NHS TAYSIDE – AGENDA FOR CHANGE

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION
 | Job Title | Audiology Specialist Practitioner |
| Department(s)/Location | Audiology Department, Tayside |
| Number of job holders | Nine |
| JOB PURPOSE A practicing healthcare Practitioner, who contributes towards provision of a comprehensive Audiology Service.Assists the Audiology Manager in the daily clinical work of the department and is responsible for managing own workload and the workload of Assistant Practitioners.This involves comprehensive rehabilitative care, complex diagnostic assessments of hearing, and care for adult hearing aid users, children of all ages, and their carers/relatives.Demonstrates effective communication and interpersonal skills with other professionals and service users, including patients, carers and relatives.Contributes to service development and maintains professional standards.Maintains patient and departmental records both written and electronic using computer databases and word processing.Provides clinical assessments and hearing aid programming and provision using complex computer software and specific specialised hardware. |
| ORGANISATIONAL POSITION Audiology Services Manager **Hearing Therapy Services** **Audiology Locality Manager** **Balance and Vestibular Sevices**  **Manager** **Manager** **Hearing Therapy Audiology specialist**  **Audiology specialist** **Specialist Practitioner Practitioner**   **Practitioner**  **Community Paediatrics** **(2 posts)** **(9 posts)**Audiology Practitioner **Audiology Assistant**  **Practitioner**   **(5 posts)** **A & C Staff** |
| SCOPE AND RANGEProvide a service to adults and children in Tayside and North East Fife. (Population of Tayside approximately 550 000)Demonstrate the ability to work effectively without direct supervision.Works as part of a multi-disciplinary teamWorks calmly and efficiently under pressure.Good prioritising and organisational skills.Manages a busy varied caseload.Use patient case history to formulate an individualised care plan.Collate data and record effectively in patient’s medical records.Deal with patients in a confident manner, respecting the importance of confidentiality. |
| MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**Work within a team to provide a comprehensive audiology service to adults and children.****Ensure an efficient and effective service within clinical governance guidelines.****Maintains professional standards and protocols without supervision.****Responsible for maintaining own work load, prioritising referrals, arranging follow up appointments agreed with patient .****Contact with patients within hospital clinical settings, community clinical settings, patients own** **home and nursing homes on domiciliary visits.** **Provide audiological support for ENT and audiological physician clinics using a variety of diagnostic assessments:-*** Perform examination of the ear using clinical Otoscope in order to identify healthy and abnormal ear conditions. Recognising contra-indications to performing further procedures and appropriate referral to other professionals (ENT, GP, Specialist ENT Nurse) for management/treatment where required.
* Using air conduction headphones and bone conduction vibrator to obtain accurate hearing threshold levels (using masking stimuli where appropriate) and following BSA guidelines. Instructing the patient on what is required of them to perform the test including the use of tact and persuasion where barriers to understanding exist e.g. children with special needs, adults with learning disabilities, babies and the patient may be unco-operative.
* Perform middle ear analysis using tympanometry, including probe microphone insertion to determine the function of the middle ear; acoustic reflex testing and eustation tube function tests. As part of the test battery for further management of medical conditions.

To take accurate and safe impressions of the ear:-* On adults and children of all ages and special needs clients.
* Taking impression of the ear following professional recommended procedures (BSA) by placing foam otostop deep into ear canal, then syringing impression material into the canal to form an accurate impression for processing by the earmould manufacturer.
* Determine the type, material and any modifications required for earmoulds, swim moulds and other types of earpiece required (e.g. ear defenders).

**Assess patients need for hearing aids and select the most suitable model in line with MHAS (modernisation of hearing aid services) and departmental protocols:-*** Using assessment results to select and programme appropriate hearing aids using specific computer software and hardware tools.
* Assess patient’s individual, physical abilities and social needs in choice of aid and programmes.
* Verify the hearing aid programming using subjective (free field and verbal assessment) and objective ‘Real Ear Measurement’ or ‘Real Ear to coupler Difference’ (on children) techniques involving insertion of probe tube microphone deep into the ear canal. Making adjustments to prescription of hearing aid as appropriate. Involves fine manual dexterity and care, requiring prolonged concentration.

Assess the benefit derived from hearing aids using subjective and objective measures:-* Audit the benefit of hearing aid use and patient satisfaction using nationally recognised benefit profiles and questionnaires. Input the information into software packages.
* Using the outcome measures for further rehabilitation measures.

