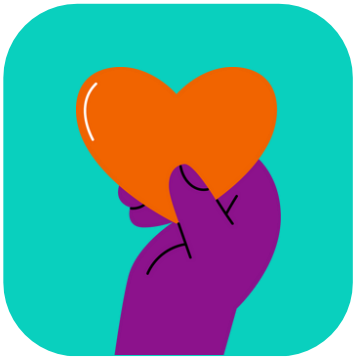
Beat
Eating disorders

Helpline Advisor (Sessional)

Candidate pack

OUR VALUES



Be yourself: Be open and try to make it easy for others to be open too. We're all human: if things go wrong be honest, take responsibility and we'll work together to put things right.



Be kind: Treat everyone with respect, empathy and compassion. Diversity makes us stronger, appreciate these differences so everyone feels welcome, included, and valued.



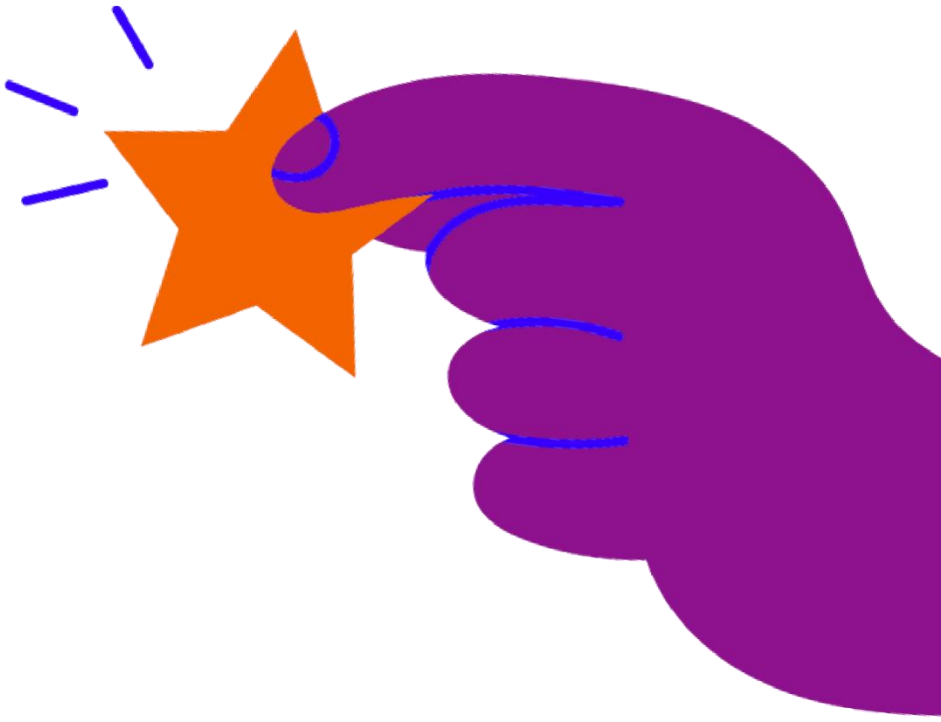
Be curious: Keep an open mind and try new things. Ask questions, constructively challenge what isn't working and help find solutions to problems.



Grow together: Work collaboratively, build trust and learn from each other and from people with lived experience. Share and reflect what you know to make Beat stronger.

PRINCIPLES FOR BEAT MANAGERS

Managers are collectively responsible for the success of Beat's strategy. They are expected to model and champion our values, building a trusting and empowering working environment where everyone's views are heard and valued and where people are working to their strengths.



OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At Beat, we believe eating disorders can be prevented and recovery is always possible. To achieve this, we must reach everyone affected by them. That means making sure our support, our influence and our organisation work for all.

Eating disorders affect people of every age, background and identity. But not everyone has the same access to support, understanding or outcomes. Too many people face barriers, are overlooked, or are not believed. Addressing these inequalities is essential to creating change.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to how we work. They shape how we support people, how we work together, and how we create change.

