

Job Information Pack

Cancer Information and Support Assistant November 2020

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**Welcome from Raj Athwal – Executive Director
The Mulberry Centre**

Dear Candidate,

We are very pleased you are interested in applying for the position of Cancer Information Support Assistant at The Mulberry Centre. I hope you will find the information in this Candidate Brief useful and more generally, the content of our website: <https://www.themulberrycentre.co.uk/>

The Mulberry Centre (TMC) is an award-winning cancer information and support centre and an independent charity, based on the grounds of the West Middlesex University Hospital in Isleworth, West London. It has been open for over 19 years and has provided services and support to more than 15,000 people.

The Cancer Information Support Assistant will be first point of contact for anyone wishing to access The Mulberry Centre's services. You will have the people skills and confidence to participate in difficult conversations.

If you are interested in the work of The Mulberry Centre and have the relevant experience to perform this significant role, we would very much like to hear from you. Please contact me via email: raj.athwal@themulberrycentre.co.uk to discuss the opportunity in more detail.

Raj Athwal
Executive Director

2) About The Mulberry Centre

History

The Mulberry Centre is the culmination of a series of events. Over twenty ago, the West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust launched its first major fundraising campaign under the heading of the Pulse Appeal. West London needed a cancer support service – somewhere for anyone affected by a diagnosis of cancer to visit for information, advice and support.



Visits were made to similar Centre's around the country to gain an understanding of the viability of the service and its ongoing funding needs and to stimulate ideas for the design of our purpose-built Centre. In the summer of 1999, the cancer care Centre gained its name and visual branding – The Mulberry Centre Appeal was born. Fundraising continued, and building started in 2000. In 2001 the dream became a reality and the doors were opened for the first time.

After four years, The Mulberry Centre moved from being a subsidiary charity of the West Middlesex University Hospital Charitable Fund, to become a charity in its own right. On 1st August 2005, The Mulberry Centre became an independent charity, with its own Board of Trustees. This development allowed further scope for funding applications and an easier route for donations. Ties with the West Middlesex University Hospital continue to be strong, but the Centre gained strategic control over its future.

Today, The Mulberry Centre is a well-established resource in West London and has received many thousands of visits from both new and established users of the Centre for over 19 years.

Mission

The core mission of The Mulberry Centre is to improve the lives of anyone affected by cancer, including those with a diagnosis, carers, family members and bereaved relatives, by enhancing emotional, psychological and physical well-being.

Activities

Since 2001, The Mulberry Centre has grown and adapted its services to meet the needs of the people we aim to serve. As people are living longer with a cancer diagnosis, we recognise that their needs may change over time. It is not just the physical manifestation of the disease, but the emotional and practical impacts that we are able to respond to.

We aim to deliver a range of information and support services to all people affected by a diagnosis of cancer: to the cancer patient, the main carer, and those bereaved by cancer. Services include complementary and relaxation therapies, ongoing one to one support on a drop-in basis, counselling sessions and support groups, plus a wide range of workshops.

The combination of information, support, self-management and relaxation helps people feel in control; it helps them to make the right decisions to manage the physical and mental trauma of a cancer diagnosis, treatment and recovery. In addition, our community engagement has continued to be strengthening referral pathways with local community groups, to ensure that people hear about us at the earliest opportunity in their cancer journey.

Longstanding relationships with a wide range of health professionals, public bodies and voluntary organisations also help us to achieve and sustain our aims.

The services offered by TMC are briefly described below. Further details can be found on the TMC website.

Information Service and Library

Drop in support

Counselling, Support Groups and Coaching

Complementary Therapies

Wellbeing classes

Informative Workshops

Creative and social activities

Welfare rights and Benefits service

Engagement in the community

A peaceful space to relax and meet others, including within our own garden.

All the services are provided free of charge.

