

**NHS GREATER GLASGOW AND CLYDE – AGENDA FOR CHANGE**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>JOB IDENTIFICATION</b></li></ul>	Job Title	<b>Band 6 Orthoptist</b>
	Department(s)/Location	<b>ORTHOPTIC / OPHTHALMOLOGY</b>
	Number of job holders	<b>5</b>

**JOB PURPOSE**

- To provide a specialised orthoptic service, as an autonomous clinician, working as part of the wider team providing ophthalmology services in Greater Glasgow and Clyde, based at The Royal Hospital for Children, Glasgow.
- The post holder will assess, diagnose, treat and manage patients with a wide range of visual acuity and binocular vision abnormalities liaising with other health care professionals as appropriate.
- To maintain and develop personal and professional skills and organise own workload.
- To act as an advice resource within own area of specialty.

**ORGANISATIONAL POSITION**

Clinical Service Manager

Head Orthoptist

Extended role Orthoptists  
2WTE posts

Specialist Orthoptist Band 6  
4WTE posts

Orthoptist Band 5  
1 post, 1.0WTE

**SCOPE AND RANGE****4.1 Budget**

The post holder has no direct budgetary responsibility although they will have responsibility for delivery of cost-effective care.

**4.2 Clinical**

- To provide a comprehensive autonomous orthoptic service in GG&C, working the majority of the time as an independent practitioner in a variety of different clinical settings.

Services are provided at a variety of locations throughout GG&C:

1. Acute Sector outpatient clinics at The Royal Hospital for Children, Glasgow.
2. Child Development Centres in Glasgow South.
3. Functional Vision Clinics for GG&C.
4. Pre-school Orthoptic Vision Screening in Glasgow South.

- Assess, diagnose, manage and treat all patients referred to the orthoptic service. This includes a wide range of paediatric patients from a variety of referral sources with defects of binocular vision (e.g. squint, brain injury) reduced visual acuity (e.g. refractive error) and specific reading disorders (e.g. dyslexia)
- To be professionally and legally accountable for all aspects of own work.
- Provide a vision screening service for children in Glasgow South.
- To actively participate in the clinical training of a wide variety of other professional staff and students.
- Train, support and advise less experienced staff within the orthoptic department.
- Work independently as an autonomous practitioner and as part of a multidisciplinary team, (e.g. assessment of visually impaired children involves multi-disciplinary working practice).

- **MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

### 5.1 Orthoptic

*These duties are carried out on a daily basis unless otherwise stated.*

2. Act as an autonomous practitioner, investigating, diagnosing and treating all new and review patients referred to the orthoptic service as out patients or in patients (referrals come from a wide range of sources e.g. ophthalmology, maxillofacial, neurology, medical, paediatrics, community optometry and general practice) and liaise with the head orthoptist, ophthalmologists and other health care professionals, providing expert advice on management of cases where appropriate.
- Provide orthoptic services to specialised clinics within ophthalmology, blurred disc and vision assessment clinic. To manage this caseload, the post-holder requires knowledge and experience at an advanced post-graduate level. The Royal Hospital for Children is a tertiary referral centre, in Scotland, for many complex cases. The post-holder requires advanced clinical reasoning and extensive knowledge of evidence based practice which will be gained by postgraduate study/research and ongoing clinical teaching by the consultant ophthalmologist and head orthoptist.
  - Provide a 'primary vision screening programme' of children age 4/5 (Nursery school) in Glasgow South schools. The orthoptist is responsible for accurately detecting defects of vision and strabismus and making appropriate referral. The post-holder is required to keep accurate documentation of results and is responsible for own caseload.
  - Formulate individual care plans and execute treatment. Disorders requiring treatment include strabismus (squint), reduced visual acuity (amblyopia), double vision (diplopia), eyestrain and/or headaches (asthenopia) and disorders of ocular motility (ability to move the eyes). The orthoptist has the responsibility and knowledge to work autonomously, referring to the ophthalmologist for further management as and when appropriate e.g. frequently takes lead in the decision and timing of squint surgery, which requires up-to-date knowledge of evidence based practice.
  - Provide expert opinion regarding diagnosis and management of cases to other orthoptists and medical staff in specialised clinics i.e. blurred disc, vision assessment clinic.