We are here for everyone
We make our services accessible, inclusive and responsive, so anyone affected by an eating disorder can get support when they need it.

We remove barriers and take action
We identify and tackle the inequalities that prevent people from accessing help, both in our services and in the wider system. We use our voice and evidence, alongside lived experience, to influence change across the NHS, policy and society.

We reflect the communities we serve
We are committed to building a more widely diverse workforce and volunteer community, with fair opportunities to join, stay and grow at Beat.

We create a culture where people belong
We want everyone at Beat to feel able to be themselves, feel respected and safe, and do their best work. Inclusion is something we practise every day.

Creating an inclusive Beat is everyone's responsibility. We expect colleagues, volunteers, partners and suppliers to be working towards these principles. We do not tolerate discrimination, exclusion or disrespect in any part of our work.

Eating disorders may affect anyone, but equality of access, experience and outcomes does not yet exist. If eating disorders are to be prevented, and recovery is to be possible for everyone, we must actively challenge these inequalities.

We are committed to learning, improving and taking action so that everyone affected feels seen, heard and supported.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title	Sessional Helpline Advisor
Department	Services
Hours per week	**0-hour contract** This is a 0-hour position, and we hope there will be a minimum of 6.5 hours per month but hours offered will be based on business need. We will provide full paid training for this role and would ask that successful candidates are available to join all of these dates as below: Monday 18th January – 10am – 4:30pm (6 hours) Wednesday 20th January – 10am – 4:30pm (6 hours) Monday 25th January 1:30pm – 8pm (6 hours) Wednesday 27th January 1:30pm – 8pm (6 hours) Monday 1st February 2pm – 9pm (6.5 hours) Wednesday 3rd February 2pm – 9pm (6.5 hours) Monday 8th February 2pm – 9pm (6.5 hours) Monday 15th February 2pm – 9pm (6.5 hours) Eating Disorder Awareness Week is 22-28th February 2027 and we hope very much that successful candidates will particularly be available for shifts during this time.
Salary	£20.91 per hour (this includes holiday pay)
Contract	Permanent
Location	Home-based

WE SHOW THE SALARY EMPLOYER

We've taken the We Show the Salary pledge to show salary info on 100% of our job ads.

PURPOSE OF THE POST

Working as part of the Helpline team, your role is to ensure that incoming contacts from our beneficiaries receive high quality, timely support when they need it. This is an opportunity to make a difference to the lives of each and every person that gets in touch, including people with an eating disorder, family, friends, supporters and more.

ABOUT THE POST

Beat is recruiting a Sessional Helpline Advisor to support the team in responding to the significant demand from those affected by eating disorders. The Sessional Helpline Advisor will work closely alongside the Helpline team who are currently all based remotely. This includes Helpline Advisors, Senior Helpline Advisors, Helpline Volunteers, the Deputy Helpline Manager and the Helpline Manager.

This role is based remotely and due to our compliancy and security requirements, you must have access to a laptop or desktop computer that meets the minimum operating system requirements of Windows 11 25H2 or macOS 15.8.1. Tablets and mobile phones cannot be used for this role.

The role will be busy and varied, and is primarily telephone and email support, but may also include webchat, social media, and facilitating daily online peer support groups.

Whilst this role is highly rewarding, it can also be demanding due to the complexity and unpredictability of the contacts received. The postholder will be required to manage a diverse range of situations, often involving uncertainty and varying levels of risk, within a busy and fast-paced environment.

