

**AGENDA FOR CHANGE  
NHS JOB EVALUATION SCHEME**



**JOB DESCRIPTION – Clinical Health Psychologist**

**1. JOB IDENTIFICATION**

Job Title: Clinical Health Psychologist (Principal) – Long COVID Service

Reports to (insert job title): Clinical Director of Psychological Therapies

Department, Ward or Section: Psychological Services

CHP, Directorate or Corporate Department: MH Directorate

Job Reference: **SEMENTNEWCPSYC41**

No of Job Holders:1

Last Update (insert date): 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008

**2. JOB PURPOSE**

To develop the clinical psychology element for the Long term COVID service for people living in NHS Highland. To provide a highly specialist psychological assessment and treatment service for people and their families, who are referred to this service. To supervise more junior psychologists, and those in training. To offer advice and consultation on client's psychological care to other healthcare professionals and to non professional carers. To liaise with other services including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, medicine, GPs, community nurses, pharmacists and other Allied Health professional staff. To support and develop the educational requirements of a range of people including health care professionals and service users. To work autonomously within professional guidelines and within the overall framework of policies and procedures of the Long term Covid service infrastructure in NHS Highland. To apply highly specialist skills in audit, research, policy and service development in Long Covid and related clinical specialties. To link in with the Psychological services group, for making suitable referrals.

**3. DIMENSIONS**

**Size & scope**

- The job holder is responsible for providing clinical psychology services for Long term COVID service, in NHS Highland.
- The geographical area covered includes both urban and remote and rural parts of Highland (including Argyll and Bute). In addition, this requires organising joint work and liaising with GP practices, specialist teams for, along with other statutory and voluntary bodies where necessary.

### **Activity**

- To hold an individual caseload, with responsibility for assessing new referrals for suitability for psychological intervention.
- Planning, developing and delivering individually tailored care packages for service users.
- To make referrals on to other relevant professionals and agencies where necessary,
- Providing direct and telephonic consultation to Medical Consultants, GP's, Occupational Therapists for any case that requires a psychological perspective and not simply those on the job holder's caseload.
- Monitoring, promoting and using appropriate measures to audit clinical effectiveness of the service in line with research findings and other national guidelines (e.g. SIGN and NICE).
- Attending and participating in departmental and professional meetings to maintain up-to-date clinical and professional knowledge and good network relationships.
- To attend and participate in departmental case presentations, outside professional workshops,
- Provision of teaching/training events in psychological theory and practice to clinical psychology
- To develop knowledge in line with contemporary evidence based practice and national guidelines through continuing professional development (CPD).
- To promote and maintain appropriate standards of professional practice as set out in the Codes of practice / Conduct of the British Psychological Society and NHS Highland.

### **4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION**

See Attached chart

### **5. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT**

- The aim of the Psychology department is to improve the mental and physical health of the population of the Highlands through efficient delivery of psychology services and through the dissemination of psychological knowledge. The clinical psychology department is the central organisational structure with responsibility for delivering all applications of psychological principles to health care (clinical, health and counselling psychology). The service also provides support, consultancy and training to other professional colleagues who are engaged in psychological therapy or who use psychological principles in their work. The department is a Training Department for the East and South of Scotland Doctoral course in Clinical Psychology.

### **6. MAIN TASKS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **6.1 Clinical:**

To provide specialist psychological assessments of clients, using interview, formal psychometric and other assessment methods as appropriate.

To provide psychological treatment, advice and management of clients, using a range of psychological interventions appropriate to the services.

To exercise autonomous professional responsibility for the psychological assessment and treatment of clients in accordance with the policies of the services.

To provide specialist psychological advice, guidance and consultation to other professionals, to assist in the formulation, diagnosis and treatment of clients.

To produce professional communications in a skilled and sensitive manner concerning the assessment, formulation and treatment plans of clients.

To liaise with other health and social care staff, from a range of agencies, in the care provided to clients.

To develop and maintain relationships including consultation to relevant user groups and other organisations.

## **6.2 Teaching, training, and supervision**

To provide advice, consultation, training and supervision/reflective practice, where appropriate, to health care professionals working with, or allied with the Long Covid service

To provide clinical placements for trainee clinical psychologists, ensuring the trainees acquire the necessary skills, competencies and experience to contribute effectively to health care, and to contribute to the assessment and evaluation of such competencies.

To provide professional and clinical supervision of pre- and post-qualified applied psychologists and assistants as appropriate.

To contribute to the teaching of pre- and post-qualified applied psychologists as appropriate

To provide training and supervision in the area of Long Covid, & plastic surgery including to other clinical psychologists.

