

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION

Job Title:	Senior Visual Field Technician Team Lead
Responsible to:	Deputy Lead Orthoptist
Department(s):	Ophthalmology
Directorate:	Head and Neck
Operating Division:	Head & Neck
Job Reference:	193166
No of Job Holders:	1
Last Update:	May 2024

### 2. JOB PURPOSE

As part of a multidisciplinary team the post holder will deliver a high quality professional visual field technician service to NHS Lothian carrying out a range of technical and diagnostic techniques that enable a variety of clinicians to determine appropriate clinical pathways and treatments in the care of ophthalmic patients, particularly those with glaucoma and neuro ophthalmic conditions.

As team lead, the postholder will be professionally accountable and report directly to the Deputy Lead Orthoptist but will be responsible for the daily management of the visual fields team by dealing with any immediate patient testing, clinic flow and workload allocation issues, raising any staffing concerns, reporting equipment failures or health & safety issues and ensuring that protocols and procedures are followed pertaining to specific subspecialty integrated care pathways.

To provide training and clinical supervision and advice for visual field technicians and to a variety of staff & students.

### 3. DIMENSIONS

This post will be in a clinical area within the Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion.

The visual fields department carries out approximately 10,000 patient assessments per annum.

The team comprises of 15 registered Orthoptic staff and 8 Visual Field Technicians/Orthoptic Assistants.

#### Financial Responsibilities:

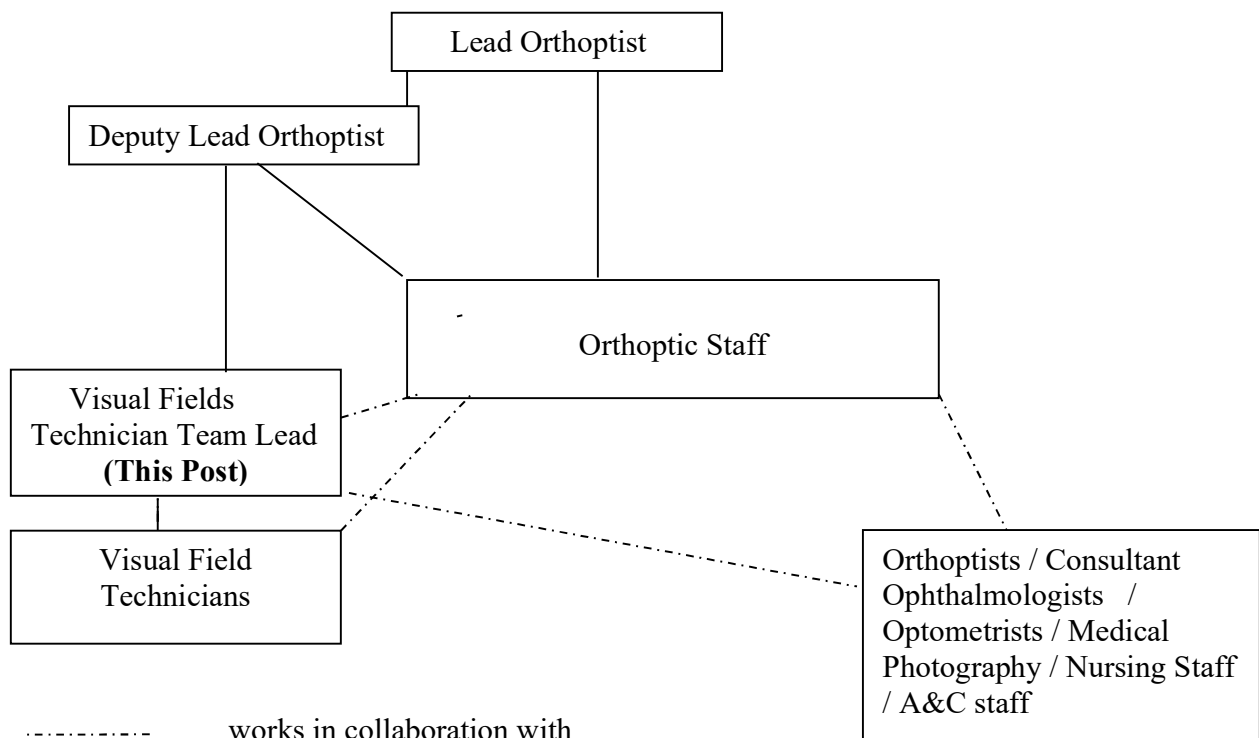
The post holder is not responsible for managing the budget but needs to work within the financial envelope to be aware of the resources available.

#### Staffing Responsibility:

Responsible for the day to day management of a team of eight Healthcare Support Workers.

Other health professionals/students who will require training in visual field assessment include nursing Healthcare support workers who are new in post, nursing staff who are required to gain or refresh testing competencies and nursing, optometry and orthoptic students.