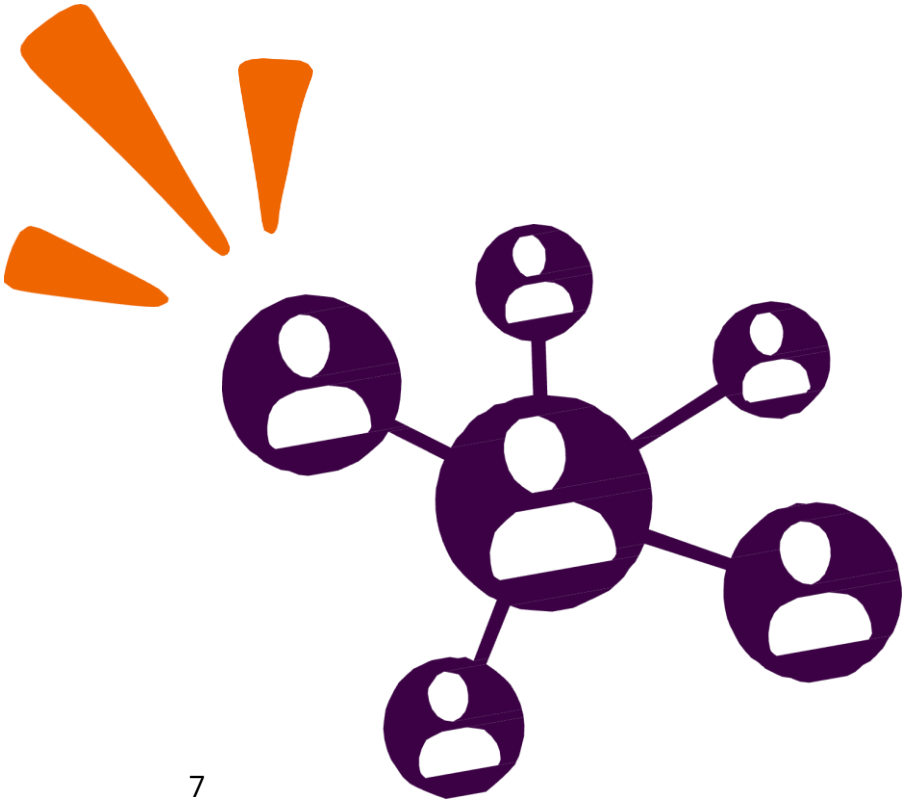
Helpline Rota

Beat's helpline is open Monday-Friday from 3-8pm. The current working hours of this role are between 1pm and 9pm, although this may vary in line with the demands of the service. Please state any restrictions to your regular availability on your application. We are looking for flexibility in availability.

Full training and support will be offered at the start of employment. Opportunities to attend monthly supervision and training will then follow.

MAIN RELATIONSHIPS

Reporting to the Helpline Manager and Senior Helpline Advisors, Sessional Helpline Advisors will work as a member of the Helpline team, supporting helpline colleagues and volunteers on shift, sharing experience and skills.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Respond to service users who contact us primarily through the telephone helpline as well as email. There may also be opportunities to provide support via the webchat service, social media, and online support group sessions, in line with Beat's helpline service training, protocol and templates.
2. Identify service user needs and provide tailored support. Delivering action-focused advice and emotional support, in line with Beat's scope service. Signposting when necessary to another appropriate service or directing referrals to appropriate programmes/colleagues.
3. Be responsible for own administration associated with providing the services. Accurately enter service user information and data in the CRM system. Noting what services were provided and feedback received into central systems.
4. Identify safeguarding concerns, risk assess and escalating to supervisor as required. Making call outs to external providers where necessary.
5. Participate in daily debriefing sessions and ongoing supervision to share learning, support colleagues, and ensure ongoing wellbeing and practice development. Increasing ability to reflect on own practice and improve quality of service.
6. Identify own personal learning and development needs and seek opportunities to address them. Including keeping up-to-date and well informed on issues and developments relating to eating disorders and support practice.
7. Ensure own behaviour is fully supportive of an inclusive culture in relation to all colleagues and other stakeholders.
8. Other responsibilities relevant to the purpose of the role as required by the line manager.

These responsibilities are subject to review and may be varied in emphasis depending on operational requirements.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates should take each of the points in the three sections of the person specification and, using each as a sub-heading in the application form, demonstrate how they meet the requirements of the role. We ask that all candidates can demonstrate they have the "core" skills but if you do not have all the "valued" skills you may still be considered depending on the experience you would bring – transferrable experience (including voluntary, care-giving, community) is welcome.

