

Practitioner (Inverclyde/West of Central Belt)

Location: Home based – with regular travel around Inverclyde/west of Scotland

Salary: £ 27,000 - 28,230 (based on experience)

Type: full time 35 hours (Mon to Fri)

Reporting to: Senior Practitioner

Closing Date: Monday 10th March (Noon)

Key tasks

We seek an experienced practitioner to join our team in Scotland to bring people with disabilities and dogs together, enabling life changing differences. The right candidate will:

- Carry out Animal Assisted Interventions and Activities alongside partnered health and social care professionals.
- Provide training and advice to people to develop a relationship and strong bond with a pet dog, to ease specific challenges.
- Support with training and placement of assistance dogs (current dogs located in North of Scotland).

Ideally we are looking for someone in the Inverclyde area, but will consider applications from candidates within a reasonable commuting distance (60mins) for this role.



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Job Responsibilities

1. Prepare and conduct AAI sessions with clients; including client profiling, goal setting, risk assessment, session plan development, record keeping and review/evaluation.
2. Prepare and conduct AAA sessions with groups; including risk assessment, session plan development, record keeping and review/evaluation.
3. Ongoing education of a community dog for specific exercises and skills.
4. Develop skills to place a small number of Assistance Dogs and play an active role in the delivery of the Assistance Dog service including support in the following aspects: identifying suitable dogs, matching with clients, education and placing dogs and ongoing aftercare.
5. Liaise and network with other organisations and healthcare professionals to promote Dogs for Good services.
6. Liaise and work with volunteers to deliver AAA in the local community.
7. To ensure accurate and timely record keeping to demonstrate the impact of the services.
8. Keep abreast of developments in the field of AAI and relevant client conditions, which may inform the progress and growth of the Community Dog service.
9. Share best practice with, and take opportunities to learn from, other practitioners in the Dogs for Good network.
10. Participate in and support programmes of evaluation/research conducted by Dogs for Good and our partners. This will include ensuring that relevant data about work with clients is collected and maintained, in line with the Dogs for Good Data Protection policy and protocols agreed with our partner organisations.
11. To support the charity's marketing team, public relations and fundraising functions by carrying out talks, demonstrations and as required.
12. To attend regular 121 meetings and appraisal reviews as part of a program for personal development.
13. To monitor and, where appropriate, take steps to safeguard charity clients, vulnerable children and adults engaged within the service area as per policy.
14. To carry out any other tasks agreed with your line manager.



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Skills and Experience

We are looking for someone with the following key skills and experience:

Essential	Desirable
Sound judgement, skills and experience in relations to:	
Dog education and handling matters that follow a positive and non-coercive, approach, including analysis of temperaments, behaviour, appropriate training methods and requirements, public image considerations, solutions for training and behavioural problems.	
Sound judgement, skills and track record in relation to working with people with a range of disabilities/individual needs.	Experience of working therapeutically with people with disabilities/individual needs.
Knowledge	
Understanding of AAI and its successful application.	Law in relation to dogs.
Health and safety practices of dog handling and client management	An understanding of the health and social care context and local/community knowledge.
Communication	
Strong ability to communicate confidently, effectively and appropriately with a range of people internally and externally. This will include clients, families, other professional service providers and members of the public.	Experience of communicating with people with dementia, autism and other communication difficulties.
Ability to listen, respond and build on feedback received from the outcome of AAI programmes, evaluation and research initiatives.	
Creativity and change	
Able to create engaging programmes of activities with dogs aimed at meeting agreed client goals, while meeting the needs of the dog.	Responsive to recommended changes in policies, procedures and best practice and able to adapt working practices to ensure these are incorporated.



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Open to new ideas and confident to put forward ideas to colleagues, thus enabling Dogs for Good's work to develop. This will involve creativity in problem-solving, ability to 'think outside the box' and responding appropriately to new ideas and unexpected situations.	
Interpersonal Skills	
Good team player and networker with strong relationship management skills, who is able to build relationships and work effectively as part of more than one team.	
Ability to work independently whilst engaging with a wider remote team.	
Planning and Organisation	
IT skills: Ability to use technology, where appropriate, to support the delivery of the service and to ensure data and records can be stored and accessed easily.	Experience of using Microsoft Dynamics
Good planning disciplines, focused on clear outcomes and delivered in line with recognised standards of practice.	
Ability to manage and prioritise own workload and resources to meet programme commitments and deadlines.	



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Person profile

- Commitment to a person centred focussed approach
- Outcomes-oriented; a 'can-do', organised and self-starter approach
- Creative approach and problem-solver
- Inclusive style and willing to share and learn
- Calm and flexible approach
- Operates to high standards

Other Requirements

- Accompanying dogs in the charity's vehicles is part of the job, so a full driving licence is preferred, but where applicable, we will work with the chosen candidate to find alternative solutions where reasonable adjustments are required.
- As you will be working with vulnerable people, you will be required to undergo a Disclosure Scotland Check.
- The jobholder will be required to work to Dogs for Good's standards of Animal Assisted Intervention, which embrace the standards of Animal Assisted Intervention International (AII).
- You are expected to have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and how they should be applied to the work of the charity and its partner organisations.
- Flexible working hours will be required in some instances to facilitate the effective delivery of services.
- You may occasionally be required to work and stay away from home for short periods of time.
- The Community Dog Handler may be required to accommodate a Community Dog in their home.



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