To provide advice, consultation and training and supervision, where appropriate, to health care professionals and allied services working with medical populations.

## **6.3 Management, policy and service development**

To advise clinicians and managers on those aspects of the service where psychological and/or organizational matters need addressing.

In conjunction with the Long Covid service team members to help and be proactive in the development of a high quality and equitable service to the population in Highland.

To manage more junior qualified clinical or health psychologists.

To manage the workloads of trainee clinical psychologists and where appropriate assistants and health psychologists, within the framework of the service' policies and procedures.

To be involved as appropriate in the short listing and interviewing of assistant, trainee and qualified clinical and health psychologists.

To ensure the psychology element of the Long Covid service works towards and maintains service performance indicators, PCT targets and other

To develop and maintain advisory relationships with key strategic committees responsible for workforce and service development in the Long Covid service and related areas in NHS Highland.

To contribute to the development, evaluation and monitoring of relevant operational policies, through the deployment of highly specialist skills in research and audit.

To contribute to service development for the Clinical Health psychology speciality and support and maintain strong working relationships within the overall Clinical Health psychology team.

#### **6.4 Research and service evaluation**

To utilise theory and research to support evidence based practice in individual work and work with health professionals.

To undertake appropriate research and provide research advice to other staff undertaking research.

In conjunction with other members of the Long Covid Team, to help develop and evaluate service provision by providing reports at regular intervals using audit and evaluation data

To undertake project management, including audit and service evaluation, with colleagues within the service to help develop and evaluate service provision.

#### **6.5 General**

To ensure the development and maintenance of the highest personal standards of practice, through active participation in internal and external CPD training and development programmes, in consultation with the post holder's professional and service manager(s).

To contribute to the development and articulation of best practice in psychology within the service area, by exercising the skills of a reflexive and reflective scientist practitioner, taking part in regular professional supervision and appraisal and maintaining an active engagement with current developments in the field of clinical psychology and related disciplines.

To maintain the highest standards of clinical record keeping including electronic data entry and recording, report writing and the responsible exercise of professional self-governance in accordance with professional codes of practice of the British Psychological Society and NHS Highland policies and procedures.

To maintain up to date knowledge of legislation, national and local policies and issues of relevance to the service.

To undertake such other duties and responsibilities, appropriate to the grade of the post, as may be agreed with the Director of Psychology in NHS Highland.

## **7a. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY**

### **Driving**

- To have a valid driving licence in order to travel to regular clinics in outlying areas. In addition, to be informed about how to drive in hazardous weather conditions and what precautions to take when travelling in such circumstances in the Highlands.

### **Telemed/Tele-conferencing**

- To have a working knowledge of Telemed/Tele-conferencing technology for the purposes of conducting sessions with clients who live in remote parts of the Highlands and who cannot attend clinics easily due to location or inclement weather and so forth.

### **Computers**

- To have a working knowledge of computer-based technology. This includes: sending and receiving e-mails; word processing skills for writing clinical reports, letters and client homework assignment topics; internet for accessing information (e.g. documents, SIGN guidelines) relevant to the job; using e-library facilities, including finding e-journal articles, ordering articles and books online and making interlibrary loan applications where necessary; and using computer packages to interpret the results from neuropsychological test batteries.

### **Telephones**

- Providing telephonic therapeutic contact to clients where necessary, taking into account the limitations of the telephone (unable to observe client and assess affect, body language, posture). Most often there is no accessible Telemed link to facilitate therapeutic contact.

## **7b. SYSTEMS**

### **Manual systems**

- To be responsible for holding and maintaining confidential clinical files for individual clients, according to the standards of the British Psychological Society, NHS protocols, and the Clinical Psychology Department.
- To record all client related contacts and information in a timely and appropriate manner, and to complete all necessary paperwork
- To maintain records and provide monthly statistics of all work carried out, including client and consultation contacts, supervision, training and development activities and clinical and non-clinical meetings.
- To complete monthly expense and travel claim forms, and also annual leave forms (including statutory leave).
- To complete record forms for psychological and neuropsychological tests, and to score, analyse and interpret results using test manuals.
- To maintain an individual Personal Development Plan (PDP), as per department and NHS Highland guidelines.
- To maintain a record of all Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity undertaken, as per British Psychological Society guidelines.

### **Computer systems**

- To input psychological and neuropsychological test results into available computer programmes

(e.g. WAIS writer), to score and generate preliminary reports and to guide interpretation and analysis.

**Other**

- To dictate clinical case notes, letters and complex psychological reports for typing.