Core Skills

- Experience of providing high-quality support and information to members of the public in a customer service, healthcare, helpline, or online support environment.
- Excellent listening, verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to build rapport and respond empathetically to people experiencing emotional distress.
- Resilient and self-aware, with the ability to reflect on practice, receive and provide feedback, and support the development of others.
- Competent IT skills, including confidence using Microsoft 365 applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Teams and Outlook.

Valued Skills

- Ability to work effectively as part of a highly cohesive, supportive remote team, demonstrating collaboration, trust and mutual respect.
- Strong organisational and time management skills, with the ability to prioritise workload, adapt to changing demands and meet deadlines.
- Previous experience volunteering with Beat or supporting people affected by eating disorders, ideally in a helpline or online support setting.

Specific Knowledge

- Understanding of mental health issues and the impact these can have on individuals and those supporting them, ideally including knowledge of eating disorders.
- Awareness of safeguarding principles and the importance of identifying and responding appropriately to concerns about vulnerable people.

We particularly encourage applications from Welsh speakers for this role; we have received funding from the Welsh government and are looking to improve our service delivery for our Welsh-speaking beneficiaries.



WHO WE ARE

Eating disorders can be prevented, and recovery is always possible.
We help those affected now, and work to stop others being affected in the future.

Our strategic priorities are:

Answer the Call: Too many of those facing eating disorders feel they have nowhere to turn. When they ask for help, we are there. Through our Helpline, our range of support services and our online information and resources, we offer accessible support and guidance directly to those who need them. Whether that's for those with an eating disorder or those who support them, we are there for people when they need us most, empowering them to take the steps they need.

Spread the Word: Too many people living with an eating disorder tell us they feel alone. We will support those around them to know what to do to help. If people can recognise and respond to the earliest signs of an eating disorder, more will get the help they need earlier. Through awareness raising, training for professionals, and supporting research, we will continue to build a community that understands eating disorders and how to help.

Change the Story: Too often those with eating disorders are failed by the system. We will influence those with power to change this. We need policy makers to understand eating disorders and how to stop them. By influencing Government, the NHS and industry through the voices of those with lived experience and evidence led campaigns we can create long lasting change for everyone affected.

ABOUT EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders destroy lives. They steal childhoods, devastate relationships and pull families apart. And they can be fatal. They are serious mental illnesses and include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder. There are **3.5 million people in the UK likely living with an eating disorder**. While more women are affected than men, and eating disorders commonly emerge during adolescence, they affect people of all ages and genders.

On average, it takes someone over 3 years from falling ill before they seek treatment, followed by more than 6 years of waiting, therapy, semi-recovery and relapse before they get better. PwC estimates that this costs the NHS £4 billion per year. However, it doesn't have to be this way: if someone starts treatment early, they have a good chance of making a rapid and sustained recovery.

Parents, siblings and other family members are also seriously affected. They should be enabled to help their loved one into a quick and sustained recovery but they can only play their role if they have full understanding, are fully supported and engaged by the health services, and if their own wellbeing is protected. However, they commonly report not being given useful information when a loved one is diagnosed, so they can't stop things getting worse while waiting for treatment to start and they don't know how to support their treatment regime. Families and carers also find that supporting the sufferer has a negative impact on their own physical and mental health.



WORKING TOGETHER

Our statement of values (see earlier section) is a description of how we work at Beat when we are working together at our best. As the statement concludes, when we get this right we will achieve brilliant results, making Beat a truly inspiring and enjoyable place to work.

Central to those values is the conviction that happy people are more likely to perform at their best, and that people performing at their best are more likely to be happy in their work.

Everyone at Beat therefore has a responsibility for modelling our values and doing whatever is needed to make sure we are working together at our best for as much of the time as possible.

Managers in particular are expected to create an environment of cohesive and focused teamwork built on trust, understanding and a shared determination to achieve great results. They put their people first and give them the support and freedom they need to innovate and succeed. The definition of a good manager at Beat is someone who is leading a happy and high performing team.