- Undertake pre and postoperative assessment of strabismus and motility patients requiring surgery. The decision to undertake surgery and its timing is dependent on appropriate and relevant orthoptic investigation and up to date knowledge of evidence based practice. The orthoptist will use professional judgment when deciding the timing of referral to the ophthalmologist for surgery and advise on appropriate surgery for each patient for the best outcome. It is the post holder's responsibility to produce accurate assessment and measurements on which surgical calculations can be based and to identify post-operative risk factors e.g. the risk of double vision following surgery. The post requires significant manual dexterity and an ability to work to a high degree of accuracy, to carry out these investigations, especially when testing young patients and when assessing complex strabismus.
- Provide the consultant ophthalmologist with accurate measurements and give orthoptic opinion regarding patients undergoing Botulinum Toxin (BT) injections. Counsel and advise patients undergoing this treatment.
- Provide and maintain a variety of written information for patients and parents.
- Appropriately instruct, motivate and monitor patients/parents on a continuous course of home treatment.
- Provide clear comprehensive written and/or verbal reports to other health professionals; orthoptists, optometrists, ophthalmologists and other medical staff. These reports include results of investigation, diagnosis, and recommendations on further management and investigations.
- Accurately measure spectacle prescriptions using both automated and manual focimetry.
- Responsible for orthoptic input to the shared care orthoptic/optometry service. To advise optometrist on appropriate prescription of lenses for optimum management of strabismus
- Undertake assessment of children with 'specific reading difficulties' e.g. dyslexia/Meares-Irlen Syndrome. This is a specialist area of practice and requires post-graduate knowledge and experience gained by additional training and reading appropriate literature.
- Be actively involved in clinical audit and research within the department of ophthalmology
- Provide clinical education and training for medical staff, pre-registration optometrists, nursing staff, and school nurses. Also at undergraduate level for medical students. This will

only be required in the absence of a qualified orthoptic clinical tutor.

- Assist and provide internal cover for colleagues during periods of annual leave, sickness and vacancies. This requires the postholder to have expertise in all disciplines of orthoptics.
- Be responsible and aware of Health and Safety procedures /legislation in relation to working practice.
- Actively participate in Service Redesign

### **5.3 Management and Administrative Duties**

- Organise and prioritise initial orthoptic appointments within orthoptic/ophthalmic clinics.
- Deal with enquiries that arise during the working day and take appropriate action, and liaise with the head orthoptist regarding any problems that arise.
- Responsible for the accurate recording on the electronic patient record, complying with departmental guidelines and hospital policies.
- Responsible for keeping statistical records and providing this information to the head orthoptist.
- Monitor stock of orthoptic equipment.

### **5.3 Professional Orthoptic Duties**

- Maintain professional registration with Health Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- Work within the framework of clinical governance in order to maintain and improve patient care, quality and efficiency of service.
- Regularly review current working practice in the light of national and professional guidelines to ensure clinical effectiveness and maintenance of professional standards.
- Maintain documentary evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Attend and contribute to orthoptic departmental meetings.
- Prepare and deliver orthoptic presentations at postgraduate orthoptic/ophthalmology meetings both at locally and nationally
- Be involved in the ongoing development of policies and procedures for the orthoptic

department in line with professional standards.

- Be involved in the development and enhancement of the role of the orthoptist within the eye care team and other professional groups.
- Proactively participate in local/national special interest groups to enhance service delivery in specialist areas.
- Attend appropriate training events, courses and lectures thereby maintaining up to date knowledge and skills.
- Actively participate in research and audit projects as requested within the department.
- To respect patient and staff confidentiality at all times.
- To be aware of trust policies and procedures and work accordingly e.g. Fire, Moving and Handling, notification of absence.

- **COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

### **6.1 Patient**

- Engage in effective communication with patients, with varying levels of cognitive abilities. The client group will consist of patients or parents/carers who may have communication and comprehension difficulties e.g. due to brain injury, learning disability, and hearing impairment. The orthoptist requires to utilise a range of verbal and non-verbal communication tools, including the use of Makaton sign language, in order to obtain assessment of patients' vision defects.
- Communicate with all patients and carers, information regarding results of assessment, diagnosis, treatment and management options, with sensitivity and using terminology that can be easily understood by them. Using written information where appropriate.
- Required to communicate highly sensitive information to patients/parents/carers with regard to diagnosis, treatment and prognosis of strabismus, severe amblyopia, visual impairment and ocular motility disorders e.g. the initial diagnosis of severe amblyopia and the treatment regime required (occlusion), management options and potential requirement for surgical correction of strabismus, the long-term use of spectacles, the post operative risks/outcomes of strabismus surgery and other forms of treatment. Communication of potential initial diagnosis may be of a sensitive and distressing nature.
- Counselling of patients prior to procedures such as botulinum toxin treatment (injection directly into the eye muscles under local anaesthetic) and adjustable suture surgery.
- Have the skills necessary to deal with complaints from patients/carers, demonstrating an ability to handle confrontational situations with sensitivity.
- Communicate with patients and carers regarding treatment plans and gain informed consent for these.

