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| 1. **Job Identification** |
| Job Title: Assistant Technical Officer (Audiology)  Responsible to: Chief Audiologist  Department: Audiology Department  Directorate: Surgical  Operating Division: General Hospitals Division  Job Reference:  No of Job Holders:  Last Update: August 2020 |
| **2. Job Purpose** |
| To support the provision of audiology services and hearing care to the population of Ayrshire and Arran as member of the technical and scientific team delivering audiological care. |
| **3. Dimensions** |
| The postholder works within the Audiology Team consisting of 8 Administration and Clerical Officers, 6 Assistant Technical Officers and 17 Audiologists reporting via the Chief Audiologist to the Head of Service.  The Service has an annual supplies budget of £1m which the postholder, through their day to day business and clinical activities, will utilise directly and indirectly.  The post holder works in a supporting technical capacity as part of a team of 29 staff associated with the delivery of the Audiology Service.  The postholder has shared responsibility for the efficient use of resources and materials needed to perform their duties along with the responsibility for ensuring appropriate care of the patients they work with at all times within the scope of their role.  The postholder reports directly to the Chief Audiologist of the site that they are attached to.  Technically, the postholder will:   * Work predominantly with older adults. * Provide direct patient care to established adult hearing aid users. * Have a key role in the aftercare afforded to adult hearing aid users via the Services hearing aid maintenance and aftercare services.   Professionally, the postholder will:   * Maintain and develop themselves as an assistant technical officer, ensuring they remain up-to-date with developments in their area of work. * Advise on communication methods suitable for use to patients, relatives and professionals alike. |
| **4. Organisational Position** |
| **Chief Audiologist**  (Band 7 / 8)  **This post**  (Assistant Technical Officer) |
| **5. Role of Department** |
| The Audiology Service, part of the General Hospitals Division within the Acute Directorate of NHS Ayrshire & Arran, provides an area wide service.  The Service is delivered predominantly from the two General Hospital sites at Ayr and Crosshouse as well as 5 satellite locations (Girvan, Arran, Cumnock, Millport and Crosshouse Village), health centres, nursing and care homes, schools and on a domiciliary basis as required.  Staffed by 17 audiologists, 6 assistant technical officers and 8 administration and clerical staff, the role of the Service is to provide comprehensive diagnostic and rehabilitative audiological care to the people of Ayrshire & Arran, ensuring effective and efficient use of resources in the delivery of services to a wide range of service users on a 5-day a week basis.  This includes:   * The provision of specialist investigative and diagnostic services to 6 ENT consultants and their middle and junior grade medical colleagues to assist in the diagnosis of hearing and vestibular disorders associated with ENT, neurological and audiological complaints with testing and assessment taking place on an out-patient and ENT theatre session basis. * Provision of hearing screening (newborns) and a diagnostic service for infants suspected of deafness via NHS Ayrshire & Arran’s Newborn Hearing Screening Programme. * Delivery of a paediatric assessment and rehabilitative audiology service for infants and children with deafness. * Delivery of an adult assessment and rehabilitative audiology service for those with deafness. * Daily support to ENT out-patient clinics. * Works in partnership with the ENT Service in the provision and delivery of a middle ear implant service. * Working in partnership with the Education Department to provide a continuous programme of assessment and rehabilitation and support to deaf children in order to support their personal development and education. * Delivery of a comprehensive hearing aid service that provides assessment, selection, prescription based fitting and rehabilitation to the residents of Ayrshire and Arran from newborns to the elderly that includes individual management plans and lifelong support. * Operation of a direct General Practitioner referral system for hearing assessment that often leads to the provision of hearing aids. * Provision of an open access, walk in service, 5-days a week for hearing aid repair and reprovisioning of consumables such as hearing aid batteries. * Delivery of clinical training support to trainees from audiology training programmes as well as nursing and medical programmes. * Delivery of broad education and training to professions, laypeople, patients and their families and 3rd sector representatives in the support of people with deafness. * Liaising with other professionals from health, education and social work across the 3 local authorities in addition to the private sector and 3rd sector to maximise the provision of care for the deaf. * Delivers an assessment and rehabilitation service to tinnitus sufferers. |
| **6. Key Result Areas** |