Recognitions and Awards

In 2010 we were chosen as a beacon site for their Macmillan Environmental Quality Mark award for the excellence of our facilities; this was awarded again in 2012, 2015 and in November 2018. In 2014 The Mulberry Centre was named Hounslow Charity of the Year at the annual volunteer awards ceremony. In recent years, The Mulberry Centre has been the Charity of the Year of both the Mayor of Hounslow and the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames. We have also won the Hounslow Health Garden of Year Award twice. In March 2019, the Complementary Therapy team won a prestigious Macmillan Volunteers Award for their commitment and determination to improve the lives of people affected by cancer.

How we operate

We have a staff team of around 10, in full-time equivalent terms, and an expenditure budget of approximately £450,000 each year. The costs of running The Mulberry Centre have to be met by the income that we manage to raise. Although a certain amount of funding is received under contract, we have needed to find the bulk of our funding from charitable donations and fundraising activities. We have over 135 volunteers providing approximately 8,000 hours of time each year to provide support and services to our clients. We would not be able to provide the support we do for people affected by cancer without our volunteer workforce.

3) The Role of Cancer Information Support Assistant

Reports to the Psychological Support Lead

Background to the role

The Mulberry Centre and Macmillan Cancer Support have a strong historical partnership and are working together to ensure that people affected by cancer can access the information and support that they need. The Mulberry Centre is financially independent of Macmillan Cancer Support; however, they have been integral to our development. The Cancer Information Support Assistant will be working closely with the Cancer Information and Support Services Manager and the team.

We are seeking a Cancer Information Support Assistant to work closely with the Cancer Information and Support Services Manager. We are looking for an individual to provide personalised support and information to cancer patients, carers and the bereaved through a broad understanding of information provision and counselling skills. You will need to be compassionate and empathetic individual striving to make a difference to people affected by cancer. The Cancer Information Support Assistant will be at the forefront of our client-based services, including the development of our community outreach cancer prevention work.

Overall purpose of role

- To be the primary point of contact for anyone wishing to access The Mulberry Centre's information and support services.
- To provide a comprehensive holistic cancer information and support service within The Mulberry Centre to meet the needs of people affected by cancer, their family and friends, and those bereaved as a result of cancer.
- To be up to date with best practice on professional issues in cancer information, support, treatment and care, including local and national trends and developments in this field e.g. NHS and cancer research.
- To support the Manager to develop a comprehensive support and information programme and ensure consistent high-quality delivery.
- To support the Manager in developing The Mulberry Centre's key relationships with health and social care professionals.

Responsibilities

Expert Practice

1. To provide confidential support to patients, their carers and those bereaved by cancer, utilising a range of recognised counselling skills. This includes sessions with new users to make an initial assessment to help identify support and informational needs and to assess any psychosocial aspects of this condition.
2. To provide comprehensive holistic cancer information covering the entire range of cancers, its treatment, psychosocial issues, lifestyle issues, financial matters and future developments; to ensure that all information held is regularly updated; to ensure that the high quality of information given to service users, health professional and community organisations is maintained.
3. To ensure that clients are signposted to relevant services where these are outside the scope of the Centre.

4. To ensure support and service information is updated on The Mulberry Centre website with support from the Marketing & Communications Officer.
5. To respond to enquiries and requests for information from a range of sources, including health professionals.

Education

6. To coordinate and disseminate information on The Mulberry Centre's support and information services, including the need to ensure the Centre staff and volunteers are up to date with current best practice.
7. To develop and deliver a programme of informative workshops and social/creative programme for anyone accessing the Centre.
8. To be involved in the delivery of an external information programme in collaboration with the Community Engagement Lead including, for example, delivering some presentations and information stands at selected events.

TMC Staff / Development of Service

9. In conjunction with the Manager, to maintain and develop contacts with key stakeholders
10. In conjunction with the Executive Director and Manager, to develop referral pathways between WMUH, local GPs and The Mulberry Centre.
11. To work to ensure the service meets the Macmillan Quality standards for Information and Support Services.
12. To facilitate the client user forum.

Monitoring of Information and Support Services

13. To review regularly the quality of the information service and give feedback about this to the Manager.
14. To maintain accurate records of service use to include library use and user enquires/support needs.
15. In conjunction with the Manager, to develop methods of obtaining useful feedback from service users in order to provide a high quality, responsive service and to develop mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of the service.