So if you are successful in your application, you can expect regular meetings with your line manager to share ideas, ensure wellbeing, support and review your progress. They will encourage your learning and development, enabling you to spend on average at least 10% of your time on L&D using a wide range of options. And they will ensure you have all the information and connections you need to do your job to the best of your abilities.



BEAT'S SHORTER WORKING WEEK

Beat has permanently adopted two significant changes to our working practices:

1) Reducing the full-time working week to 34 hours over 4 consecutive days without reducing pay.
2) Allowing significantly greater flexibility to work from home

These changes were introduced to help protect staff wellbeing during the Covid pandemic, but were so valued by our colleagues – and resulted in higher productivity despite the reduced hours - that we have made them permanent.

Therefore most full-time staff at Beat work 8.5 hours per day Monday- Thursday, with considerable flexibility available providing that necessary diary commitments can be met. Part-time working patterns are agreed on an individual basis but with the 4 day week as a starting point.

No internal meetings are arranged on Fridays and the office is closed (although still available for use as needed and in the case of personal preference). Full time staff are nevertheless required to be available to work on Fridays when required for meetings unavoidably organised by other organisations, with time to be taken off in lieu.

A slightly different version applies for the Helpline but the principle remains that full-time means working for 34 hours across 4 consecutive days.

Staff who are unable to work 8.5 hours in a day (e.g. because of caring responsibilities) can work some of their hours on Friday and requests for this working pattern would only be refused for very specific business needs or wellbeing requirements. Any full time staff choosing this option would nevertheless need to be available for engagements considered as 'business need' on Monday to Thursday, with notice given and TOIL to be taken as necessary.

