NHS TAYSIDE – AGENDA FOR CHANGE

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION
 | Job Title | Clinical Psychologist  |
| Department(s)/Location | NHS Tayside Psychological Therapies Service – Clinical Neuropsychology Ninewells Hospital, Dundee |
| Number of job holders | 1 |
| JOB PURPOSE* To provide a highly specialised clinical neuropsychology service to adults across Tayside and North Fife who are known to have, or are suspected to have acquired damage to the brain, largely as a result of disease, trauma or ageing.
* To assess behaviour and emotional functioning and formulate the patients difficulties.
* To deliver therapeutic interventions, to address a range of psychological conditions including anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, sleep disorders, functional disorders and management of challenging behaviour.
* The post holder will not be routinely be required to conduct cognitive assessments but will require some knowledge of neuropsychological assessment. They may have to complete formal cognitive assessment at times or conduct cognitive screening measures. They will have to integrate information from cognitive assessment carried out by other members of the department.
* To be familiar with the neuropsychological features and changes across a wide range of neurological, medical and psychiatric disorders.
* To communicate complex information in a professional manner.
* To keep up to date with professional and health board guidelines.

To carry out audit and research |
| ORGANISATIONAL POSITIONSee attached.  |
| SCOPE AND RANGEThe population of Tayside is approximately 400,000. This post is based within the Regional Neuroscience Unit at Ninewells Hospital in Dundee and provides a highly specialised clinical neuropsychology service to patients across the Tayside and North Fife region. Referrals are received from a diverse range of referring agents including Neurology, Neurosurgery, General and Old Age Psychiatry, Medicine for the Elderly, General Physicians, Cardiovascular Medicine and Clinical Genetics. Examples of the type of clinical populations seen include those with demyelinating disorders, movement disorders, cortical and subcortical dementias, toxic conditions, epilepsy, hypoxia, hydrocephalus, cerebrovascular disease, sleep disorder and traumatic brain injury. The service provides both outpatient and inpatient services to the general medical and psychiatric hospitals within the catchment area.  |
| MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES* To provide a highly specialised clinical neuropsychology intervention service to patients with acquired damage to the brain. This involves the appropriate selection, adaptation and administration of a range of therapeutic interventions, employed in order to address a wide variety of cognitive, behavioural and emotional presentations.
* To conduct cognitive screening and highly specialised neuropsychological assessments (with appropriate clinical supervision).
* To give expert advice and consultancy on the cognitive, emotional and behavioural functioning of the patient population referred to this specialty, in order to assist interventions by other parties involved in the patient’s care, such as referring agents, medical and social services, employers and relatives/carers, in order to help them understand the complex needs of the patient.
* To maintain an accurate record of clinical work.
* To initiate, organise and undertake research work.
* To manage research budgets as required when acting as lead researcher on specific funded projects.
* Responsibility to ensure the training and supervision of D.Clin.Psych. Doctoral trainees and D.Clin.Psych. Doctoral graduates, in clinical and research matters within the speciality.
* To contribute towards the further development of the neuropsychology service.
* To ensure that any difficulties are brought to the attention of the lead clinician for this speciality.
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| COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS* Responsible for the production of timely and informative written reports for referral agents and other health care colleagues involved in the patients care. Such reports are required to provide a written history of the complaint, the clinical findings on examination, a clinical formulation and a recommended course of action.
* Responsible for the communication of highly complex information to both patients and family members in an accessible and easy to understand fashion. This may contain very unwelcome and upsetting information.
* Providing highly complex and sensitive information where there are significant barriers to acceptance, which need to be overcome using the highest level of interpersonal and communication skills.
* It is necessary to work with patients who may be very impaired and not able to easily understand the rational for complying with treatment due to brain damage, dementia etc.
* It is necessary to be able to work with all levels of disability from vegetative state to loss of sight, hearing, physical limitations and all levels of cognitive impairment.
* Many of the patients seen have considerable barriers to communication due to their medical condition, psychological stress, cultural and language factors or a combination of the above.
* To cope sensitively and appropriately with the potentially difficult job of comforting hurt, distressed or distraught patients.
* To communicate with aggressive, violent or confused patients in such a way as to de-escalate the situation where at all possible.
* To develop and maintain good relationships with voluntary, carer and community organisations dealing with acquired brain injury or carer issues.
* To have excellent interviewing skills.
* To ensure that Scottish Government and NHS Tayside standards of confidentiality are observed in the communication and storage of information.
* To ensure that the requirements for informed consent are observed when communicating about a patient with a third party.
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| KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB* The postholder requires to have a good honours degree in Psychology and be eligible for graduate membership of the British Psychological Society.
* The post holder requires to have a Doctorate in Clinical or Counselling Psychology or an equivalent qualification recognised by the British Psychological Society.
* To be eligible for Chartered status with the British Psychological Society.
* To be registered with the Health Care Professions Council.
* Have knowledge of neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neurology and neuroradiology, in relation to neuropsychology, in order to interpret clinical presentations.
* Have knowledge and experience of working with patients who have acquired a brain injury or neurological illness.
* Have knowledge and experience of the administration of a wide range of psychological assessment measures which can be used in neurological populations. This would include cognitive screening measures; and neuropsychological tests. .
* Maintain up to date knowledge of the speciality by additional reading, study and CPD, including attending short courses and training events.
* Knowledge of research principles in clinical analysis.
* Knowledge of statistics, in particular those with respect to social science research.
* Knowledge of critical appraisal analysis.
* IT skills to support word processing and PowerPoint presentations.
* An awareness of current legislation relevant to the specialty.
* Have knowledge of national and professional guidelines for optimal standards of clinical care.
* Have knowledge of the Health Board and Department’s policies and procedures such as moving and handling, management of aggression and violence, lone working guidelines, infection control etc.
* Be able to cope professionally with severely challenging, offensive and confrontational behaviours which are a manifestation of illness.
* Meet the needs of a range of patients with very complex neuropsychiatric presentations and who often also have complex social needs.
* Work innovatively with people who have suffered cognitive, emotional and physical losses as a result of their illness and who also have reduced personal resources as a result of their damage.
* Engage in sensitive liaison with families who are often themselves under considerable stress and have complex needs.
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ESSENTIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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| 1. SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT
* To maintain a high level of proficiency in the use of, psychological assessment measures, required in the assessment of emotion and behaviour.