| **Technical (95% of activity of post)**   * Assists in the delivery of the adult hearing aid service with a focus on the maintenance of existing hearing aid users via the Services hearing aid repair service. * Undertakes in conjunction with Administration & Clerical colleagues, the shipping and delivery of earmoulds to and from Suppliers. * Co-ordinates the delivery of materials between the two main Hospital sites to ensure patient materials, consumables and hearing aids are available when required. * Is, along with other ATO colleagues the first point of contact for people using the hearing aid repair service. * Assists in the delivery of postal services for consumables and repairs. * Undertakes the refitting of replacement hearing aids and replacement earmoulds with adult patients.   **Administrative / Managerial (5% of activity of post)**   * Participates in the maintenance of the Services audiological equipment. * Participates in the collection, collation and analysis of Service statistics in order to monitor and improve the delivery of the Service. * Comply, contribute and be involved in the application and revision of departmental, organisational and professional guidelines, policies and procedures to include but not be limited to safety health and environment, clinical governance etc. * Participate in the daily processing of audiological supplies and stock stocks. |
| **7a. Equipment and Machinery** |
| Use of audiological equipment in the care of patients that includes the following:   * Video otoscope- fibre optic camera system used to examine and electronically record the appearance of the external ear and tympanic membrane   The post holder also uses additional equipment in the maintenance and refitting of hearing aid systems that includes the following:   * Computer systems- used in the fitting and measurement of hearing aid systems. * 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 used in the custom fitting of hearing aids. * Otoscope- used in the examination of the external ear. * Lightprobe- used in the ear impression taking process. * Syringe- used in the impression taking process to dispense impression material. * Scissors- used in a variety of situations. * Earmould threader- tool used to replace tubing in the earmould of a hearing aid system. |
| **7b. Systems** |
| The post holder is required 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 is also required as part of the gathering of Service activity data. This includes:   * Use of NHS Ayrshire & Arran’s patient management system in addition to the Service’s own patient management system, Practice Navigator, for general scheduling and managing of electronic (Audiology) patient records. * Practice Navigator used to allow the programming and performance measurement of hearing aid systems. * Intranet, Internet and Microsoft Office applications used for communication both within and external to the Organisation. * Hospital casenotes, used for paper based collection of patient information. * Paper and computer based recording of daily activity information for statistical analysis of service activity. * Paper and electronic systems for regular stock monitoring. * Stock control and ordering of consumables. |
| **8. Assignment and Review of Work** |
| New clinical activity is predominantly generated via GP Direct Referral and ENT OPD clinics. Work may also be generated through extra contractual referrals, referrals and requests from other agencies such as social work and the voluntary sector.  The majority of activity is generated through the repeat attendance of existing service users via Audiology and ENT and “self-referral” and demand led through the Service’s open access routes. Patients seen via these routes invariably remain services users for life but can on occasion be referred to other Departments or Agencies for further assessment, treatment and assistance. The post holder   * Activity is undertaken based on established work practices and professional standards (protocols) with the postholder being required to respond to the needs of patients on a case by case basis modifying as and when appropriate, their approach to the activity. * Supervision is via clinical colleagues with periodic evaluation of historical work undertaken by Chief Audiologist, Deputy Head of Service and Head of Service. * Activity is recorded automatically as part of the patient’s clinical record but this and all other non-clinical activity is measured via the activity plans that constitute the Service’s diary. * The post holder, operates within strict guidelines and the scope of the post. * Supervision is available and in 80% of the time on site. * Work is assigned via the General Office based on the grade and competency of the postholder. The abilities of the postholder must meet a minimum standard as detailed by this job description and the associated person specification. * The postholder will participate in the Organisations personal planning and review processes as well as continuous professional development processes as part of their professional development and to ensure maintenance of knowledge and skills as well as acceptable standards. * Review of work is predominantly via peer review where patient journeys may expose individual patients to several different members of staff hence the automatic checking of previous activity. * Ongoing training and access to training is provided with the opportunity for trainees and trainers to feedback their experiences verbally or in writing to peers and Head of Service. |
