

# JOB DESCRIPTION: BLESMA SUPPORT OFFICER (NORTH WEST)

**Blesma, The Limbless Veterans** is the national charity and membership association for limbless serving and ex-service men and women and their dependants.

We help all wounded Servicemen and women who have lost limbs, the use of limbs or eyes, to rebuild their lives by providing well-being support and rehabilitation activities.

Blesma campaigns for our veteran’s rights and looks after individuals and their families by offering a comprehensive welfare system and financial assistance programme. Rehabilitation, support, counselling and care are the four principal foundations of our organisation. Together, we can help our men, women and their families face the challenges ahead with renewed confidence and self-belief.

The **Blesma Support Officer (North West)** is a pivotal role within Blesma, providing a lifeline to Members by delivering effective wellbeing support to help reduce the negative impacts of disability and to assist the Members in leading independent and fulfilling lives.

**Current holder**: Leaving post March 2022.

**Main purpose**: To provide wellbeing support to Blesma Members in the designated Area through a welfare visiting service.

**Location**: Home based in Area (IM,CA,LA,FY,PR,BB,L,WN,BL,OL,M,WA,SK,CW)

**Responsible to**: Director Independence and Wellbeing

**Line Manager to**: Outreach Officer (North West)   
**Salary and Benefits**: Starting salary £42,969.66 plus car.

Blesma offers a contributory pension scheme, employer’s contribution of 5% and you are encouraged to pay 3% of your salary, and a Death in Service insurance benefit equal to one and a half times annual salary.

**Contract:** Permanent.

**Holidays:** 25 days per annum, plus statutory holidays.

**Equal** **Opportunities:** Blesma is an equal opportunities employer and commitment to this is expected.

Full details of Conditions of Employment are set out in Blesma’s Employment Contract, the main features of which are standard for all staff.

We seek to attract and employ the best people from the widest talent pool, as well as those who reflect the diverse nature of our society. Blesma encourages a culture where people can

be themselves and be valued for their strengths. With an increasingly agile workforce, we are open to flexible working arrangements where appropriate.

# Main accountabilities of the post Primary Purpose

To support Blesma Members in the designated Area of responsibility by providing a lifeline to Members by delivering effective wellbeing support to help reduce the negative impacts of disability and to assist the Members in leading independent and fulfilling lives. The role will also involve representing Blesma and enhancing the charity’s profile within the local community.

**Main Duties**

* Assist members to obtain all the assistance to which they may be entitled from statutory sources, such as Benefits and Allowances from the DWP and Veterans UK and care services from the NHS and Local Authorities.
* Assist members in financial distress and whose need is not provided for by the State by considering grants from Blesma or other charitable sources and making the appropriate recommendations. Where a grant is to be awarded, work within delegated financial authorities.
* Promote the mobility and independence of members through the provision of disability and mobility aids either through statutory sources or from Blesma or other charitable sources.
* Support and advocate for members throughout the DWP and Veterans UK appeal/tribunal process.
* Support members in their dealings with the NHS Limb Service with a view to ensuring they receive a satisfactory, timely and appropriate level of support.
* Refer members to other specialist charities and organisations when appropriate.
* Deliver practical and emotional support to those who care for Members.
* Develop a regional strategy and plan to develop and sustain a healthy social network to engage as wider a membership community as possible.
* Line Manager to the Outreach Officer (North West) who delivers a blended regional programme of activities to reduce isolation and improve health, wellbeing and independence. Ensure that all activities meet Blesma’s welfare objectives and are approved in accordance with financial delegated authorities.
* Liaise and coordinate North West outreach activities with both the Head Office Activities and Communications departments.
* Work with the Outreach Officers to develop and implement strategies to recruit, retain and deploy volunteers to support Blesma members.
* Where a safeguarding issue arises, take prompt and appropriate action in accordance with Blesma’s safeguarding policy to ensure all at risk parties are appropriately protected. Report the issue(s) as appropriate to the designated safeguarding lead or the DIW.
* Represent Blesma at events, enhancing the community profile and supporting fundraising activities.
* Represent Blesma on regional committees and working groups as required.
* Maintain records using the Blesma’s Independence and Wellbeing Members’ database.
* Provide routine and ad-hoc key management information to support DIW’s management reports.

This Job Description is a guide to the work the job holder is required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. It does not form part of the Contract of Employment.

# Work context

Home based within area of responsibility with a requirement to visit members throughout the area and to attend meetings at Blesma Chelmsford and at other locations. BSOs spend a considerable amount of time ‘on the road’ and there will be occasional overnight stays away from home. Consequently, there will be times when there may be the need to work outside of a standard working week.   
  
BSOs also deliver and collect mobility aids to/from Members and Widows.

# Person Specification – Blesma, The Limbless Veterans

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|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Knowledge** | * Demonstrable knowledge of the needs of Blesma Members of all ages * Demonstrable knowledge of State Benefits and Allowances (DWP and Veterans UK) * Demonstrable knowledge of the services provided by statutory and voluntary health and social care providers * An understanding of the relationship between stakeholders supporting Blesma Members | * A good understanding of the challenges facing amputees and those who have lost the use of limbs in achieving and maintaining independence * Demonstrable knowledge of prosthetic provision within the NHS * Demonstrable knowledge of the Defence Recovery Capability and Blesma’s role within it * Knowledge of the Royal Hospital Chelsea and RBLI Village * Understanding the purpose of the Armed Forces Covenant |
| **Skills** | * High level of written and verbal communication skills * Excellent organisational, time management and problem-solving skills * Ability to work under pressure and to deadlines * Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to build positive relationships at all levels * Ability to represent Blesma and advocate on behalf of our Members * Ability to effectively manage resources * A confident presentational and public speaking style * Computer literate including MS Word, Outlook, Excel and Database systems * Competent in the use of social networking communication tools |  |
| **Qualifications** | * Educated to at least GCSE level with a demonstrable commitment to personal and professional development * UK Driving Licence | * Graduate * Recognised welfare qualification * Safeguarding level 3 * Member Institute of Health and Social Care Management, or an equivalent professional body. |
| **Experience** | * Delivering support to WIS Military Personnel and /or veterans and their families | * Working knowledge of the wider charity sector. |

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| **Personal qualities** | * High level of Emotional Intelligence * Compassionate * Engaging and proactive * Approachable * Organised * Sound judgement and calm under pressure * Decisive * Confident and friendly * Analytical decision maker * Tactful and diplomatic * Discreet * Flexible * Open minded and willing to learn. * Empathy and genuine interest in the work of Blesma. |  |