### 4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



Key ..... works in collaboration with  
\_\_\_\_\_ Staff Management responsibilities

## 5. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT

The Orthoptic Services sit within the Ophthalmology Department. Patients are seen in outpatient services at the main bases at Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion and St John's Hospital and specialist clinics at the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People (RHCYP), Department of Neurosciences (DCN) and community treatment centres.

Key responsibilities of the department are:

The provision of high quality Orthoptic assessment, diagnosis and care to all patients with a diverse range of clinical conditions across acute and community settings with referrals from health visitors, General Practitioners (GP's), community optometrists, paediatricians, neurologists, maxillofacial and stroke specialists.

Assessments will be on orthoptic only clinics or in conjunction with consultant ophthalmologists, hospital optometrists or community paediatricians.

Visual field technical service provided at the Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion providing field service for predominantly glaucoma services for Edinburgh, East and Mid Lothian.

Delivery of pan Lothian 'See for School' pre-school orthoptic vision screening service.

## 6. KEY RESULT AREAS

### Clinical Duties

1. Review of case records prior to conducting own patient assessments for judgement on appropriate visual field test to be conducted and to be an onsite resource providing advice to other staff where field test to be conducted is unclear or complex field assessment.
2. Perform static perimetry (visual fields) testing for predominantly glaucoma patients on a field analyser in preparation for medical and / or optometric staff review and analysis of results.
3. To perform specialised visual fields assessments, both manual and automated, for the neuro ophthalmology and inherited retinal disease services where a greater level of expertise and further training competencies are required for conducting kinetic and low vision field assessments.
4. Meet recognised standards in relation to documentation of patient care including entering of current patient information.
5. To recognise where there has been a significant change in previous test results or artefacts affecting testing and to bring this to the urgent attention of ophthalmic medical or optometric personnel, especially where clinics are conducted 'virtually' without medical staff present.
6. To undertake a range of other tests e.g. Snellen distance and near visual acuity measurements, manual or automated focimetry, iCare tonometry, Ishihara colour vision & / or 100 Hue colour vision assessments to equip medical / optometric staff with results that determine clinical outcomes.

7. To undertake paediatric visual acuity measurement to support the paediatric ophthalmic clinics and pre-school vision screening.
8. Referral to the medical team / optometry / nursing / orthoptics as appropriate for any questions regarding the patient's ophthalmic condition or any suggestions or complaints they may wish to raise.
9. Work within divisional policies and procedures to ensure maintenance of safe working practices for patients and colleagues including protection of patient confidentiality at all times.
10. Responsible for the calibration of specific clinical equipment and for escalation, reporting & logging of faulty equipment to senior orthoptic team, Estates or relevant external contractors.
11. Responsibility for monitoring & ordering replacement stock / equipment items for the visual fields service in a timely manner for authorisation by the Lead Orthoptist, to ensure the smooth running of the department and to promote the effective and efficient use of resources.
12. Take responsibility for personal continuing professional development in order to enhance knowledge, skills and values needed for safe and effective practice through training and education.
13. To support NHS Lothian's values of quality, teamwork, care and compassion, dignity and respect, and openness, honesty and responsibility through the application of appropriate behaviours and attitudes.

Team Lead Responsibilities:

14. Responsible for the day to day management of a team of Healthcare Support Workers which includes staff appraisal, recruitment panel member duties & review of work performance and progress.
15. To address any patient flow issues by liaising with members of the multidisciplinary team including nursing, medical staff, medical photography plus patients and their carer's with responsibility for decision making that includes re-triage or redirection of patients to assist clinic flow.
16. To demonstrate own work plus deliver training and subsequent competency assessment and mentorship in visual fields for staff including new visual field technicians and health care support staff, where these are currently delivered by registered orthoptic staff.
17. To manage any issues with staff competency with job role and to raise with professional lead, Deputy Lead Orthoptist as required.
18. To act as an alternate for the Deputy Lead Orthoptist by attending the Eye Pavilion daily staff multidisciplinary team huddles to escalate any issues relating to the visual fields service and to provide verbal and electronic feedback to the visual fields and orthoptic teams post huddle.