Personal Development

16. To continue his/her own personal development through the pursuit of relevant professional and academic study.
17. To keep up-to-date on professional issues in cancer, research and the National Health Service.
18. To undertake regular professional supervision in line with counselling protocols and Centre policy

Miscellaneous

19. To share with other members of the team general and ad hoc tasks.
20. To be available as a member of staff on the Thursday late night opening rota (be available as member of staff on the Thursday night rota).

21. To attend, as appropriate, meetings and community events as and when necessary. (Some of these events may be outside of normal office hours).

General duties and responsibilities

22. To ensure that the support and information services offered at TMC remain user-led – a product of user need.
23. To drive a culture that embraces change, open communication, ambition, innovation, future-thinking and external focus.
24. To develop and support a culture that acknowledges the importance of training and personal development.
25. To work collaboratively with colleagues and key stakeholders in order to achieve TMC's organisational objectives.
26. To undertake additional activities related to the role as identified in discussion with the Manager. An example of this could be on site partnership working with the West Middlesex University Hospital with the PCP team.

Person specification

Experience

- ♥ At least 3 years' experience in a similar role.
- ♥ Recognised counselling qualification.
- ♥ Ability to provide personalised support and information to cancer patients, carers and the bereaved through a broad understanding of information provision and counselling skills.
- ♥ Ability to offer empathetic understanding and participate in difficult conversations.
- ♥ Collaboration and teamwork: proven ability to work with colleagues from a range of disciplines.
- ♥ Proven analytical and problem-solving skills.
- ♥ Forward thinking with a logical mind.

Skills and abilities

- ♥ Knowledge of issues faced by those affected by cancer.
- ♥ Excellent communication and relationship skills.
- ♥ Experience in presenting to individuals and groups of people.
- ♥ Excellent writing skills.
- ♥ Proven IT skills. Competent in all aspects of Microsoft Office.
- ♥ Flexibility to represent The Mulberry Centre in out-of-hours.

Personal attributes

- ♥ **Committed to the aims and values of The Mulberry Centre:** we expect all staff to uphold and reflect the ethos of the Centre and all its work
- ♥ **Hardworking:** as a small charity, our success depends on the hard work of all our people
- ♥ **Creative and resourceful:** Ability to source and evaluate a comprehensive range of information and distil into key requirements.
- ♥ **Practical:** as part of a small team, you will need to have a positive collaborative outlook and the ability to work across the organisation and with external stakeholders to achieve results.

- ♥ **Reliable:** this is a critical post with responsibility for ensuring the delivery of client Services.
- ♥ **Approachable:** an open, friendly approach is critical to the team spirit of our small staff and to be sensitive to the needs of minority and vulnerable groups.
- ♥ **Flexible:** the post holder will need to be willing to travel and work unsocial hours twice a month.

Other requirements

- ♥ Willingness to undergo enhanced DBS.

4) Working hours, salary and benefits

Working hours and flexibility

We are looking for someone to work part-time 22.5 hours per week.

Salary

£16,200 per annum pro rata (£27,000 FTE).

