

BASW Social Work in Health (SWiH) Thematic Group



Role outline for a charity social worker working with sick children

Who we are:

The charity works in partnerships with NHS hospitals to support families whose children have cancer or a life-challenging condition. If the unthinkable happens, and a child dies, the charity offers specialist bereavement support.

What we do:

The social work service offers families specialist advice and information, practical support and help to access available grants and welfare benefits. Where required, we can also signpost to other relevant services which are beyond the scope of the service for example, immigration or legal advice. The most common issues the social work service supports families with include completing benefit claims such as DLA (Disability Living Allowance), PIP (Personal Independent Payment), Blue Badge applications, helping with financial worries/applying for grants, providing advice/support for their child's education, and advising families on housing and employment issues.

Families referred to the service will first have an introductory call to understand their situation. Together, we develop a tailored plan to address the parents' concerns and support their needs. One of the social workers is also the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) in the organisation, providing expert guidance on safeguarding matters, contributing to policy development, and delivering training for frontline family support staff.

How we work:

The social work service is an integral part of the charity's family support team, providing in-house specialist support. It operates as a non-statutory service. Our work is deeply relational, personable, and flexible. We adapt to the evolving circumstances of each family, tailoring our approach to meet their specific needs. Kindness and compassion are at the heart of everything we do. Support can be offered in the home, in one of our partner hospitals, or remotely - whatever works best for the family. The social work service also operates in collaboration with other charities and grant giving organisations which enables us to offer a holistic support service.

What we know:

The Children Act 1989 & 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the Equality Act 2010, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Care Act 2014, basic employment law principles and Data Protection Act 2018 are all key legislation and frameworks applied in our practice.

In addition, a strong understanding of the UK welfare system, local government schemes, and access to charitable funding is essential to effectively advise and advocate on behalf of the families we support.