

Job Title (Location)	Benefits Advisor (Newcastle)
Salary and Band	Band 5 – Salary range £28,048 - £36,290
Annual Leave	27 days plus 9 Bank Holidays for full-time hours
Reports to	Centre Head
Liaises	Colleagues across Maggie's, statutory and voluntary organisations linked to Welfare Rights and Benefits

About Maggie's

Maggie's provides free cancer support and information in our specially designed centres across the UK and online. Working alongside NHS hospitals, Maggie's centres are staffed by expert Cancer Support Specialists, Psychologists and Benefits Advisors, helping people to take back control when cancer turns life upside down.

Our long-term ambition is to be there for everyone with cancer in the UK at all 60 cancer centre sites to ensure that there is no-one living with cancer who is unable to access the expert psychological and information support that they so desperately need to live the best quality of life possible. The next five years brings us over the halfway mark to achieving this goal.

About the Post Holder

As well as a strong understanding of relevant legislation and its' application, you will have good analytical skills, the ability to understand and summarise complex issues and to develop working relationships for the benefit of income maximization. You will have the ability to work on your own initiative to effectively manage a busy caseload, working when necessary in partnership with other agencies when handling complex cases. The role can be emotionally intense at times and the post holder should be emotionally sensitive whilst also resilient in order to manage these demands.

About the Role

The role will advise and assist people to access available benefits and other sources of financial help. This support may be provided on a 'drop in' basis and through a programme of booked appointments. You will be responsible for liaising with other statutory and voluntary bodies as required.

You will also have responsibility for creating the conditions for maintaining ongoing relationships with people accessing the centre, and in collaboration with colleagues for enabling people to access all aspects of Maggie's programme to ensure ongoing and effective cancer support.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide comprehensive advice on benefits using a variety of different mechanisms
- Assist in the completion of benefits claims, maximising an individual's income.
- Promote and develop benefits advice as a component of Maggie's programme including participation in teaching and training programmes.
- Recording and maintaining up to date records and reporting of activity data in relation to own activity as required by Maggie's policies and procedures.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of relevant external agencies, signposting where appropriate and being able to develop beneficial working relationships.
- Responsible for recording data in relation to their own work in accordance with Maggie's policies and procedures, and will contribute to Maggie's programme of annual audit, centre review and triennial review.
- Follow up claims for disability benefits and any further benefits triggered by an award.
- Negotiate with statutory bodies, ensuring that people are supported through this process.
- Ensure that centre visitors feel welcome and valued as individuals, and that they feel their concerns have been heard and understood; creating the conditions for ongoing relationships with other members of the team facilitating exploration of what Maggie's programme may have to offer.
- Contribute to raising awareness of and enabling access to Maggie's Centres.
- Contribute to centre specific or other specific audits as required.
- Support Maggie's Centre Head in ensuring that Maggie's environment is maintained as a welcoming atmosphere.
- Participate in staff support sessions, meetings with the Centre Head and supervision meetings, and staff training as required.
- Maintenance of statistical information and accurate case records.
- Administration and follow up to benefits advice and the submission of claims.
- Assist Maggie's Centre Head with centre administration as required.
- Occasional overnight stays and some travel will be required along with some evening and unsociable hours working.

Essential skills and experience

- Degree educated in a relevant field or equivalent experience.
- At least 2 year's experience in providing welfare benefits and money advice.
- The ability to think about and understand health related concerns within the wider context of an individual's life experience, family and social context.
- A warm, empathetic manner with excellent communication and listening skills.
- Able to write clear and concise reports.