## **6.2 Other professional groups**

- Effectively communicate diagnosis, interpretation of investigation results and management options to the ophthalmologist or other members of the eye care team.
- Interpret and explain the relevance of the orthoptic investigation results to other medical, AHP and nursing staff, when referral of the patient is from another medical specialty.
- Report back to general practitioners, community paediatricians, health visitors and school nurses on the outcome of their direct referrals to the orthoptic service.
- Represent the department and promote the orthoptists' role to relevant professional groups including other allied health professionals

## **KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB**

### Essential

- Current registration with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- A degree / diploma in Orthoptics
- Previous post graduate clinical orthoptic experience in acute sector orthoptic service
- Evidence of experiential learning to enable management of a complex caseload.
- Evidence/documentation of continuing professional development (CPD)
- High level of personal and professional motivation enabling post holder to work independently.
- High level of communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work as part of a team

### Desirable

- Demonstrable research and audit skills
- Established presentation skills
- Current UK driving license and car owner
- Competent computer skills with a working knowledge of IT packages and databases e.g. Power Point, Excel.
- Previous relevant experience in areas of relevant specialist interest

## ESSENTIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT**

### Medical Equipment

- The post holder will be responsible for the calibration and correct use of clinical equipment and for cleaning and storing equipment correctly. Orthoptic equipment is highly specialized and the orthoptist requires a high degree of manual dexterity to obtain accurate assessment and measurements. Examples of equipment used are:

Prisms and lenses for measurement

'press on' plastic prisms, lenses and filters which require cutting and fitting to lenses

Synoptophore

Paediatric vision tests

Ophthalmoscope

Stereopsis tests

Manual perimeter

### Information Technology

- Will have ability to use IT Systems such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Powerpoint, and be required to utilize these in professional duties e.g. create presentations, use databases, word processing.
- Will have ability to make literature searches and access the internet and intranet for work related information such as organizational policies and procedures.
- Will also have access to Trakcare and Open Eyes for patient/clinical information.

### Medical records

- The post holder will comply with the Data Protection Act and local policies regarding confidentiality.
- Will be required to input information to, and maintain patients' orthoptic and

medical records in compliance with the departmental standards and BIOS guidelines (British and Irish Orthoptic Society – Professional Body).

General

- Must be aware of and comply with hospital and departmental health and safety guidelines.

- **PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB**

Physical demands: on daily basis

- A high degree of manual dexterity skills are required to ensure accurate assessment results e.g. in infants and children requiring surgery where the amount of surgery is based on the orthoptic measurements.
- Patient assessment regularly requires uncomfortable working conditions including leaning forwards, kneeling, bending and twisting to assess infants. Working whilst maintaining an awkward posture, whilst manipulating equipment.
- Manual handling skills are regularly required to assist patients of all ages and ability e.g. moving patients from wheelchairs to examination chairs, lifting infants onto examination chairs, movement of equipment, visual field machines and case records.

Mental demands: on a daily basis

- A high level of communication skill is required to obtain and maintain a child's co-operation during testing.
- Ability to maintain concentration during patient consultation whilst subject to frequent interruption by other team members/ telephones/relatives.
- Ability to work to high standards of accuracy using analytical skills and judgments continuously when assessing and treating patients
- Maintain a consistent high level of professional behaviour in unpredictable and stressful situations

Emotional demands: on daily basis

- Communicating with and assessing distressed/anxious/worried patients/carers and staff.
- Assessment of critically and terminally ill patients.
- Assessment of patients with severely challenging behaviour.
- Exposure to verbal aggression (infrequent)

- Assessment of patients with visual impairment, hearing impairment and multiple disability
- Dealing with a diverse patient group including very young children, all with varying abilities

Working conditions:

- Working conditions may be unpleasant with exposure to fleas, lice, childhood illnesses, MRSA, odours, body fluids etc.

- **DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS**

- Functions autonomously.
- Not directly supervised therefore to be professionally and legally responsible for all aspects of your own clinical workload.
- On a daily basis investigative, treatment and management decisions have to be made.
- Expected to anticipate problems and resolve them without being asked.
- Follow departmental standards and guidelines.

- **MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB**

- Gaining attention and co-operation of children, in particular pre-school children and those with special educational needs.
- The diagnosis and management of a highly complex caseload that includes tertiary referral of complex ocular motility disorders to the eye department.
- Provision of accurate and detailed orthoptic assessment on which surgery may be based.
- Significant mental effort is required when participating in clinical teaching.
- Counselling of patients with visual impairment and disability and communicating sensitive information to patients/carers with regard to aetiology, diagnosis and management of complex disorders.