19. Responsible for timetabling of visual fields staff for PAEP clinics and visual screening service in line with weekly predicted fields and to highlight any serious or recurrent staffing issues with the Deputy Lead Orthoptist.
20. Maintain accurate and up-to-date electronic records for statistical information, collated monthly, for the visual fields service for numbers of patient assessments conducted per session, type of field conducted, staffing levels and patient assessment flow to reflect care and plan for service delivery. Information is sent to the Deputy Lead Orthoptist for analysis.
21. To conduct annual TURAS appraisals for visual fields staff.
22. To aid the Deputy Lead Orthoptist with the recruitment process for visual fields staff by assisting with shortlisting applicants, preparing interview questions and as an interview panel member.
23. Be responsible for monitoring and adhering to Health and Safety procedures in relation to working practice and to assist the Deputy Lead Orthoptist with health & safety issues including departmental checks, workplace inspections & quarterly reviews and to promote awareness and adherence of health & safety policies within the visual fields team.
24. To lead the bimonthly visual field team meetings, and ensure the annual iMatters survey results team meetings are organised which includes preparation of agendas, taking of minutes, ensuring previous action points have been completed and circulating minutes post meeting.
25. To represent the visual fields team at internal Orthoptic service meetings and escalate any issues pertaining to the visual fields team to the Deputy Lead orthoptist with appropriate feedback to staff, including suggested service improvements and policy development.
26. To support internal departmental research involving fields testing which may require training on new fields programmes, demonstrating to colleagues and contribution to updates of Standard Operating Procedures in collaboration with Line Managers.

## 7a. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

Be competent in the use of a wide range of equipment. Ensure that equipment in use is clean and safe, and regularly monitored for safety as per professional and organisational standards of practice.

### **General Equipment :**

Personal Computer, fields machine printers, phone and answering machine, wheelchairs.

### **Ophthalmology equipment in areas of identified practice :**

Visual Acuity Testing Equipment- Snellen Charts, LogMAR and Crowded Kays vision tests, Near Vision tests & pinhole occluders-to perform visual acuity assessments for adult & paediatric patients.

Humphrey Visual Field Analyser- to perform visual fields for the glaucoma service

Octopus 900 Visual Field Analyser/Tagaki Perimeter -to perform kinetic visual field assessments for neuro-ophthalmic conditions & paediatric ophthalmic service and for baseline driving standards at Consultant request. To perform Low Vision static perimetry to support the Inherited Retinal Diseases clinic & internal departmental research.

Bjerrum Screen-To allow visual fields assessment on patients with physical disability where are unable to use other perimeters.

Lens box, Automated Lensmeter & Manual Focimeter-to identify patient's refractive error for correct fields examination.

iCare tonometry-for intraocular pressure measurement.

Ishihara/100 Hue colour vision test-conducting and charting of colour vision anomalies.

Lees Screen-conducting and charting of ocular motility defects.

**Note:** New equipment may be introduced as the organisation and technology develops, however training will be provided.

## 7b. SYSTEMS

### Information Processing

Accurate input and storage of individual patient ophthalmic data for visual field assessment.

### Information Technology

Microsoft Office (e.g. Word, Excel and Outlook packages).

Maintenance of patient records.

Internet and Intranet-work systems e.g. TURAS, Job Train.

Risk Assessments- conducted with the Deputy Lead Orthoptist for e.g. Health & Safety quarterly review cycle or departmental equipment.

TRAK-patient clinic appointments, relevant referral information e.g. spectacle prescriptions and weekly collation of predicted patient numbers attending the open access visual fields service.

Datix/Incident forms-inputting information onto the system.

PECOS-Ordering departmental stock and supplies.

**Note:** New systems may be introduced as the organisation and technology develops, however training will be provided.

## 8. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK

Workload is generated by the specific needs of the ophthalmology service.

Assignment of work will be determined by the Lead/Deputy Lead Orthoptist, and potentially the Advanced Orthoptic staff or sessional Orthoptist In Charge.

The postholder will work with minimal supervision following training and competency sign off. They will seek clinical/professional advice from the Lead / Deputy Lead Orthoptist/Advanced Orthoptists. The Deputy Lead Orthoptist will carry out a work review and formal appraisal of performance on an annual basis.

The post holder will be expected to plan and prioritise workload and use own initiative.

## **9. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS**

On a daily basis, ensure preparation of clinical visual fields rooms & equipment, confirming equipment supplies and infection control checks have been undertaken and that clinical areas are safe to progress, whilst actioning any safety alerts.

To ensure patient suitability for procedures and escalate if concerns that these fall out with testing protocols.

Monitoring and acknowledging changes in patient's condition i.e. deterioration in visual field, difficulties with test performance including cognitive difficulties or low vision and documenting in the case notes / reporting to the appropriate clinician especially where one clinic per week is conducted as 'virtual' i.e. without medical personnel present.

Working within clear clinical guidelines and protocols, recognise where apparent new visual field defects are artefacts secondary to incorrect trial lens or patient positioning and addressing these to ensure accurate testing.

To judge when the open access service is becoming overwhelmed and to escalate this to a senior member of staff and to know when to apply re triaging of patient workload using a variety of strategies e.g. adjustment in patient flow such as patient to medical photography first.

To recognise where there is a significant issue with equipment and the need to report this to an external Supplier, Lead & Deputy Lead Orthoptist and to document this. Also, to liaise with the external contractor in repair and service of ophthalmic visual field equipment.

