

Sands
Application Information
Bereavement Support Services Officer

August 2021

About Sands

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

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

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

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.

The Sands Helpline is open from 10.00am to 3.00pm from Monday to Friday, and also between 6.00pm and 9.00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Bereavement Support Services Officers will be expected to work regular shifts on a rota basis.

With proven ability in providing bereavement-centred support in a variety of settings and channels, you will be able to demonstrate a sound understanding of, and empathy with, the issues surrounding the death of a baby.

You will have excellent verbal and written communication skills, and be able to use these appropriately to offer telephone and email support to bereaved families.

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 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. Please also complete the Diversity and Equality Monitoring Form and send this with your application.

Closing date for applications : 1st September 2021

Interview Date : w/c 13th September 2021

As we have limited staff resources, we are unable to provide candidates with feedback about their applications. **Interviews will be held online via Zoom.**

Job Description

Job Title:	Bereavement Support Services Officer
Responsible to:	Bereavement Support Services Manager
Location:	Home-based, with occasional travel within the UK
Contract:	Permanent
Salary:	£16,146 per annum (£26,910 FTE) plus £187 per annum Home Working Allowance (£312 FTE)
Hours:	21 hours per week

Main Purpose of Job:

This is a key role in the Bereavement Support Services team. The team provides a wide range of services, including the Helpline, Online Community, the Bereavement Support App, memory making, and print materials.

The aim of this post is to provide consistent, high-quality emotional support to bereaved families who seek support from Sands.

The primary focus of this role is to work on the Sands Helpline as support officers, listening to callers and responding to emails. The helpline offers telephone and email support and is usually open from 10am-3pm from Monday to Friday; 6pm – 9pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays; and has occasional extended opening for specific reasons.

Bereavement Support Officers (BSOs) will be expected to cover all regular opening hours on a rota basis. Flexibility to accommodate other external commitments will be considered. Each shift will start 60 minutes before the helpline opens and end 60 minutes after the helpline closes. If colleagues start work when the Helpline is already open, they will be expected to use the first hours of their shift to settle in and organize their work before starting calls and email responses.

The role will be split between work on the helpline 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 Sands Helpline.

- Document key information from calls and emails and assist the Senior Bereavement Support Services Coordinators 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.
- Support colleagues by handing over after each shift, highlighting issues of note or contact from repeat callers with additional needs.
- Collaborate on providing responses to emails and moderating posts on the Online Community as needed.
- Offer Digital Support via online channels like Facebook, Instagram and dedicated social media pages.
- Supporting other Sands teams in responding to enquiries and requests which include a bereavement support element.
- Contribute to team and organization-wide resources around bereavement support.
- 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 monthly group and individual clinical supervision sessions to reflect on work and (Sands will fund these sessions on a monthly basis).
- Attend Team Meetings and training participate in the development of training as organized by the Digital Coordinator.
- Attend meetings with the Counselling Coordinator and BSSM to plan and review specific projects around bereavement support.
- Input to and attend key external Bereavement Support events.
- Use video conferencing to attend team meetings and organisation-wide staff meetings.
- Attend away days.
- 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.
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 and email support to bereaved individuals and others contacting the helpline.
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.
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.