

JOB DESCRIPTION

1. JOB IDENTIFICATION

Job Title: General Medical Sonographer

Reports to (insert job title): Ultrasound Team Leader

Department, Ward or Section: Radiology

CHP, Directorate or Corporate Department: Clinical Services & Support

Job Reference: **SSCLSSRAIGRADI49**

No of Job Holders: 1

Last Update (insert date): 06/08/2025

2. JOB PURPOSE

To provide a diagnostic Ultrasound service autonomously within the area of responsibility commensurate with training and experience, ensuring effective Clinical Governance. Provide continuous clinical supervision, teaching and educational support to trainee Sonographers and Medical staff as appropriate. Undertake autonomous effective report writing to contribute to efficient ongoing patient management. Be responsive to local demands, working collaboratively with all disciplines where an ultrasound service is provided. Actively implement and follow local protocols and policies from National directives and professional best practice guidelines to support service developments.

3. DIMENSIONS

Clinical Environment

- Ultrasound activity includes referral from various in and out-patient medical and non-medical referrers. Ultrasound scans are performed in all age groups in acute and non - acute settings.

Clinical Activity and provision

Note - Activity will depend upon the size and scale of individual Boards and locally agreed

evidenced necessity.

Staff Responsibility

- Sonographers work as part of a multi-disciplinary team and promote open and positive communications at all levels.
- Sonographers contribute the training of medical staff and sonographers as required.
- Sonographers direct and supervise the workload of those assisting in ultrasound.

4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION

Note – Organisational position will vary dependent upon individual Boards

5. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT

- As part of a multidisciplinary team, the Medical Imaging Department provides a wide range of imaging services for patients across the NHS.
- As part of the Medical Imaging Department, ultrasound imaging delivers front line clinical Sonographer led ultrasound services to assist clinicians in patient diagnosis and management.

6. MAIN TASKS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clinical – remove overlap with decisions and judgements

- To work as an expert autonomous ultrasound practitioner and be professionally and legally accountable for all aspects of direct and indirect patient care.
- To evaluate and justify referrals.
- To gain consent after assessing preparation, ability to tolerate a procedure or any contraindication in order to achieve a diagnostic outcome. Give consideration to potential cognitive, behavioural or motivational barriers.
- Use advanced skills to recognise ultrasound appearances. Adjust scanning techniques as required in order to achieve a diagnostic outcome.
- Use expert clinical knowledge to provide a diagnostic report, in line with departmental guidelines. Reports will advise referrers of appropriate further investigation and/or onward referral so as to assist in patient management (consultation with peers may be required in some cases).
- To act as an expert in clinical sonography and to provide advanced direction to other healthcare professionals, Secondary care clinicians, GPs, patients, carers and others within the service.
- To plan and organise workload to best optimise personal and patient and care / safety.
- With the lead/consultant sonographer continually develop robust frameworks to monitor and evaluate standards of care and clinical outcomes i.e. development / implementation of national clinical guidelines or benchmarking within similar specialities.
- Whilst decision making is mandatory to the role, to be aware of the boundaries of own advanced scope of practice and to assess and manage associated clinical risk effectively at all times.

Leadership/ Educational

- Support the Lead Sonographer and Radiology Manager on all aspects of workforce planning and service demand / capacity.
- To take responsibility for maintaining knowledge of technological advances and to promote a culture of continuous professional development within the department.
- Actively participate in quality assurance.
- Participate in the decision making process when procuring new equipment.
- Participate in audit / peer review/ discrepancy meetings as per local guidelines.
- Attend/participate in CPD events and thereafter share learning with the team.
- Attend multi-disciplinary team meetings as appropriate.

- Undertake mandatory NHS training and keep accurate records of personal CPD and when undertaking additional training.

7. EQUIPMENT, MACHINERY AND SYSTEMS

- Specialist diagnostic medical ultrasound equipment.
- Standard keyboard skills and use of appropriate software as required.
- Radiology Information System (RIS), Voice Recognition Software, Picture Archiving systems (PACS) and archiving.
- Manual Handling, and ergonomic equipment / peripherals, surgical/ interventional supplies as required.

8. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS

- Assess a patient's condition prior to and during the ultrasound examination
- With a high level of autonomy, analyse, compare and interpret sonographic findings during the course of an examination and use independent clinical judgement to adapt technique in complex examinations.
- Within your scope of practice, form a professional diagnostic opinion from the findings and present in a report to the referrer, acting on findings that may require urgent notification which may affect patient management or care.
- Participate in the assessment, review and development of protocols and policies for own clinical area. Appropriately use for report / management
- If required and entitled have Non med / restricted referrer status (IRMER).

