

Sands  
Application Information

**Bereavement Support Services Officer  
(Black and Black British Focus)**

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June 2021

## About Sands

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Every day in the UK, 14 babies are stillborn or die shortly after birth.

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity and exists to reduce the number of babies dying and to support anyone affected by the death of a baby, before, during or shortly after birth.



Sands provides bereavement support services both nationally through its Freephone helpline, mobile app, online community and resources, as well as locally through a network of around 100 regional support groups based across the UK and run by trained befrienders.



Sands works in partnership with professionals, trusts and health boards and offers a range of training programmes and bereavement care resources to ensure that every bereaved parent and family receives the best possible care wherever they are in the UK.



Sands promotes improvements in practice and supports research to better understand the causes of baby deaths and save babies' lives.

Sands raises awareness of baby loss and works with governments, key influencers and other stakeholders to make reducing the number of babies dying a priority nationally and locally.

Over the past 43 years, Sands has grown into a national charity with a powerful vision shared by dedicated volunteers, fundraisers, members, donors, healthcare professionals, partners, staff and bereaved parents and families.

Sands has grown its income by over 40% since 2012 and, as part of our strategic plan, is focusing on how we can make the biggest difference to the lives of bereaved families and save babies' lives. To find out more, visit [www.sands.org.uk](http://www.sands.org.uk)

*our vision at Sands is for a world where fewer babies die and anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the best care and support for as long as they need, wherever they live in the UK.*

**Join us and help create a world where fewer babies die.**

## Sands Staff Benefits

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### Annual Leave

Staff receive 28 days annual leave per annum pro rata, plus bank holidays. Staff will be required to take 3 days annual leave during the period between Christmas & New Year.

### Employee Assistance Service

As part of its commitment to employee wellbeing, Sands offers independent, free and confidential counselling and information telephone service. Support is available on a range of issues including legal, financial, emotional, health issues and work related concerns.

### Sand Cycle to Work Scheme

Sands has teamed up with Cycle Solutions to provide a Cycle to Work Scheme, which you can join to make considerable savings on the cost of a new bike and equipment.

### Sands Pension Scheme

Subject to eligibility, you will be automatically enrolled into the Aegon Personal Pension scheme as soon as your employment commences. You can decide whether to remain in the scheme and/or make additional voluntary contributions if you wish.

### Sands is a vibrant, growing charity!

With a clear strategy, Sands is repositioning as a learning, developing organisation which aims to achieve excellence through people and offers a collegiate, collaborative working environment – making it an especially exciting time to join the charity!

## About the role

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Sands offers support to anyone affected by the death of a baby. We are looking to recruit a Bereavement Support Services Officer to provide consistent, high-quality information and support to bereaved families.

Our Bereavement Support Services team provides a wide range of services, including the Freephone Helpline, Online Community, Social Media support, a Bereavement Support App, memory making resources, and print materials.

In this role you will provide consistent, high-quality emotional support to bereaved families who seek support from Sands, with particular focus on Black and Black British families. We know that Black and Black British women are at increased risk of stillbirth and maternal death and Sands' support services currently do not completely reflect Black and Black British communities. This is one of two new roles to support and promote the work of Sands within communities at higher risk of stillbirth and neonatal death. Working alongside Black Mums Upfront and other organisations representing Black communities, Sands has conducted joint work and surveys to inform and inspire this work.

The primary focus of this role is to provide frontline support via telephone, email and social media.

You will have excellent verbal and written communication skills, be highly empathetic and also be able to offer telephone, email and social media support to bereaved individuals and others contacting the team.

The ability to professionally represent the charity's views and positions clearly is essential, as are strong research skills and the ability to keep accurate and clear records in a variety of formats.

You will have effective time management skills and be able to manage your own workload. The ability to reflect on your own practice and attend regular accredited clinical supervision is also essential.

**To apply:** Please submit your CV, together with a supporting statement that demonstrates how you meet the criteria in the person specification to [recruitment@sands.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@sands.org.uk). Please also complete the Diversity and Equality Monitoring Form and send this with your application.

**Closing date for applications:** 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021  
**Interview Date :** w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021

As we have limited staff resources, we are unable to provide candidates with feedback about their applications.