 * To have a working knowledge of computer-based technology including word processing, email, internet, PowerPoint, spreadsheets and document scanning.
* Conform to the Health Board systems of information management for patient records, activity data, and mileage and expenses information.

**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 JOBManual Dexterity* .
* Ability to manually manipulate psychological outcome measures, neuropsychological tests, and take clinical notes during sessions.
* It is desirable that the post holder is able to use a computer.

Physical Effort* As many patients are physically disabled it is often necessary (monthly) to move patients in wheelchairs, in line with NHS Tayside’s policy on manual handling.
* Many patients suffer from physical health problems, such as epilepsy. The NHS Tayside Policy on dealing with a medical emergency must be followed, where necessary.
* Ability to travel to different locations (monthly).
* It is occasionally necessary to travel to other sites to see patients for assessment, requiring the transport of bulky assessment materials.

Mental Effort* Be able to concentrate for long periods (daily).
* To be able to modify psychological assessment and therapy to take patients cognitive function into account (daily).
* Be creative in devising individual treatment programmes for patients with physical and or cognitive impairments (daily).
* The post-holder must be vigilant at all times to any behavioural change in the patient which might indicate frustration, irritability or aggression, and take steps to de-escalate the situation, as aggression following brain injury comes with very little warning.

Emotional Effort* Frequent direct exposure to patients and their families, many of whom have degenerative or terminal conditions and are often in a distressed and emotional state as a result of their circumstances.
* Frequent direct exposure to emotionally charged discussions with patients and their families involving often unwelcome and upsetting information regarding their diagnosis/condition.
* Be able to deal in a sensitive and professional manner with the details of patients traumatic life events (daily).

Working Conditions* Increased irritability is one of the commonest features of acquired brain injury and so verbal aggression is common in this population. Physical aggression can also occur and requires the psychologist to be vigilant as they will usually be alone with the patient during assessment. It is necessary to comply with NHS Tayside Policy and Procedures on Violence and Aggression and Lone Working Guidelines.
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| DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS* Be accountable for own professional actions.
* To work as an independent practitioner with responsibility for the provision of highly complex psychological assessment, intervention, and consultation regarding patients referred with a diverse range of disorders.
* Be capable of making clinical judgments which involve highly complex information from multiple sources, which require analysis, interpretation and comparison of a range of possible options, and require to be carried out on a case by case basis.
* Be capable of weighing conflicting components pertaining to a complex problem or situation, forming judgements where information is incomplete or unavailable, and in situations where expert opinion may be divided.
* Be capable of selecting an appropriate treatment or intervention to fit a particular clinical presentation.
* Be capable of monitoring a situation or intervention by some formal means of evaluation, and be able to modify the plan, treatment or intervention to obtain a better outcome.
* Be capable of monitoring training and supervision and varying these to suit the learning requirements of the trainee.
* Be capable of acting within the terms of reference of legislation pertaining to mental health and capacity to protect the rights and health of individuals and the community (e.g. Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000).
* Identifying future demands reflecting technological innovation, novel treatments or demographic shifts in the population structure and to address these in strategic planning.
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| MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB* Coping with the diversity of the patient group and the complexity of their problems/illness.
* Dealing with the stress which results from working with patients who have degenerative or terminal illnesses.
* Dealing with the stress which results from working with distressed family members.
* Maintaining an up to date knowledge base relating to a wide range of psychological/neurological/neuropsychiatric conditions.
* Balancing clinical and research demands of the work.
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| 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 . |

## ORGANISATIONAL POSITION – PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES

**DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**LEAD CONSULTANT CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGIST**

**CLINICAL/COUNSELLING**

**PSYCHOLOGIST**

*(THIS POST)*

Operational Line Management

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