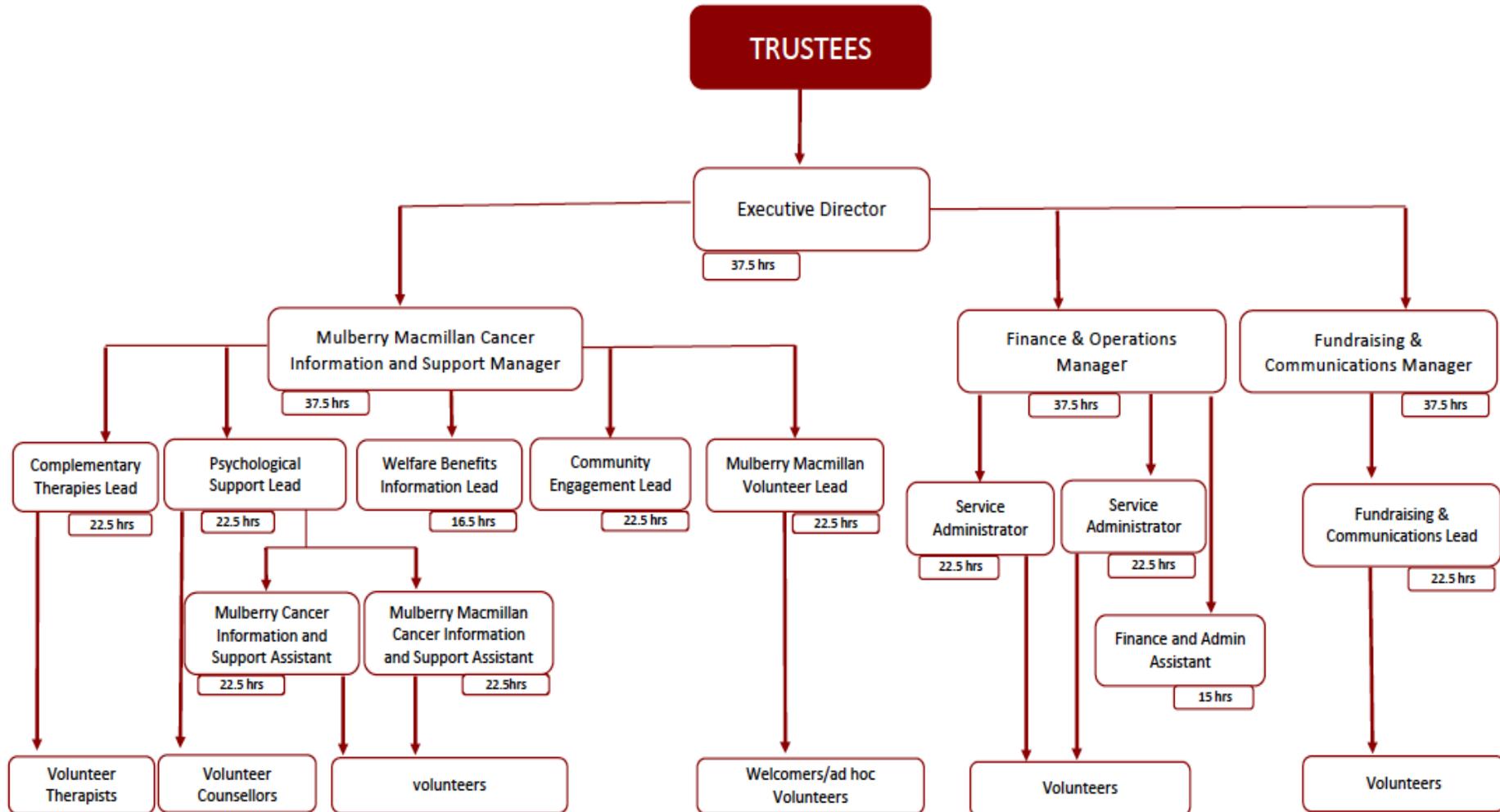
Annual leave

Holiday entitlement is 23 days holiday per year excluding public and statutory holidays. Holidays will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time workers.

Pension

6% pension contribution (either into a personal plan or through NEST).

5) Organisation Chart



6) Timetable and how to apply

Thursday 12 th November 2020	Applications open
Sunday 6 th December 2020- Midnight	Deadline for applications
Monday 14 th December 2020	Interview day

How to apply

To apply, please email the following documents to raj.athwal@themulberrycentre.co.uk quoting CISA, as soon as possible and no later than 23:59 on Sunday 6th December 2020.

1. A comprehensive CV
2. A covering letter containing:
 - a. Supporting statement showing evidence of how you meet the personal specification of the role
 - b. Your notice period
 - c. The name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees. (Please note referees will not be approached without your prior permission.)

Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Please contact Raj Athwal (email address above) if you have any queries or if you would like to have an informal conversation about the role.

Thank you for your interest in this position.