate the NHS.
* Providing health education to our clients.

# Skills and experience needed

* Ideally a female General Practitioner with 2 years post-qualification experience. The need for a female doctor reflects the preference of our client population, many of whom have experienced sexual violence.
* An interest in migrant health and the specific health needs of survivors of trafficking, modern slavery and torture.
* 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;
* Punctual, reliable and self-motivated with a positive, ’can-do’ attitude;

# What you will get out of the role:

* Gain an understanding of the complex health needs of people who have survived torture, trafficking and other forms of extreme human cruelty.
* Gain experience with working with an overlooked and very vulnerable population.
* Freedom to explore complex and varied health needs with long appointments, outside of the usual time constraints in NHS General Practice.
* Work closely with the multi-disciplinary team to enhance client care and attend (on an optional basis) the weekly complex cases meeting.

# 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.