

Apply today and you could be...

A Mental Health Development Worker at the Angoda Mental Hospital in Sri Lanka

What's the context and purpose of the role?

More than twenty years of civil conflict and the devastation caused by the Tsunami of December 2004 have had a significant impact on the mental health of the population. The imperative to offer good quality, accessible mental healthcare has grown since 2004 but people with mental health problems are still marginalized and largely excluded from society. The Mental Hospital, Angoda (MHA) is the largest mental hospital in Sri Lanka, providing residential mental health services to patients from all over the country. Over the last 3 years, MHA has been moving towards a more client-centred and rehabilitation focused care model. As more mental health facilities are established at local level, the hospital's vision is to increasingly provide quality community based care throughout the western province. The objective of this placement is to develop and implement an effective and comprehensive care plan, building on the work of a previous VSO volunteer. You'll be working closely with a multi-disciplinary team, building the capacity of nurses, OTs, doctors, psychiatric social workers etc.



What does the role involve?

- Building on the development and implementation of an effective and comprehensive care plan initiated by a previous VSO volunteer
- Planning and facilitating workshops and practical demonstrations of care planning for groups of staff on the wards
- Networking with relevant stakeholders in the Western Province to develop a coordinated effective care plan system in the region and feed into VSO's overall strategy to improve mental health services in Sri Lanka
- Work together with the VSO Mental Health Trainer at MHA to include care plan systems in the training curriculum

What skills, experience and personal qualities are needed for the role?

You'll need to be a qualified and registered Psychiatric Nurse or Psychiatric Social Worker with at least 3 years' experience of working in both hospital and community mental health. Good communication and facilitation skills are important. You'll also need to be patient and flexible and have realistic expectations of what can be achieved in a slow-paced and hierarchical working environment. You'll need confidence in your skills but be culturally sensitive when applying them.

And the rest...

A current volunteer at Angoda describes her placement as the best place to be in Sri Lanka. Twenty minutes outside of Colombo, the surroundings are rural and peaceful with the amenities of the capital a trishaw ride away. The hospital is a friendly place and the volunteer will feel welcome and should find it easy to make friends with staff.

We'll ask you to commit to 12 - 24 months to make a sustainable contribution to our development goals. In return, we'll give you comprehensive financial, personal and professional support. We'll provide you with extensive training before your placement, and our financial package includes a local salary, return flights, accommodation, insurance and more. When you return to your home country, we'll help you to resettle and many of our returned volunteers stay involved with us long after their placement ends.

www.vso.org.uk/srilanka