An Introduction to Options

Options provides innovative and flexible support to people with disabilities, with a range of support needs. We are a registered charity and therefore every penny is spent on providing great support. The organisation was one of the first of its kind in the UK, established in 1993 and has a proven track record of providing community based, supported living for people who want their own places to live with support.

Our first support was provided in Liverpool and Sefton. Each was based on the principle of finding out what each person to be supported uniquely wanted and needed, and then designing support around him/her (what is now called person centredness). Options seeks to support anyone with a learning disability, no matter how complex their support needs. We are committed to turning no-one away and to sticking with people when their lives become very difficult.

Options expanded to the Wirral in 2001. To date, across Merseyside, we support 73 people through community outreach and we support 94 people in supported living.

Outreach support now operates in Wirral, Liverpool, Sefton and Halton. We support these people who have learning disabilities by promoting community inclusion and reablement through voluntary or paid work, college and social activities and offering valuable respite for families and carers.

The support will vary from 3 hours a day to 15 hours a day, usually to someone who lives at home and is supported by their family or another provider agency, or who lives without much support.

Supported Living tends to provide support 24 hours a day (although it can be less), with waking or sleep in staff at night-time. With Supported Living, Options will usually be the main provider of support. We will often assist the person to find a house and to establish their own home from scratch.

We are committed to staying small with few management tiers and an unwavering commitment to support people with complex support needs. We have approximately 350 staff and provide £6 million of support.
Our Mission is to support, empower, and enable people with disabilities to live their lives to the full.

Our Aims and Beliefs

1. We believe that all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:
   - The power, authority and resources to control our own lives
   - A sense of belonging and acceptance for who we are
   - Being treated with dignity and respect
   - Participating as valued members of our own communities
   - Having new life opportunities and enriching life experiences
   - Meaningful and loving personal relationships
   - The opportunity to express our own cultural and spiritual beliefs
   - Good health
   - Taking responsibility for what we can or ought to do for ourselves
   - Caring about and helping those around us.

2. To support families and carers to in turn enable people we support to achieve the lives described above

3. To provide a challenging, rewarding and supportive work experience for staff, where they are able to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of the people we support

4. To help and engage with communities to understand how they can support people with disabilities to live valued lives in those communities

5. To provide excellent value to people we support and to those who purchase that support

6. To work in partnership with Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, specialist trusts, housing associations and others to provide excellent services

7. To share our learning, our successes and mistakes and our experiences with others, and to constantly learn from others

8. To develop and strengthen Options as an organisation in order to fulfil our mission.
1. Vision
We have a clear sense of purpose and direction.

2. Listening
We listen to each other, and don’t jump in with our own views before considering others. This reflects our respect for each other.

3. Enabling
We support each other to develop our skills and abilities, and to use them effectively for the benefit of those we support. Therefore we don’t jump in to do everything ourselves, but look to developing and using the skills of others.

4. Integrity
We seek in our actions, in what we do, to reflect what we say and believe. We say what we mean and mean what we say.

5. Teamwork
We recognise each other’s different skills, experiences and abilities and seek to use each to work as a team, and to support each other in good and in bad times.

6. Recognition and Encouragement
Appreciation and encouragement are great motivators. We seek to identify opportunities to praise and encourage each other, and we celebrate success.

7. Challenge
We rigorously debate our differences of opinion and see such debates as healthy and positive. Once a decision is made we work wholeheartedly towards the agreed decision.

8. Commitment
We work hard to enable people we support to achieve their goals. When the going gets tough we stick in there. But we are also committed to balanced lives. As we seek full lives for the people we support so we seek to ensure staff do not work excessive hours, and have time for themselves and others outside of work.

9. Confidentiality
We share specific, private information on a need to know basis, and within supervision systems. We do not gossip about others, and we do not create negative reputations for people we support.

10. Rigour
We act and make decisions on what makes a real difference to the quality of life of those we support. When necessary we take hard and painful decisions.

11. Risk Taking
We are willing and keen to take thought through risks and make productive mistakes.

12. Learning
We are creative and try different ways of doing things. We make mistakes, but after they occur we learn from them to ensure they do not happen again.
Why join Options?

• An opportunity to make a real difference to someone’s life

• You care passionately about people

• The chance to work for the best supported living agency in the world (work in progress!)

• As much responsibility you can take

• Regular support and supervision (which helps you to grow and develop)

• Excellent training and development (you’ll have the opportunity to learn from some of the best trainers from around the world)

• A real voice and say in the organisation

• An opportunity to develop your skills as part of a team.

• Recognition for doing a great job (from a simple thank you to more formal recognition)
**Job Purpose:**
To shape, design, deliver and manage technology initiatives within Options to support people with disabilities to live as independently as they are able, while supporting the organisation to use technology to aid efficiency and effectiveness.

