

## **HIV Care Link Peer Ally/Support Specialist (Full-time or Part-time)**

### **Job Description:**

People living with HIV deserve a trusted ally—to have supportive meaningful human connection—in their lives. Our Care Program provides trained Peer Allies/Support-Specialists for people living with HIV. A peer ally is someone who has firsthand experience with challenges like what our clients experience and is trained to offer support and guidance to others who may be going through similar experiences. They are caring and empathetic individuals who truly understand what clients are going through and can provide a safe and non-judgmental space for clients to talk about their concerns and feelings.

Peer allies/support-specialists use their own experiences to help our clients navigate their journey, offering practical and emotional support that can help them feel less alone and more empowered. They can help clients identify their strengths and coping strategies and offer guidance on how to manage their challenges in a way that works best for them. With a peer ally/support-specialist by their side, our clients can feel confident that they have a knowledgeable and compassionate ally who is dedicated to helping them achieve their goals and live a fulfilling life.

Peer allies provide in-person visits that are usually 1 to 1 ½ hours long and talk about what is important to the client. We can meet at client's homes, go out and grab coffee or a meal together (our treat of course), go to the client's medical or case manager appointments together, go for a walk in a park, a quick run to the store, talk on the phone... the options are endless--whatever is helpful, and works for the client.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Respond to calls for assistance and client emergencies as needed.
- Meet with clients regularly to provide them with psychosocial support and assistance.
- Develop connections based on common experience, respect, empathy, and freedom of choice.
- Together with the client and appropriate specialists, co-create an appropriate care plan.
- Refer clients to appropriate specialists as needed.
- Communicate as appropriate with family members and medical specialists.
- Support the client's scheduling of activities, including appointments for treatment and medical care.
- Use a strengths-based approach and motivational interviewing to support clients in reaching their goals.
- Share personal experience stories to generate hope in clients as appropriate.
- Take a culturally-humble and client-focused approach by recognizing and respecting a client's specific needs, past experiences, cultural values, and personal views.
- Encourage and assist clients as they navigate challenging situations.
- Maintain personal contact with clients using means aligned with client preferences, which may include in-person contact, phone, text or email.
- Provide clients with support and encouragement to help them develop and accomplish their goals.
- Monitor clients' progress with respect to their care plan.
- Provide coaching related to topics such as managing HIV, managing stress, resolving conflict, and preventing drug abuse.

- Provide information about local resources to clients to assist them in obtaining the services they need.
- Support client self-advocacy and navigation of treatment and the healthcare system.
- Maintain appropriate records related to the client and their care plan.
- Complete documentation as required for grant funding.
- Provide transportation for clients as needed to engage in medical care, case management, and other forms of assistance (e.g., food banks).

**Qualifications:**

*Required Qualifications:*

- Experience working with people from a variety of cultural, social, economic, ethnic, racial, and spiritual backgrounds, especially people from the LGBTQIA+ community.
- High school diploma or GED
- Possession of a valid driver's license and car insurance.
- Possession of or commitment to obtain required certifications as a peer support specialist (paid for by Care Link).
- Lived experiences that establish a peer-relationship with HIV Care Link's clients.
- Skills that enable effective work with people with physical and mental health challenges.
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills.
- Compassion and empathy.
- Attention to detail.
- Thorough knowledge of HIV and related issues and passion for working with people living with HIV.
- Basic computer skills (e.g., word processing) and willingness to learn applications necessary to maintain client and business records.
- Occasional availability to be on call for emergency purposes.
- Availability to work on some Saturdays.

*Preferred Qualifications:*

- A minimum of one year's experience as a peer support specialist or a similar role.
- Bilingual or multilingual.
- Skills to provide office support.

**Submissions:** Applicants should submit a letter of interest addressing their qualifications and a resume to [mike@hivcarelink.org](mailto:mike@hivcarelink.org).

**Salary:** \$30,000-40,000 annually full-time, or \$15,000-20,000 for half-time, depending on qualifications.

**Important Dates:** Consideration of applications will begin July 1 for an anticipated start date of September 1, 2023.