**8. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK**

- The area covered is across NHS Highland (including Argyll & Bute). The work comes from referrals from primary care sources (e.g. GP's) other professionals in the health service. Clients are discharged from the service following clinical assessment and/or therapeutic treatment or referred onto other services if deemed appropriate.
- Work is reviewed by the Clinical Director of Psychology Therapies/ Lead for Clinical Health psychology via six monthly appraisals, supervision, & supervision and Line management 1:1 meetings.
- To take the lead psychology clinical role and responsibility within NHS Highlands.
- To be responsible for prioritising and organising clinical caseload (e.g. deciding which referrals are appropriate for the service according to the broad criteria agreed between the job holder and other colleagues in Long Covid service)
- To be responsible for managing client waiting lists and deciding whether to prioritise referrals as routine, soon or urgent cases. Often this requires liaising with referrers and other professionals involved in the case
- To be capable of making judgements and clinical diagnoses involving highly complex facts and situations that are often characterised by ambiguity, and which requires analysis, interpretation and comparison of a range of options.
- To be capable of weighing contentious or conflicting components of a complex problem To monitor the job holder's own effectiveness with each client and/or presenting problem, and to determine whether consultation, supervision or further CPD is required to maintain high standards of clinical work.
- To receive clinical supervision from a more experienced clinical psychologist, as stipulated by the BPS. Clinical supervision includes a review of clinical cases, as needed, to address complex issues or treatment decisions and implementation, discussion of any ethical or legal implications of treatment, best practices and current research literature on treatment practices.
- To identify gaps in service provision, inform service management of such gaps, and suggest ways in which these deficiencies can be realistically met.
- To be capable of balancing the welfare rights of the individual against the duty of care to the wider community where the behaviour of a client is likely to pose a significant risk to themselves and others.
- To work within the legislation pertaining to mental health (e.g. Mental Health Act), and within the professional standards and code of conduct set by the BPS, and within NHS organisational and service guidelines.
- To participate in formulating departmental policies by attending departmental meetings, specialty groups and to have an active role in clinical governance aspects of the Clinical Psychology Department.

- To observe and anticipate future trends and developments relevant to healthcare delivery and to suggest methods of modernising service delivery.

## **9. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS**

- To take the lead clinical role and responsibility within NHS Highlands
- To be responsible for prioritising and organising clinical caseload
- To be capable of making judgements and clinical diagnoses involving highly complex facts and situations that are often characterised by ambiguity, and which requires analysis, interpretation and comparison of a range of options.
- To be capable of weighing contentious or conflicting components of a complex problem or situation and forming judgements, especially where information is incomplete or unavailable or where professional opinion may be divided.
- To be capable of making decisions regarding formulation and selecting the most appropriate therapeutic intervention plan given a range of possibilities.
- To judge when there is a need for referral to other disciplines
- To judge the most appropriate methods for responding to requests for advice, consultation and support from other professionals, organisations and agencies
- To monitor a situation or intervention by some formal means of evaluation, and to be able to modify the plan or intervention to obtain a better outcome.
- To be capable of judging how best to convey complex and/or contentious information, and also assessment or neuropsychological assessment results that may have significant implications for clients their carers/families.
- To monitor the job holder's own effectiveness with each client and/or presenting problem, and to determine whether consultation, supervision or further CPD is required to maintain high standards of clinical work.
- To receive clinical supervision from a more experienced clinical psychologist, as stipulated by the BPS. Clinical supervision includes a review of clinical cases, as needed, to address complex issues or treatment decisions and implementation, discussion of any ethical or legal implications of treatment, best practices and current research literature on treatment practices.
- To identify gaps in service provision, inform service management of such gaps, and suggest ways in which these deficiencies can be realistically met.
- To work within the legislation pertaining to mental health (e.g. Mental Health Act), and within the professional standards and code of conduct set by the BPS, and within NHS organisational and service guidelines.
- To participate in formulating departmental policies by attending departmental meetings, specialty groups and to have an active role in clinical governance aspects of the Clinical Psychology Department.
- To observe and anticipate future trends and developments relevant to healthcare delivery and to suggest methods of modernising service delivery.