To escalate any staffing concerns, departmental or inter-departmental issues to the senior orthoptic team to allow for a quick resolution.

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

Managing and prioritising the competing demands of patient care and service needs on time /workload.

Frequently dealing with anxious patients in a sensitive and reassuring manner to allow them to perform to their maximum capability. Recognition that poor test results may have life altering consequences e.g. loss of driving licence, independence and livelihood.

High volume of patients with open access service where workload can be unpredictable and there is a frequent requirement for concentration (particularly on Consultant & Optometry led glaucoma clinics).

Determining when to escalate results to clinical staff where there is concern over deterioration in the visual field particularly for field only/virtual patients.

Direct line management responsibility for a team of Healthcare Support workers.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS.**

The post holder will communicate on a regular basis with the patient, their relative/carer and the multidisciplinary team involved with the provision of care.

Co-operate with and maintain good relationships with a range of other healthcare professionals as part of the multidisciplinary team to ensure seamless information sharing to maximise patient care.

### **Patients**

Communicating testing information verbally, requiring empathy and reassurance to overcome any barriers to understanding in order for an accurate visual field assessment to be conducted.

May receive potentially sensitive information from patients, some with special needs, accommodating patient views and preferences with regard to cultural differences, language barriers and hearing impairment.

### **Internal**

Senior Orthoptic Team- Staff & service related issues.

Medical, Nursing & Medical Photography staff – work planning, reporting of clinical issues & changes and logistical discussion regarding waiting time and clinic flow and staff training.

Colleague Field Technicians- Work planning & reporting of clinical issues and changes.

Students - Sharing & demonstration of knowledge.

Admin & Clerical Team-Re issues with case notes/patient appointments.

Estates Department - Reporting and documentation of equipment faults.

### **External**

Fields Equipment Suppliers – Reporting and documentation of equipment faults.

Interpreter Services-Face to face or via telephone service.

Where relevant, participate in relevant professional body orthoptic or ophthalmology meetings / conferences with peers across other health boards.

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

### **Physical Skills/Demands:**

Manoeuvring of patients with visual and physical impairment e.g. wheelchair users.

Ophthalmic skills in areas of identified practice e.g. correct patient and post holder positioning and maintenance of this throughout testing for maximum accuracy.

Precise positioning of ophthalmic machinery.

Regular requirement to adopt awkward positions for a sustained period whilst working in dim lighting conditions when operating ophthalmic visual field equipment. For example, the post holder may be required to aid patients with maintaining steady head and chin position on testing equipment which involves bending forward, standing behind patients or standing for test duration of up to 20 minutes per eye.

Manual dexterity for applying correct position of eye occlusion to avoid any hearing aid impairment, eyelid droop or damaged skin and for maintaining correct positioning of equipment

Standard keyboard skills with prolonged exposure to VDU's for 75% of working day.

### **Mental Demands:**

Intense concentration in obtaining high quality visual field measurements in a darkened environment and ensuring correct data entry on a patient by patient basis.

Continual monitoring of patients whilst undertaking field tests and implementing immediate corrective action as required.

Frequent encouragement & reassurance to obtain best test performance in both adult & paediatric patients.

Concentration required for the collation of daily & monthly service statistics.

Frequent interruptions by patients, relatives and the multidisciplinary team.

Balancing and prioritising changing demands.

### **Emotional Demands:**

Communicating effectively with distressed/anxious/worried patients/relatives.

Dealing with patients/relatives/carers with barriers to understanding/challenging behaviours that includes verbal aggression.

Supporting existing & new staff members and learners.

### **Environmental:**

Majority of fields shift working in dimly lit conditions.

Exposure to bodily fluids, e.g. tears, blood and cough & nasal droplets etc on a daily basis.

Occasional exposure to aggression e.g. verbal/physical.

Working at VDU to input patient information.

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

Educated to SCQF level 7 e.g. SVQ Level 3 training in healthcare or equivalent.

**Plus:**

Previous experience working within Ophthalmology demonstrating a portfolio of specialised ophthalmology competencies (includes specific anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology knowledge) including static and kinetic (neurological) visual field testing, visual acuity testing in adults and paediatrics, icare applanation tonometry and manual and automated focimetry undertaken by self-assessment and summative assessment signed by a designated assessor/mentor.

**Plus:**

Completion of Professional Development Leadership in house training- including Recruitment, TURAS appraisal, Health and Safety and relevant staff management courses with 6 months of commencing post.

Evidence of team working skills with the ability to work using own initiative.

Problem solving, time management & organisational skills.

Evidence of excellent communication and effective interpersonal skills.

Awareness of equality and diversity needs of patients and staff.

IT literacy skills.

Experience of audit.

### 14. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

A separate job description will need to be signed off by each jobholder to whom the job description applies.

Job Holder's Signature:

Head of Department Signature:

Date:

Date: