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**POLICY & RESEARCH ASSISTANT: JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Position:** Policy & Research Assistant (Temporary contract)

**Hours:** Full -time (37 hours per week)

**Start date:** ASAP

**Duration:** Temporary contract until the 31 December 2020

**Salary:** €38,000 per annum

**Reports to:** Senior Policy and Research Officer or Research Officer

**Location:** Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7.

[Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, and subject to Government restrictions, the successful candidate may also be required to work remotely.]

**About Mental Health Reform:**

Mental Health Reform (MHR) is the national coalition driving reform of Ireland’s mental health services and supports. Our vision is of an Ireland where everyone can access the support that they need in their community to achieve their best possible mental health. With more than 70 member organisations and thousands of individual supporters, MHR provides a coordinated voice to Government, its agencies, the Oireachtas and the general public on mental health issues.

MHR’s priority objectives are:

* Policy and law reform
* Access to quality services
* Social and economic rights of people with mental health difficulties

The recent publication of Ireland’s new mental health policy, Sharing the Vision, provides a unique opportunity to build a modern mental health system. Visibility of mental health as a topic of concern in the public domain has never been greater due to the impact of COVID-19 on mental health. Political interest in the issue of mental health has also increased, as evidenced by existing commitments in the current Programme for Government, the establishment of a Joint Oireachtas Committee on mental health in 2017 and successive Dáil debates on mental health in the last couple of years. Public activism towards improving mental health services and preventing suicide has also surfaced in recent campaigns such as #IAmAReason, #InOurHourOfNeed and #GetYourActTogether.

**Position summary:**

The Policy & Research Assistant will support the MHR team in the organisation’s work to promote the improvement of mental health services and the social inclusion of people with mental health difficulties, with a particular focus on MHR’s policy development and research activity.

The Policy & Research Assistant will play an important role in conducting qualitative research (including the facilitation of interviews and/or focus groups, analysis of qualitative data and report writing), desk research, the drafting of policy documents and in organising policy and research-based events.

Primary tasks for the Policy & Research Assistant will include carrying out qualitative research as part of MHR’s project on identifying the experiences of LGBTI+ people of the mental health services in Ireland. Other policy and research activities will be decided in conjunction with the MHR team on the basis of the needs of the organisation and the experience and competencies of the assistant but are likely to include:

**Assisting team members in:**

* Developing interview schedules for focus groups and one-to-one interviews
* Facilitating research-based interviews and focus groups. Given the current climate it is possible that focus groups may be held online
* Analysing qualitative data
* Drafting research reports
* Drafting and editing a range of policy and research documents
* Developing literature reviews on issues related to mental health
* Gathering evidence on good practice in mental health service delivery, both nationally and internationally
* Gathering evidence and monitoring developments on the status of mental health reform in Ireland
* Reviewing and summarising reports from Government agencies and advocacy groups that could be relevant for the area of mental health services
* Organising policy and research-based events, such as public consultations, focus groups, meetings and seminars
* Providing administrative support, including transcribing minutes, meeting notes and interviews and other administrative tasks

**Skills, knowledge and experience required:**

* A third-level post graduate qualification in social policy and research or a related discipline
* Qualitative research experience (including the facilitation of interviews and/or focus groups and the analysis of qualitative data)
* Report writing
* Fluent speaker and writer of English
* Excellent written and verbal communication skills
* Excellent organisational skills including an ability to work to deadlines
* Keen interest in the area of mental health
* Skill in Microsoft Office, specifically Word, PowerPoint and Excel
* Flexibility

**Desirable:**

* Knowledge of mental health and/or LGBTI+ issues
* Experience producing written work of publishable standard
* Experience organising and/or helping to organise events
* Experience recruiting and working with research participants
* Experience planning and coordinating research activities
* Ability to work as part of a team

The occasional evening and/or weekend work may apply. Time in lieu will apply for any ‘out of hours’ work built up.

**Application process:**

To apply for the above post, please send your letter of application and up to date CV via email to [kmitchell@mentalhealthreform.ie](mailto:kmitchell@mentalhealthreform.ie). Any enquiries about the post should be emailed to this address also.

**Applications will be reviewed as received and the process will close once a suitable candidate is identified.**

**Mental Health Reform is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**