# Job Description

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<b>Job Title:</b>	Bereavement Support Services Officer – including Black and Black British focus
<b>Responsible to:</b>	<b>Bereavement Support Services Manager</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Home-based, with occasional travel within the UK
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent
<b>Salary:</b>	£26,910 per annum pro rota plus £312 Home Working Allowance per annum pro rota
<b>Hours:</b>	21 hours per week

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## Main Purpose of Job:

This is a key role in the Bereavement Support Services(BSS) team. The team provides a wide range of services, including the Freephone Helpline, Online Community, Social Media support, a Bereavement Support App, memory making resources, and print materials.

The aim of this post is to provide consistent, high-quality emotional support to bereaved families who seek support from Sands, with particular focus on Black and Black British families. We know that Black and Black British women are at increased risk of stillbirth and maternal death and Sands' support services currently do not completely reflect Black and Black British communities. This is one of two new roles to support and promote the work of Sands within communities at higher risk of stillbirth and neonatal death. Working alongside Black Mums Upfront and other organisations representing Black communities, Sands has conducted joint work and surveys to inform and inspire this work.

The primary focus of this role is to provide frontline support via telephone, email and social media. The BSS team offers telephone and email support and is currently open from 10.00am – 3pm from Monday to Friday; 6pm – 10pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays; and has occasional extended opening for specific reasons. Other channels are supported throughout the working week.

Bereavement Support Officers (BSSO's) will be expected to cover all regular opening hours on a rota basis. Flexibility to accommodate other external commitments will be considered.

The role will be split between direct family support and contributing to other strands of bereavement support work.

## Key Responsibilities

- Offer immediate, sensitive telephone, email and social media support to bereaved individuals and others who telephone or email the Bereavement Support Services Team.

- To explore and develop support for Black and Black British bereaved families within the UK to meet Sands' core strategic aims; this could include Black Befriender recruitment, liaison with faith and other community organisations and continuing our partnership working
- Creation and moderation of a safe online space for Black and Black British parents and families to share their experiences
- Document key information from bereavement support contacts and assist the Senior Bereavement Support Services Coordinator/Bereavement Support Services Manager to collate information and identify patterns, including providing support for the Online Community.
- Work with the team to ensure that the Helpline Partnerships accreditation standard is maintained – recently re-accredited in May 2021.
- Support colleagues by offering opportunities for debriefing after calls
- Collaborate on providing responses to emails and moderating posts on social media channels and within the Online Community as needed.
- Supporting other Sands' teams in responding to enquiries and requests which include a bereavement support element.
- To support Sands' communication function in the area of bereavement support.
- Participate in mutual call shadowing (listening in and being listened to) as arranged.
- Attend regular external clinical supervision sessions to reflect on your role (Sands will fund these sessions on a monthly basis).
- Attend regular internal team supervision
- Input to and attend key external Bereavement Support events.
- Use video conferencing to attend team meetings and organisation-wide staff meetings.
- Attend away days.
- Attend training as needed and participate in the development of training.
- Contribute to the ongoing review and development of bereavement support materials, website copy and the Bereavement Support App.
- Any other duties as commensurate with the role.

# Person Specification

Importance	Criteria
Essential	Demonstrate an understanding of and empathy with the issues surrounding the death of a baby, with particular focus on the needs and specific issues surrounding baby loss within Black and Black British communities.
Essential	Proven ability to support others around issues of bereavement.
Essential	Demonstrate a warm, clear, and considered telephone manner.
Essential	Excellent active listening skills
Essential	Demonstrate compassion for others and a non-judgemental attitude.
Essential	Evidence of professionalism and boundaries
Essential	Excellent verbal and written communication skills and ability to use these appropriately to offer telephone, email and social media support to bereaved individuals and others contacting the team.
Essential	A thorough understanding of confidentiality and safeguarding.
Essential	Ability to represent professionally the views and positions of Sands clearly and distinctly from any personal opinions.
Essential	Demonstrate the ability for accurate and up-to-date record keeping.
Essential	Demonstrate strong research skills to be able to identify opportunities for external relationships or signposting to other organisations.
Essential	Able to manage own workload, be well organised and demonstrate strong time management skills.
Essential	Demonstrate a reliable, positive attitude towards work
Essential	Demonstrate a willingness to work well within a team.
Essential	Prepared to reflect on own practice and attend regular clinical supervision.
Essential	Willing to attend meetings as required.
Essential	Willing to keep skills up to date and attend training as necessary.
Essential	Willing to keep up to date with developments in bereavement support and share this knowledge across the BSS and wider Sands teams.
Essential	Have access to a private space for receiving and returning calls.
Desirable	Previous experience of bereavement support work.
Desirable	A qualified counsellor from a BACP accredited course.