Policy and Research Manager

Job Description

Position: Policy & Research Manager
Hours: Full -time (37 hours per week)
Duration: Permanent (Subject to funding)
Reports to: CEO
Location: Carmichael House, 4 Brunswick Street North, D07 RHA8
Mental Health Reform operates a hybrid system of remote working and in office working.

1. Position summary

This position manages the policy, advocacy and research unit and is a key member of the senior leadership team. The role has overall responsibility for shaping and delivering MHR's policy influencing strategy, building the organisation's evidence base, producing high quality submissions, developing and ensuring strong stakeholder engagement, and assisting MHR to deliver on its strategic plan.

2. 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 over 80-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. For more information, see https://www.mentalhealthreform.ie/

Main responsibilities

a) Developing and implementing MHR's policy reform agenda

- Lead the development of organisational policy positions, ensuring they are evidence-informed, rights-based and aligned with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
- Provide strategic direction, oversight and coordination of MHR's policy reform agenda
- Plan and organise our policy and advocacy work by overseeing objectives, key results, and action plans, and ensure that we deliver on those plans

- Lead the deepening and strengthening of MHR's influencing and advocacy agendas and approaches
- Develop and implement political advocacy strategies and identify key influencing targets with a view to influencing Mental Health policy and amplifying Mental Health Reform's voice and work
- Oversee and assist the policy team in developing and coordinating lobbying strategies to deliver positive policy change
- Champion the meaningful participation and leadership of people with lived and living experience of mental health difficulties, ensuring their voices are central to the development of policy positions, advocacy priorities, research, and organisational decision-making.
- Ensure policy positions are coherent with the views and experiences of mental health service users and family members through regular consultations
- Proactively monitor relevant developments in Irish and international mental health policy, practice and law
- Ensure MHR is producing high quality policy submissions and briefings.
- Conduct regular consultation with MHR's member organisations, advisory groups and international and national experts
- Collaborate with the communications team to deliver advocacy campaigns and events.
- Chair MHRs Policy & Advocacy Working Group

b) Building Mental Health Reform's evidence base

- Provide oversight and coordination of MHR's research agenda
- Proactively develop and maintain relationships with key academic institutions, identifying opportunities to work jointly
- Oversee and contribute to the design of research
- Oversee and conduct desk and empirical research as necessary
- Ensure robustness and rigour in MHR's research and policy work including regular engagement with the Research Advisory Committee (RAC)
- Identify funding opportunities and write research grant applications

c) Developing and strengthening partnerships and political engagement

- Develop and maintain a network of contacts to inform and increase the impact of our work.
- Consult regularly with members, people with lived experiences, peer organisations, allies and other relevant actors in order to stay current with trends and to ensure that MHR's research, policy and advocacy agendas are responsive to these trends
- Represent MHR in cross-departmental consultative forums and at public events
- Deliver training sessions and workshops as needed to a range of audiences and stakeholders.
- Plan and organise work to build MHR's credibility, influence and relationships with members of the Oireachtas and political advisers, in support of Mental Health Reform's policy priority issues.
- Monitor opportunities within the Oireachtas for MHR to advance its agenda – debates, committee meetings, consultations etc. Advise on and coordinate responses to these opportunities in collaboration with colleagues as appropriate

- Develop and implement a monitoring system to oversee MHRs relationships and interactions with key Oireachtas stakeholder (TDs, Senators, committees, staff etc.) to enable reporting and evaluation.

d) Assisting MHR to deliver on its overall strategic goals

- Work within the framework of the overall objectives and the policies and practices of MHR
- Ensure all work undertaken complies with data protection and GDPR rules
- Contribute to the promotion of equality of opportunity, anti-discriminatory practice, diversity, individual rights and choice in all aspects of work
- Carry out other administrative duties as required
- Lead, manage and coach staff within the MHR performance management system
- Supervise staff, interns and/or volunteers as required
- Participate in relevant training and development courses as agreed with the CEO
- Undertake such other duties as might be reasonably assigned from time to time by the CEO
- Be vigilant to any Health, Safety and Welfare risks in the workplace and bring any concerns to the attention of the CEO or Health & Safety Representative

3. The person

Skills, knowledge and experience required:

- A third-level qualification in a relevant discipline
- Satisfactory relevant experience in a senior policy role
- Proven experience leading political advocacy initiatives, building cross-party relationships, and influencing legislative and policy reform.
- Experience managing several projects simultaneously, as well as effective relationship management and influencing skills are essential.
- Considerable proven experience in leading the production of policy and research outputs
- Proven experience mobilising, cultivating, and empowering people with lived and living experience to inform and shape initiatives.
- Demonstrate expertise in international human rights frameworks, with a strong working knowledge of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC),
- Demonstrate ability to research, analyse and distil complex policy issues.
- Experience in managing staff to achieve deliverables
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to manage tight deadlines
- Fluent speaker and writer of English
- Proven exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, both verbal and written
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain high-quality and productive working relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.
- An ability to work with initiative and autonomy and take responsibility for a functional role within a small team

Desirable:

- Experience in and familiarity with community and voluntary sector in Ireland
- Familiarity with mental health policy landscape in Ireland
- Experience with media engagement

Pay & Benefits:

- The salary will be commensurate with skills & experience with the salary band 50k – 60k.

Mental Health Reform operates the following benefits for its employees:

- A pension schemes.
- Annual leave 24 days, exclusive of public holidays, 1 wellbeing day per year.
- Hybrid working arrangement
- Additional 4 days of PTO per year (Good Friday & Christmas)
- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme

Additional notes:

- Candidates must have the legal right to work and reside in Ireland at the time of application.
- Flexibility is required regarding hours as some weekend and evening work will be necessary. Travel and out of office work will also be a feature of the role.
- This job description is not a definitive list of tasks; rather it is designed to give an overview of the job. It is envisaged that the post-holder will use their own initiative and develop the job under guidance so that the organisations aims are achieved. It should be noted that the organisation is dynamic and fast paced and it may be necessary to step beyond the areas outlined above to support others from time to time.
- All documentation received by Mental Health Reform will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR; 2018). The information will only be used by Mental Health Reform in the processing of job applications and for ongoing administrative purposes with job candidates.

Application process:

- Please email your CV and cover letter to info@mentalhealthreform.ie.
- Requests for additional information can be sent to info@mentalhealthreform.ie.
- Closing date for the submission of applications is **Friday, 31st July at 17:00pm.** Late submission will not be considered
- Interviews are expected to take place the week of the **10th August**

Mental Health Reform is an equal opportunities employer. Reasonable accommodations are available throughout the recruitment and selection process. Please let us know if you require any adjustments.