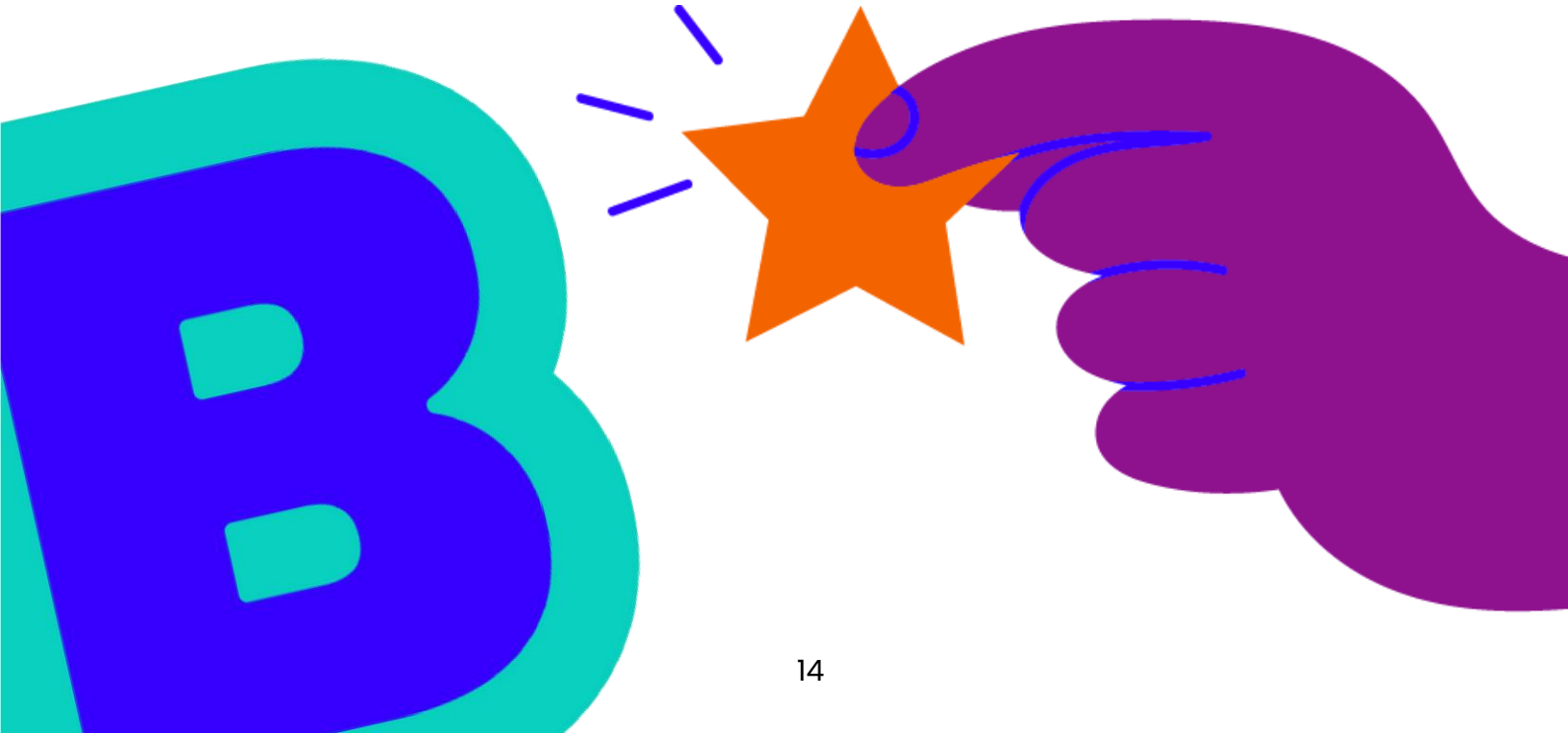


BEAT'S OFFICES AND HOME WORKING

Beat's head office is in Norwich. Staff who are based in the office must be present there when a business need arises and can choose to work there whenever they like. Except for roles which can only be fulfilled in the physical office, staff also have a high degree of flexibility to work from home.

People who are recruited to be fully or partly home-based will be provided with a laptop and relevant other necessary equipment. All home-working postholders must ensure an internet connection of sufficient speed to attend meetings by video conferencing without disruption.

Staff are required to attend meetings in the Beat office (or elsewhere) when there is a business need. They are also expected to travel to meet business needs, which vary depending on the role. Expenses will be paid for any required travel to locations other than the postholder's normal place(s) of work.



RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING INTERVIEW

Our work at Beat involves supporting vulnerable people who may be in distress, and all staff are likely to come across potentially upsetting content. This can be difficult for staff at times and for some it can have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. We value the insight that those with lived experience can bring to their role while making every effort to ensure the work does not negatively impact them.

In order to best protect our team, and ensure all staff are able to thrive at Beat, we conduct a resilience and wellbeing interview as part of the recruitment process. The purpose of this conversation is not to assess mental health or wellbeing, and applicants with existing or past mental health conditions will not be disadvantaged.

Instead, this is an opportunity to discuss how you manage emotionally demanding situations, what support networks you have in place, and how you balance work with life. This will help to ensure that applicants understand the pressures of the role and are able to meet them. It also helps us to understand what support you might need from Beat to thrive in your role.

HOW TO APPLY

Full information about this role including application forms are at **www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/vacancies**. For guidance on completing the application form and out interview process go to https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/about-beat/who-we-are/join-the-team/ and scroll down to the Candidate Toolkit.
If you have any specific questions on the process, please email jobapplications@beateatingdisorders.org.uk or call 01603 753311.

Completed application forms should be returned via the website page above by 9am on **Wednesday 25th November.** All applications must be on the Beat application form. CVs will not be considered unless by prior agreement.

We may close this vacancy early if we receive a high number of applications for the role. Therefore, if you are interested, please submit your application as early as possible.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed by close of business on **Thursday 3rd December.** If you have not heard from us by **Friday 4th December**, please assume that your application has not been successful.

First interviews will take place on **Tuesday 15th December via Microsoft Teams**, and the second interviews will be held on **Wednesday 16th December** via **Microsoft Teams.**