9. MOST CHALLENGING / DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB

- Obtaining additional clinical information from the patient or clinical portal.
- Exposure to findings/anomalies often with a poor prognosis.
- Dealing with patients and their relatives who may become emotionally upset or aggressive.
- Responding to complex questions with discretion and empathy, which are appropriate to the patient's levels of understanding.
- Working at times with little or no direct professional support or peer consultation.
- Responding to changing workloads to meet service needs.
- Conducting intimate examinations – e.g. transvaginal/testicular scans.
- Working in acute areas, sometimes having to provide images in severely injured, abusive or violent patients.
- Maintaining and continually developing clinical knowledge and skills in appropriate specialist areas. Combining training in new techniques using highly complex equipment while maintaining a normal patient workload.

10. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Patients

- Provide explanation of often complex and sensitive procedures in accordance with patient's level of understanding.
- Listen to patients' questions and concerns, before and during an exam. Relieve any anxiety and show empathy, whilst demonstrating a high degree of professionalism.
- Identify and overcome barriers to communication such as language, auditory or visual.

- Develop a rapport with patients to create trust and 2 way communication and offer post examination advice and counselling in conjunction with examination findings.
- Deal with challenging behaviour in an appropriate manner.

Carers / Relatives

- Receive information and provide reassurance that may be beneficial to the patient's care.
- Liaise with carers/relatives regarding patients' mobility and tolerance.

Radiology Staff

- Discuss clinical cases and give/receive advice on complex cases with other clinicians, disciplines and geographical areas.
- Seek advice from Radiologists/Clinical Staff as and when required.
- Share information with colleagues regarding continuity of care.

Other Health Care Professionals

- Liaise with other health care professionals in the best interests of patient care.
- Query incorrect/ unnecessary referrals, advise on a more appropriate pathway.
- Provide advice on ultrasound findings.

11. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB.

Physical Skills/Working conditions:

- Excellent hand-eye coordination and accurate fine motor skills. Continuous bending, stretching and repetitive movements, with high risk of repetitive strain injury. Application of sustained excessive pressure on bariatric patients to achieve diagnostic quality images. Knowledge and understanding of good musculoskeletal (MSK) health workplace practice including ergonomics, risk reduction and personal well-being strategies.
- Adopt good scanning practice, such as neutral posture and micro breaks (i.e. docking the probe to change pressure and allow muscle recovery) to reduce chance of developing WRMSD. Document and report any ergonomic concerns or persistent pain or injury and seek medical advice.
- Accurate and precise ability to perform measurements as required.
- Risk of eye strain, headaches and fatigue associated with prolonged use of a DSE.
- Work in an environment (sometimes confined space) with low noise levels, no natural light and restricted air circulation/ excess heat.
- You may come into contact with bodily fluids.
- Constant use of ultrasound gel and probe cleaning fluids.
- Movement of ultrasound machines requiring physical strength and effort.

Mental Demands:

- Intense concentration for prolonged periods so as a comprehensive diagnostic outcome is achieved.
- Well-developed pattern recognition and special acuity to detect subtle differentiations in tissue texture and a logical and analytical approach to findings.
- At the end of each session, accurately check, edit and authorise reports for referrers.

Emotional Demands (Also see communication and relationships):

- Knowledge and understanding of health interventions (mental health, musculoskeletal and healthy lifestyles) to improve their own and other's health and wellbeing through prevention, self-management and targeted support.

12. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB

Training

Diploma of the College of Radiographers (DCR), BSc Hons Radiography or other relevant degree.

- Registration with relevant Governing body (and evidence of CPD/ reflective practice)
- DMU/PgCert / Dip Medical Ultrasound or MSc in Medical Ultrasound.

Clinical Experience

- Advanced general medical ultrasound scanning and interpretation skills.
- Evidence of independent reporting at general medical sonographer level.

Management Skills

- Experience of collaborative and negotiation skills. Information and knowledge management including health informatics, counselling, planning and organisation.

Behavioural and Communication Skills

- Knowledge and understanding of psychological, sociological and cultural factors and their relevance and impact upon the management and care of patients undergoing procedures.

Applications and Techniques

- Up to date knowledge of current developments in applications and techniques used within diagnostic imaging in general and within ultrasound / management.

Legislative, policy, ethical and research dimensions

- Advanced knowledge and understanding of the legislative, policy, ethical and research frameworks that underpin, inform and influence diagnostic imaging in general, and within the specialist area of clinical practice and management.
- Awareness of developments and trends in legislation and health and social care policy, with a focus on issues of particular reference to diagnostic imaging.
- Knowledge of the quality assurance processes and systems in place and their relationship to current legislation and health policy.
- Knowledge of the research process, research methods and the principles of audit.
- Knowledge of requirements in relation Data Protection Act, Duty of Candour, Caldicott principles and local policies and procedures regarding security and confidentiality.