**Responsibilities:**
1. Build up a detailed knowledge of the assistive technology available for the people Options supports and how that might be used to support people’s independence.
2. Research and understand the various national, regional and local projects to use assistive technology with people with learning disabilities.
3. Identify with Development Managers and Team Leaders opportunities to use assistive technology.
4. Ensure these opportunities are realised through a process of individual project management which will include consultation, design, implementation and monitoring.
5. Ensure Team Action Plans focus purposefully and productively on increasing independence through the use of AT.
6. Increase awareness of AT opportunities throughout Options.
7. Know some of the people supported sufficiently well to inform best practice in support around Assistive Technology.
8. Source, at best value, Assistive Technology from a range of suppliers.
9. Produce monthly and ad hoc bulletins promoting ways to improve people’s independence through AT.
10. Provide training on the use of AT for staff throughout Options and work with individual teams also.
11. Work with all our partner organisations, families and others to promote Assistive Technology.
12. Support people to manage their own Assistive Technology as much as they are able.
13. Fully implement organisation wide use of Office 365 and SharePoint
14. Maintain Carista as a system administrator and streamline the areas used by each department, implementing further development of the software and its reporting when required.
Responsibilities (cont.):

15. To maintain day to day use of IT systems - active users, troubleshooting support issues, liaising with IT Support Contractors.
16. To induct new users into the office systems and work in partnership with the Training Coordinator to offer training if required.
17. To look for opportunities for improvement of systems and put proposals to the Leadership Team for consideration.
18. To work with the Quality Lead to ensure we remain compliant with Data Protection laws and all data is appropriately and securely stored and backed up.
19. Oversee all aspects of Options use of technology, including our hardware and software, and maintenance contracts.
20. To identify with the Organisational Development and Innovation Manager ways to make Options more efficient and effective using technology and implement these.
21. Support staff to maximise their IT literacy through training and coaching.
22. Implement and work to all Options policies and procedures.
23. Ensure compliance with relevant contractual and statutory requirements in relation to technology.
24. Provide regular reports to the Leadership Team on activity and progress in the role.
25. Participate in a range of training and personal development opportunities.
Experience:
- At least one year’s experience of working in a management role in an organisation which was person centred, mission orientated and innovative.
- Experience of assistive technology initiatives to bring about real change (desirable).
- Experience of using Office 365 including SharePoint, One Drive, Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint.
- Experience of supporting an organisation with their IT requirements.

Skills, Values and Knowledge:
- A passion for technology and its real benefits.
- Knowledge of how to use assistive technology with people to increase their independence (desirable)
- Ability to absorb technologically focused information from a range of websites.
- Person Centred – committed to ensuring people with disabilities are valued and enabled to take control of their own lives. To champion this when the going gets tough.
- Leadership Skills – the ability to set direction, lead and motivate staff so that things get done.
- Communication Skills – the ability to really listen to people supported, families and staff, and to communicate clearly – verbally and written.
- Pro-active and Purposeful – a self-starter who sees what needs to be done and gets on and does it or helps others to do it.
- Relationship Skills – good with people – able to support people and to challenge.
- Time Management – ability to organise and manage a complicated and demanding range of responsibilities and duties
- Independent thinker – prepared to stand alone and buck the trend when needed and use creativity to problem solve.
- Committed to learning and personal development
- Integrity – a clear desire and commitment to working out one’s values openly and honestly.
Summary of Terms

Salary: £21,500 pro rata

Hours
20 per week (part-time) in agreement with line manager

Holidays:
28 days including 8 Premium Days

Training:
Options will support the post holder in pursuing their development. Significant and attractive development opportunities will be available.

Sick Pay:
Options currently provides 5 calendar days sick pay at full pay for staff, after a waiting period of 3 days.

Pension Scheme:
Options will contribute 3% of salary to a pension scheme.

Based at:
St Nicholas House, Old Churchyard, Liverpool, L2 8TX. Occasionally travel outside of Merseyside will be required.

Mileage:
30p per mile.
Options is committed to people – people we support with learning disabilities and people who work for Options – our staff. We recognise that sometimes people commit crimes, but then develop beyond that, with the potential to be great at supporting people with disabilities.

Options is committed to providing opportunities for employment for people who have a criminal record or have been the subject of police enquiries. What we must do is to ensure this happens safely, without putting people we support at risk – financially, physically or emotionally.

Options, therefore has a policy of carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) on all of its employees. DBS checks examine people’s police records and other national registers that may indicate someone’s unsuitability to work with people who are vulnerable. We do this because:

a) We want to ensure the safety of people we support
b) We want to get the right staff (who may have committed offences but have developed beyond that)
c) We are legally obliged to.

We comply with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants fairly. A copy of the code of practice is available from the office if you would like one. We are keen to give a ‘second chance’ to people no longer likely to commit offences. Potential employees are advised at application stage i.e. in the application form, that they must disclose any cautions / convictions / warnings / court appearances which they have and that failure to do so will result in dismissal should the cautions / convictions / warnings be revealed subsequently, this is true of all civil and criminal offences. Should a candidate disclose cautions / convictions / warnings / court appearances at the interview stage, the chair of the interview panel should ask the person for more details. The decision as to whether or not to appoint should then be made bearing any of the information that has been disclosed in mind.

Should a successful candidate not reveal any cautions / convictions / warnings / court appearances which he/she have at application, Options will terminate that person’s employment, based on non-disclosure, and the need for honesty and integrity in the service. Applicants are always appointed subject to a satisfactory DBS check.
Options reserves the right to refuse employment to anyone who has a conviction for the following, should the circumstances of that conviction indicate that the employee may pose a potential threat to any of the people we support.

- Fraud
- Obtaining money by deception
- Crimes of a violent nature
- Burglary
- Theft
- Actual Bodily Harm
- Drug Related Offences.

No offence whatsoever is regarded as spent as Options work and appointments are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 due to the nature of the work that we do.

Options also reserves the right to refuse employment to anyone who has a number of convictions over a period of time, where the crime itself may not warrant either not appointing a candidate or termination of employment but the frequency and the pattern of crime indicate the person may re-offend.

Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily bar you from working for us. That will depend on the nature of the conviction and the circumstances and background of your offences. Dishonesty regarding convictions, cautions or court appearances will lead to non-appointment.