## **10. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB**

- Managing a varied caseload, with clients who have complex needs and who frequently present with severe, chronic and multiple psychological problems, with therapeutic input frequently requiring to be long-term and involving other individuals and systems (e.g. family, carers, other professionals).
- Undertaking to provide a high quality, effective psychological service to clients across a very large and remote geographical area
- Working with a very high level of independence, usually without immediate access to other clinical psychologists for informal supervision and support.
- Dealing with clients exhibiting high levels of distress and describing harrowing and traumatic life events and situations on a very regular basis.
- Responsibility for managing risk of harm to client (self-harm or suicide) and others.
- Managing and prioritising long waiting lists and responding to urgent situations or referrals with a busy caseload, other non-clinical duties and also across a large geographical area.
- Maintaining up-to-date clinical awareness and knowledge of therapeutic treatment strategies across a very broad spectrum of diverse mental health problems and disorders.
- Requiring travel and overnight stays in order to attend courses and conferences due to the remoteness of the Highlands from the main centres that host these courses.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

- To communicate professionally and empathically with clients, their relatives and carers in a wide range of sometimes very distressing, emotive and hostile circumstances, this may involve sharing sensitive clinical information relating to the development, therapeutic treatment intervention and prognosis of an individual's problem.
- To communicate promptly, clearly and sensitively with referrers, and other professionals involved with the case providing a written history of the presenting problem, the clinical findings on assessment, a clinical formulation, diagnosis, and a recommended treatment plan; ensuring that these observations are sent to all those with a significant role in the management and care of the client, and that an appropriate record is stored in the record system.
- To be experienced and skilled in developing a therapeutic alliance with clients while maintaining a professional and ethical stance.
- To provide a clinical consultancy service to colleagues, other professionals and organisations relating to the psychological aspects of health care.
- To ensure a satisfactory supervisory relationship is in place and that the job holder is using this appropriately, and that there is sufficient flexibility within this relationship to have impromptu discussions where urgent clinical issues arise that require immediate attention or action.
- To ensure that confidentiality is observed in the communication and storage of clinical information.
- To ensure that informed consent is obtained when communicating about a client with a third party or when soliciting their participation in research.

- To attend regular meetings of the Area Clinical Psychology Service.

## 12. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

### Physical demands:

- Driving skills necessary to drive on a regular basis long distances on different types of roads ranging from motorways, city streets to single track roads and even farm tracks in a variety of weather conditions. The average monthly mileage to conduct routine clinical work is approximately 500 miles. The driving required may necessitate driving outwith normal working hours
- Conducting clinic sessions in small, cramped office spaces where job holder and client are frequently sitting closer to each other than is desirable and where having a third party present in the room (e.g. relative, carer) requires careful manoeuvre of office furniture making the space even more cramped and not conducive to good clinical practice.
- Carrying bulky test equipment and clinic case files on community visits
- Keyboard skills for inputting information (for reports or test results) into a computer for long periods of time (over 20 minutes), on a frequent (daily) basis.

### Mental demands:

- The ability to concentrate well for frequent, intense periods, on a daily basis is essential. Clinic sessions with clients and other people involved in the case last approximately one hour but some clinical contacts last longer (e.g. initial assessment appointments can last one-and-a-half-hours, especially if clients have travelled long distances from outwith the area to attend the appointment; multidisciplinary review meetings can last up to two hours). Clinical sessions involve listening to and recording information given by the person, integrating information received with information already gathered, formulation of presenting problems and communicating appropriate and constructive feedback based on all the information known about the client.
- The ability to apply additional concentration skills in telephonic therapeutic contact with clients where such contact is deemed clinically necessary and/or where weather conditions prohibit the client from attending a regular clinic session.
- The ability to adapt to the often unpredictable nature of the work, such as seeing clients on an urgent basis, clients cancelling appointments, clients and other professionals involved in the case presenting with new difficulties and being asked for on-the-spot-advice.
- Sourcing, reading and organising supplementary written material to send to clients in remote areas who cannot attend face-to-face therapy sessions as frequently as is required.
- Administration time is unstructured and open to unplanned interruptions, through telephone calls, impromptu discussions with colleagues and general queries by secretarial staff.

### Emotional demands:

- Frequent (daily), intense exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances reported by clients or through other clinical contacts regarding these clients, who present with complex emotional problems, including physical and sexual abuse, anger management problems, complicated grief reactions, significant suicidal ideation, offending problems and associated substances misuse.
- Environmental and working conditions demands:
- Travelling to clinics in remote areas where weather conditions are inclement and frequently hazardous (especially during winter months).

- To be able to cope with unpleasant body odours and threatening behaviour, including intimidation and physical and verbal aggression.

### 13. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB

- The postholder will be eligible to be or registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Clinical Psychologist (D.Clin.Psychol).
- The postholder will have experience in working in the field of Clinical Health psychology and is able to work with adults who present with complex mental health difficulties.
- To complete mandatory health and safety training (e.g. management of aggression, fire safety) required by NHS Highland.
- Given the large, remote geographical area to cover, the ability to work with a very high level of independence and lone working is essential.

### 14. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

I agree that the above Job Description is an accurate reflection of my duties and responsibilities at the date of signing.

Job Holder's Signature:

Date:

Manager's Signature:

Date: