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| JOB DESCRIPTIONJob Title: Orthoptist**Department(s): Orthoptics**CAJE ID: AHP.0527 **No of Job Holders: 1** |

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| 1. **JOB PURPOSE**
* To provide orthoptic services as an autonomous practitioner.
* To work as an active member of a multi- disciplinary team.
* To undertake primary vision screening as part of the See 4 Schools Pre-school Orthoptic led Vision Screening Programme
* To be autonomously responsible for the diagnosis, management and treatment of patients presenting to the Orthoptic department and formulate relevant discharge plans and make appropriate onward referral
* To take direct referrals from medical professionals e.g. Ophthalmology, Paediatrics, A&E, Maxillo-facial, Endocrine, Neurology, Geriatrics and Community Health, and to make the appropriate onward referral.
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| ORGANISATIONAL POSITION  |

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| 1. **SCOPE AND RANGE**
* To take autonomous responsibility for the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of all patients directly referred from GPs, Ophthalmology, Community Health, Paediatrics, A&E, Maxillo-facial, Endocrine, Neurology, Geriatrics and Stroke unit.
* To formulate relevant discharge plans and onward referral, where appropriate. This includes evaluating the visual acuity and visual behaviour of infants with congenital or developmental abnormalities and adults with significant learning difficulties as well as acute ocular motility defects in both adults and children.
* To be responsible for the detection of reduced visual acuity and ocular motility disorders in pre-school children and to refer on to optometric or ophthalmology service as necessary.
* To undertake single-handed clinics at base hospital, satellite clinic and any other community clinic deemed necessary to the service, having sole responsibility for assessment, management, onward referral and discharge.
* To be responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring individual orthoptic treatment plans/care pathways for patients of all ages using advanced clinical reasoning and evidence based practice.
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| 1. **MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

**CLINICAL*** To undertake primary vision screening as part of the Pre-school Orthoptic led Vision Screening Programme
* To take responsibility for patients undergoing Orthoptic treatment as an outpatient or an in-patient and provide specialised advice to the Ophthalmologist and other members of the Ophthalmic team. The post holder may be the first point of contact for patients with recently required signs and symptoms of Ophthalmic, Neurological or Systemic disease.
* To take autonomous responsibility for the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of all patients directly referred to the service.
* To manage, implement care plans, plan onward referral to relevant specialties and discharge from the service.
* To formulate individualised management and treatment plans for patients of all ages, using advanced clinical reasoning, evidence based practice and a wide range of treatment skills, communicating effectively with patients, parents, and carers and gaining informed consent to carry out the appropriate treatment plans.
* To instruct patients and carers on a continuous course of treatment.
* To assess patient results and act when they show new or change in existing clinical signs
* To examine urgent patients when required, being able to see these patients during or at the end of an on-going clinic, balancing extra patients with the appointed patients, and relaying any subsequent delay to the waiting patients. To assess, diagnose and manage these patients and provide advice to the receiving medic.
* The Orthoptist is responsible for the non-surgical management of all his/her patients.
* To assess, diagnose and treat patients with special needs.
* As an autonomous practitioner the post-holder will be responsible for the decision to instil drops for diagnostic and refraction purposes, the appropriate strength required and to advise patients of the side effects in accordance with the appropriate PGD
* To be responsible, as an autonomous practitioner for the evaluation of visual acuity and visual behaviour in. infants with strabismus , amblyopia, acute ocular motility defects, congenital or developmental abnormalities, adult illiterates, children and adults with significant learning difficulties.
* To take the lead identifying suitable patients for surgery and referring to the ophthalmologist appropriately. This requires an up to date knowledge of evidence based practice.
* To under take pre operative and post operative measurements of motility defects and to discuss surgical options with the surgeon. Significant manual dexterity and speed will be required to ensure accurate results especially in children. Surgery will be based on Orthoptic measurements.
* To identify post operative risks e.g. under or over correction or diplopia and discuss with the patient (parent/carer) and surgeon.
* To assess patients’ post-operative outcome and modify treatment accordingly.
* To assess, diagnose and treat new and review patients referred with reading difficulties in relation to Meares Irlen Syndrome (MIS). To assess these patients using coloured overlays and to progress management in appropriate cases.
* To liaise with the visual impairment services team and health professionals regarding the educational and social needs of patients.
* To undertake secondary pre-school vision screening on patients referred to hospital eye service and primary visual screening of pre-school children in nursery classes.
* To participate in clinical teaching of orthoptics to medical students, junior staff and other visiting staff when required.
* To liaise with Social Services in cases of suspected child abuse.

**ADMINSTRATIVE*** To deal with enquiries that arise during the working day and take appropriate action.
* To decide priorities for own work area, balancing other patient and professional demands, and ensure these adhere both to local and professional requirements
* Write to referring agent the outcome of patients’ initial assessment and following discharge. Letters to be typed using appropriate computer software.
* To organise review Orthoptic appointments for patients with appropriate Ophthalmology and / Orthoptic clinics using PMS.
* To be aware and comply with organisational and departmental policies and procedures.
* To assist and provide internal cover for colleagues during periods of annual leave, sickness and vacancies

**PROFESSIONAL*** To be professionally and legally accountable and responsible for all aspects of own work, including the management of all patients.
* To practise autonomously taking cognisance of the trust and Orthoptic professional standards, policies and procedures.
* To be aware of the continued need to measure and evaluate current practice through the use and application of evidence-based practice, professional standards, projects, audits, research and outcome measures. To suggest recommendations to changes in clinical practice where applicable.
* To participate in the k planning and development of the orthoptic service including departmental standard setting and attendance at staff meetings. To adhere to Hospital policies and procedures, e.g. Smoking, Fire, Moving and Handling, Notification of Absence, etc.
* It is mandatory to participate in the Trust’s manual handling and basic CPR training programmes.
* To maintain professional registration with Health Professions Council (HPC)
* To have documentary evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
* To participate in annual Personal Development Planning (PDP’s)
* To maintain up to date knowledge and professional development by attending e.g. BIOS meetings, AGM, in-service training days and Special Interest Group meetings.
* To participate in department, trust and profession wide audit and research projects and quality management monitoring.
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| 1. **EQUIPMENT & MACHINERY**
* To use automated and non-automated specialised Orthoptic and Ophthalmic equipment.
* The postholder is responsible for the safe and correct use of clinical equipment and for cleaning and storing equipment correctly and reporting of faults
* To be aware of Health and Safety Policies and to ensure prompt reporting of any faults, hazards or accidents to patients, carers and staff.
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| 1. **SYSTEMS**

**IT*** To use Microsoft Word, Outlook, Excel and Power Point
* To input data for clinical audit.
* To access e-mail.
* PMS
* Inter/intra net/e-Library

**Clinical Systems*** To be aware of compliance with the data protection act, Caldicott Report, Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, local policies regarding confidentiality and access to medical records, and to be aware of the Child Protection Act and local reporting procedures
* To be responsible for inputting information accurately into patients’ clinical written records in compliance with departmental standards and BIOS guidelines
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| 1. **DECISIONS & JUDGEMENTS**
* To determine which children assessed within the orthoptic vision screening programme need onward referral to an optometrist and/or for further assessment in the orthoptic department. The orthoptist must also decide on the urgency of the referral.
* To assess, manage and discharge patients, who are directly referred to the Orthoptic department, without a medical opinion.
* To use specialist knowledge and judgement to assess, diagnose, formulate individual management and treatment plans using clinical reasoning and a wide range of treatment skills.
* To provide advice to all types of patients and carers for the best clinical outcome.
* To determine the diagnosis, prognosis and management in a wide range of patients where clinical signs and symptoms do not fall into particular categories and where aetiology and is unclear or information limited
* To give advice to the Ophthalmologist concerning the surgical management of ocular motility defects based on pre- operative measurements undertaken by the post holder. The Orthoptist will take the lead in the timing of surgery and will identify surgical risks (pre, intra and post) and discuss these with the patients, carers and surgeon
* To give specialist advice to the optometrist regarding the treatment required for Orthoptic patients and to be responsible for the optical modification of spectacle corrections using prisms and lenses during the management of each individual case.
* To be responsible for the decision to instil eye drops for diagnostic and refraction purposes and to decide on the appropriate strength required, advising patients/carers of purpose, action and side-effects in accordance with the PGD
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| 1. **COMMUNICATIONS & RELATIONSHIPS**

**Patients:*** To communicate effectively with all patients and parents to ensure an understanding of the condition. To convey information to those who may have a significant communication problem, which may include behavioural problems, learning disabilities, loss of sight, loss of hearing, dysphasia due to stroke etc.
* To form relationships with patients so that trust may be gained and a diagnosis can be established so that a therapy programme can be commenced
* To provide the necessary support, empathy and motivation for each individual patient/family and to sustain a relationship for possibly many years.
* To communicate the initial potential diagnosis which may be of a distressing nature.
* To tactfully explain the details of the medical condition which may be highly complex. This requires a holistic and tactful approach where patients or parents have no knowledge of the ocular defects associated with particular medical conditions and / or who have difficulty accepting the diagnosis
* The post holder will have the skills to deal with complaints from patients and carers and the ability to handle confrontational situations with sensitivity

**Other professional groups:*** To liaise closely with and provide specialised advice to ophthalmologists, other members of the ophthalmic team, in-house and community optometrists and other professionals in order to provide the best possible care
* To provide informative reports and discharge letters for e.g. GPs, public health nurses, optometrists, clinical medical officers, educational psychologists and other medical professionals
* To provide written reports to the Pre-Scat team, community paediatricians, visual impairment teachers and school teachers regarding children with visual difficulties
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| 1. **DEMANDS OF THE JOB (physical, mental, emotional)**

**Physical*** The post demands long periods of physical effort and difficult postures to assess a patient’s condition. Paediatric patients, patients with special needs and those with learning difficulties require the clinician to adopt prolonged, awkward postures for accurate assessments. The Orthoptist may have to adopt awkward bending positions in order to achieve the assessment or measurement of a young child, or a patient with special needs or behavioural problems. These awkward postures may require to be adopted during 80% of the post holder’s clinical time.
* A high degree of manual dexterity skills are required to ensure accurate results e.g. in infants and children requiring surgery where the amount of surgery is based on orthoptic measurements. This is also relevant to highly complex adult motility defects where many accurate measurements are required
* Manual handling is regularly required e.g. movement of patients (transferring from wheelchairs to examination chairs), movement of equipment, fields machines and wheelchairs.
* The post holder has frequent exposure to unpleasant working conditions e.g. Childhood illnesses, fleas, lice, MRSA, body fluids etc

**Emotional** * The post holder frequently has to give distressing news to patient/parent e.g. informing parents that their child has impaired vision, advising patients with double vision or a visual field defect that they do not meet DVLA standards and therefore cannot drive.

**Mental*** All shifts require continual concentration and significant mental effort to ensure correct investigation, diagnosis and management. This is also required when dealing with emotional and distressed patients / parents / carers.
* To carry out clinical work, using a variety of specialised equipment, which requires a high degree of concentration to allow accurate and precise assessment and measurement.
* It will be necessary to maintain concentration despite regular interruptions during clinical assessment e.g. clinical enquiries from patients / colleagues, telephone calls, disruptive behaviour from patients / relatives or be required to assist / advise a colleague in an emergency situation.
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| 1. **MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB**

Where clinical signs and symptoms do not always fall into particular categories, & / or where information is limited / unavailable the Orthoptist will be expected to determine the diagnosis, prognosis, management.To be able to assess a wide spectrum of patients within the one clinic e.g. adult patients with neurological, endocrine problems, paediatric patients or patients with special needs.Concentration and communication skills are required when assessing very young children and patients with special needs including learning, physical and communication disabilities and severe behavioural problems.To be able to support and empathise with all types of patients, this will frequently involve giving difficult and unwelcome information concerning the condition and prognosis. They may be required to advise and counsel patients with degenerative conditions whose diagnosis and prognosis is worsening e.g. dysthyroid eye disease, myasthenia gravis, chronic progressive external ophthalmoplegiaProlonged mental concentration is required to assess, diagnose and manage difficult and complex cases.Working in non clinical environments e.g. nurseries and schools is often difficult due to limited space, frequent disruptions and noise levels. |

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| 1. **KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND/OR EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB**
* Registered Orthoptist with valid HCPC Registration
* The post holder will be required to demonstrate excellent team working skills with the ability to work using own initiative
* Effective listening, communication and interpersonal skills
* Ability to work with people and as part of a multidisciplinary team
* Excellent time management skills
* Working knowledge of basic information technology
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| **Job Description Agreement****Job Holder’s Signature** **Print Name** **Date****Head of Department Signature** **Print Name** **Date** |