| **9. Decisions and Judgements** |
| The clinical workload of the postholder is assigned via the Service’s diary. The work is pre-booked usually 6 weeks in advance but can be altered at short notice. On occasion the postholder may be required to make alterations that can include re-organising his work, the location of the work and the timing of the work. The allocation of activity is “grade based” and also takes into consideration specialist skills that are required/available. This information is recorded as part of the individual’s personnel record and is available to the General Office to ensure the relatively automated process of allocating workload is possible and does not impede the throughput of activity.   * The postholder is at all times responsible for the wellbeing of patients in their care. * The postholder will record all information related to the care they provide within the Audiology PMS. * Where necessary, the postholder will have access and will refer complex issues to a senior Audiology colleague who is onsite. * 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 however supervision/referral to a senior colleague will be practical in at least 80% of occasions due to the work being carried out in an environment where senior staff also work. * The postholder has the ability and responsibility to make and take decisions on a case by case basis and is accountable professionally for their actions. |
| **10. Most Challenging/Difficult Parts of the Job** |
| * Balancing the standards of care against the constraints of time. * Dealing with parents/carers/family members of patients and their expectations. * Managing resources such as stock, materials and time well. * Dealing with patients with a physical and/or mental impairment or limited understanding / cooperation due to this and / or age. * Working with colleagues. * Team working to include the multidisciplinary team and contributing to the team work while acknowledging differences of approach or opinion. |
| **11. Communications and Relationships** |
| **Internal**   * Audiology staff – daily contact with Audiologists, Assistants and Administration and Clerical colleagues to discuss clinical and administrative issues related to past, present and future work or activity related to work. Challenges are related to the open nature of the communication and the often different views from colleagues. Communication will also be required where supervision and training is being provided. * Nursing Staff – weekly or more frequent contact with Nursing colleagues where shared care of a patient is required.   **External**   * Patients - providing information and explanation to patients verbally, in written form as part of the process of care. This may include explaining clinical information, providing instruction on use of hearing aid, offering information on how to cope with a hearing loss or related issue, listening to patients concerns and assisting to alleviate them, dealing with complaints, developing a good long term relationship to assist with the ongoing care of individuals. * Patient’s carers/family – as per the patient but often to help reinforce or further explain information previously supplied to patients. * Social Work, Education, Voluntary Organisations – to provide continuous care and support to patients utilising the services of these organisations as seen fit by audiologist. May also be required to feedback information to organisation following their referral to the Service. |
| **12. Physical, Mental, Emotional and Environmental Demands of the Job** |
| **Emotional demands:**  Working with anxious, vulnerable and emotional patients and their families/carers.  Dealing with angry / unhappy patients / families  **Mental demands:**  Dealing with continuously varying patient requests during a clinic for information, explanations and help.  Working to a deadline, delivering clinical activity and care within a set period of time.  Remaining sensitive to the needs and worries of individual patients.  **Physical skills / demands:**  Moving of equipment between locations  Keyboard skills  Sitting for periods at a desk  Regularly moving around department between rooms and furniture  Assisting in the movement of patients from time to time.  Car driving  **Environmental:**  Potential exposure to aggressive patients  Working in artificially lit/heated environment  Use of laboratory equipment for the modification of earmoulds and potential exposure to dust.  Potential for exposure to body fluids to include earwax, ear discharge blood and associated risks from these.  Possible exposure to cleaning fluids  Working in uncomfortable temperatures |
| **13. Knowledge, Training and Experience Required to do the Job** |
| **Essential:**   * 3 Highers (or equivalent) at BBC or 4 Highers at BCCC of which English, Maths and Physics must be included. * A positive attitude and an ability to work in a team as well as being able to make decisions when working single handed. * The ability to problem solve and use initiative. * Ability to work with hearing impaired individuals and their family/carers. * Safe working behaviour and ability to adhere to professional and health and safety guidance / requirements. * Good verbal and written communication skills. * Car owner driver.   **Desirable:**   * Higher physics, physiology, or equivalent. * Formal IT qualification. |