 Provides comprehensive and complex rehabilitation and counselling:-* Instructing patient on effective use of aid, communicating realistic expectations, advice on the disabling effects of hearing loss. Using basic directive counselling and empathic skills to empower the patient in their rehabilitation and management of hearing loss.
* Formulating individualised care plans.
* Using effective communication and persuasion where a poor motivational attitude to hearing loss may exist and barriers to understanding and communication may include hearing loss, visual impairment (including deaf-blind clients), dementia and stroke patients with aphasia.

 **Modification of earmoulds for patients using appropriate equipment including dental drill, buffer/grinder and safety equipment, to ensure comfortable and acoustically viable fit.** * For adults and children with all types of hearing aid, requiring skill, dexterity and judgement when working to finer tolerances.

**Be responsible for generating written, verbal and electronic reports to other professionals, communicating results, prognosis and further actions:*** Direct referral hearing aid clinic: taking accurate clinical history, otoscopic examination of the ears, performing diagnostic assessment and making a clinical decision on the appropriateness of hearing aids and assistive listening devices, formulating a patient management plan. Reporting findings to GP and other medical personnel as required for further management.
* Speech Audiometry, using taped speech lists and headphones to determine speech discrimination.
* Paediatric Audiology: assessment of neonatal to pre-school children. Using persuasion and encouragement strategies to elicit co-operation and responses from children and babies who may be reluctant to participate, using a variety of age-related assessments including distraction, performance, co-operation tests, VRA (visual response audiometry), and tests of middle ear function using tympanometry.
* Supervision and training of Assistant Audiology Practitioners, clinical placement students and work experience students. Assess clinical competencies both verbally and practically and update the student logbook. Provide training days for junior and senior medical and non-medical staff.
* Responsible for maintenance and calibration of all Audiology equipment. Ensure annual calibration is carried out, equipment sent for repair to appropriate department/company. Ensure accurate records are maintained for equipment. Train all staff in the care and maintenance of equipment, filling in the risk assessment sheets as required.
* Hearing aid stock control: adult and paediatric hearing aid stock maintenance to ensure adequate levels of stock for new issuing and replacement.
* Tinnitus management, advising patient on tinnitus rehabilitation techniques.
* Be responsible for providing and organising workload at peripheral Audiology clinics.
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| COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPSExcellent communication skills needed to impart complex and factual rehabilitative knowledge and skills information to patients, carers, and colleagues.Communicating Audiological information to other relevant professionals including Ear Nose and Throat Doctors, Nursing staff, Teachers of the Deaf and support staff.Uses tact, sensitivity, persuasion and reassurance where barriers to communication and understanding include hearing loss, visual impairment (including deaf-blind), dementia, stroke/aphasia, and English as a second language, emotional distress, adults with learning disabilities and children.Ability to deal with and diffuse, verbally aggressive or hostile situations, and know when to seek support.Demonstrating effective interpersonal skills when dealing with staff, patients, relatives and the public in person, on the telephone and in writing. Major working relationships include ENT, Hearing Therapy, Paediatric Audiology, Speech and Language Therapy, other hospital departments/wards, GP Surgeries and the satellite clinics, which are connected to the Audiology Department. There are close links with the Education Department and Social Services. Also, strong links are maintained between the Audiology Department and external hearing aid companies and earmould manufacturers |

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| KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOBQualificationsBSc in Audiology or equivalent (Dip Audiology with relevant BSc or BAA parts 1 &2 with H’Tec/B’Tec MPPM)CPD portfolio up to date and maintained.RCCP registrationYou will be expected to study to higher levels where appropriate, or to undertake study/training that will assist you in providing a high standard of care in the profession and to maintain CPD portfolio.KnowledgeProfessional knowledge acquired through experience.Experience in adults and paediatric testing, hearing aid fittings and rehabilitation.Advanced knowledge in specialist fields.Wide knowledge of NHS networks/referral routes.SkillsBasic counselling.Computer skills – database use.Excellent interpersonal skills.Ability to work off own initiative within the role.Apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations requiring fine manual dexterity.Able to diffuse conflict situations |

ESSENTIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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| 1. SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

EquipmentUse of clinical equipment in the assessment, diagnosis and rehabilitation of audiological complaints. This includes the following machinery:Audiometer – used for the voluntary testing of hearing levels.Tympanometer – used for the assessment of middle ear problems.Electronic patient management systems – computer based systems used to collect patient information and data including standardised patient assessment/outcome measurements.Use additional equipment in the fitting, maintenance and evaluation of hearing aid systems both with and independent of patients. This includes the above list and the following:Computer systems – used in the fitting and measurement of hearing aid systems.Real Ear Measurement Systems – used in conjunction with computers to assess the acoustic performance of hearing aids insitu.Hearing Aid Analyser – used to assess the electro-acoustic performance of hearing aids both insitu and under test conditions.Grinding, drilling & polishing equipment – used in the repair and modification of ear inserts which themselves are used in the custom fitting of hearing aids.SystemsThe post holder requires to use both paper-based and electronic-based information management systems.Both types of system are required for the collection of patient specific data to compile a clinical record of activity and to maintain, add and update this. The collection of this and activity information are also required for the gathering of Service activity data. The following list highlights this:* Maintaining of paper case records both Departmental and Hospital.
* Maintaining of electronic patient records.
* Collection and recording both in paper and electronic form of daily activity information for statistical analysis of service activity.
* Regular stock monitoring.
* Stock control and ordering of consumables.
* Maintenance and monitoring of patient waiting lists.
* Collation of patient outcome measurements.

**Responsibility for Records Management**All records created in the course of the business of NHS Tayside are corporate records and are public records under the terms of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. This includes email messages and other electronic records. It is your responsibility to ensure that you keep appropriate records of your work in NHS Tayside and manage those records in keeping with the NHS Tayside Records Management Policy and with any guidance produced by NHS Tayside specific to your employment. |
| PHYSICAL DEMANDS OF THE JOBEmotional demands:Dealing with patients, their relatives etc and delivering sensitive and unwelcome information.Dealing with angry / unhappy patients / familiesMental demands:  Focus and concentration while carrying out diagnostic testsDealing with continuously varying patient requests during a clinic for information, explanations, helpWorking to a deadline, delivering clinical activity and care within a set period of time.Analysis of complex clinical test resultsPlanning of own workPhysical demands: Carrying various pieces of equiptment up to large suitcase size Moving of equipment especially between locations Moving stock, paper records Keyboard skills Regularly moving around department between rooms and furniture Kneeling and bending when working with children Ability to TravelEnvironmental: Potential exposure to aggressive patients Working in artificially lit/heated environmentUse of laboratory equipment for the modification of earmoulds and potential exposure to dustPotential for exposure to body fluids, earwax, ear discharge, ear canal debris and blood.Possible exposure to cleaning fluidsWorking in uncomfortable temperaturesWorking in cramped conditions with close proximity to patients |

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| DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTSThe postholder is responsible for the assessment of patient’s conditions and the management of patients to include the provision of results and information to patients, their carers, and other agencies as well as the recording of such information within the systems of the Service.The postholder will be responsible for managing the workload assigned to them on a daily basis and managing the use of their time during the working day taking consideration of the work of others, the working time directive and the need for appropriate breaks. This will also take into consideration the needs of individual patients. This includes having responsibility at all times for the level of care and the quality of work delivered.The bulk of the post holder’s work will be carried out unsupervised particularly where the work is undertaken on a peripheral location or on a domiciliary basis. Supervision where necessary will be provided via peer support either in person or via telephone or other electronic means.The postholder has the ability and responsibility to make and take decisions on a case by case basis.The postholder may be responsible for an area or section of the Services work. |
| MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOBBalancing the standards of care against the constraints of time.Meeting both local and national waiting times targets.Dealing with patients with complex hearing difficulties which requires the full use of modern hearing aid technology (advanced signal processing) and counselling skills to maximise the benefit for the patient.Dealing with parents/family members of patients and their expectations particularly where sudden or total hearing loss has been identified or has occurred.Managing resources such as stock, materials, time well.Dealing with patients with a physical and/or mental impairment.Managing junior staff..Working with other agencies that have a different focus or agenda.Delivery of a modernising service. |
| JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT The job description will need to be signed off using the attached sheet by each postholder to whom the job description applies . |

**JOB DESCRIPTION AND ESSENTIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FORM – SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT**

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| **Post Title** | Audiology Specialist Practitioner |
| **Reference Number** |  |

The attached job description and essential additional information will be used as part of the Agenda for Change assimilation exercise and therefore the job matching panel may wish to seek further clarification on any issues contained within the documents. **Should this be necessary please identify an appropriate Manager and Postholder representative who can be contacted to provide this clarification. (This may be one of the undernoted postholders or a staff side representative who has been involved in agreeing the job description)**

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| **Responsible Manager** | David Willis |
| **Contact No.** | 32824 |
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| **Postholder Representative** | Gillian Forsyth/Gillian Milne/Kirsty Gilson/Ruth Blackwood (P) |
| **Contact No.** | 13776 |