NHS TAYSIDE – AGENDA FOR CHANGE

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION
 | Job Title | Associate Audiologist |
| Department(s)/Location | Audiology Department, NHS Tayside |
| Number of job holders | 4 |
| JOB PURPOSEThe Associate Audiologist will work with indirect supervision as a member of the Audiology team. The post will involve direct patient care using a high level of clinical skill in areas of routine work including (but not exclusively)* Diagnostic assessments of hearing
* Care for adult hearing aid users and their carers/relatives
* Effective communication and interpersonal skills with other professionals and service users, including patients, carers and relatives
* Maintaining professional standards.
* Maintaining patient and departmental records both written and electronic using computer databases and word processing.
* Providing clinical assessments and hearing aid programming and provision using complex computer software and specific specialised hardware.
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| ORGANISATIONAL POSITIONAudiology Services Manager **Hearing Therapy Manager** **Locality Manager PRI** **Audiology Specialist Practitioners**  **Audiology Specialist Practitioner** Audiology PractitionersAssociate Audiologist (This Post) **Audiology Assistant**  **Practitioners**   **A & C staff**  |
| SCOPE AND RANGE* Provide a service to adults and children in Tayside and North East Fife. (Population of Tayside approximately 550,000).
* Works as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
* Works calmly and efficiently under pressure.
* Works to National and local Guidelines to agreed standards for Hearing Testing and Issuing of Hearing Aids
* Use patient case history to help formulate an individualised care plan.
* Collate data and record effectively in patient’s clinical records.
* Deal with patients in a confident manner, respecting the importance of confidentiality.
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| MAIN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES**OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES:**The Associate Audiologist is expected to be able to undertake the tasks of the Assistant Audiology Practitioners plus tasks that are specific to the Associate Audiologist role and should not be exceeded:**To perform assessments of hearing on adults over 18 years of age.*** Hearing Aid reassessments on patients aged 18 and over.
* Using air conduction headphones and bone conduction vibrator to obtain accurate hearing threshold levels using masking 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. Requiring frequent use of keyboard whilst sitting in a restricted position.
* Perform middle ear analysis using tympanometry
* 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 where required.
* Concerns to be highlighted to Audiology practitioner supporting clinical activity.

 **Selection, Verification and Programming (subjective and objective) of hearing aids to Patients be aged 18 and over with no Complex Needs:*** 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’ techniques involving insertion of probe tube microphone into the ear canal. Making adjustments to prescription of hearing aid as appropriate. Involves fine manual dexterity and care, requiring prolonged concentration.

 **Rehabilitation and counselling**:* Aural Rehabilitation - Basic listening and questioning skills & Information giving.
* 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.
* Developing individual management plans (IMP), to include a **limited** range of investigations, procedures or processes in consultation with patients and relevant others based on individual patient needs and wishes and accepted good practice.
* 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 ear moulds for patients using appropriate equipment (with training) including dental drill, buffer / grinder and safety equipment, to ensure comfortable and acoustically viable fit.*** For adults with all types of hearing aid, requiring skill, dexterity and judgement when working to fine tolerances.

 **To take accurate and safe impressions of the ear:*** On adults.
* 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 ear mould manufacturer.
* Determine the type, material and any modifications required for ear moulds, swim moulds and other types of earpiece required (e.g. ear defenders).

**Hearing Aid Reviews*** Patients must be aged 18 and over and have no complex needs. Recognised outcome measures must be used as appropriate.

**Repair Clinics**Patients aged 7 and over can be seen by an Associate Audiologist within the repair clinic setting. All tasks must be related to the patient’s current hearing aid and hearing status.* Like-for-like replacement
* Hearing aid test box use
* Impression taking (see below)
* Tubing
* Hearing aid adjustment.

Referral to a Specialist Audiology Practitioner is required for Paediatric Audiology.* Appropriate referral to other professionals (ENT, GP, Specialist Audiology Practitioner) for management where required in the following circumstances: sudden hearing loss; onset of tinnitus/dizziness; infection; sudden change in hearing status.

**Administrative duties will include:*** Maintenance of accurate and efficient patient records both paper and computer databases.
* Records clinical test results and observations onto electronic patient database and hospital patient management system.
* To assist in maintaining accurate and efficient records of all technical services, including computer databases and stock control functions.

**Induction Standards & Code of Conduct**Your performance must comply with the national “Mandatory Induction Standards for Healthcare Support Workers 2009” and with the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers. |
| COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS Communicating and receiving non-complex and factual information to patients, carers, colleagues and other professionals. Communicating Audiological information to other relevant professionals including Audiology Specialised Practitioner, Ear Nose and Throat Doctors, Nursing staff, and support staff. Uses tact, sensitivity, persuasion and reassurance where barriers to communication may be hearing loss, visual impairment, dementia, stroke/aphasia, and English as a second language. Ability to deal with verbally aggressive or hostile clients, 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.Multi-Agency Working - Patients must be aged 18 and over and referral should be made in line with local protocols and the Individual Management Plan |
| KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOBQualificationsDiploma in Higher Education in Hearing Aid Technology (Dip HAA) or equivalent to HNDVoluntary Registration with Council for Clinical Physiology (RCCP)KnowledgeProfessional knowledge acquired in postIncrease knowledge and skills by attending in house training, external further training courses both theoretical and practical based.**Skills**Ability to communicate effectively with all client groups.Ability to perform a limited range of audiological tests.Basic computer skillsAbility to work off own initiative within the role.Apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations requiring fine manual dexterity |

ESSENTIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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| 1. SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

EquipmentUse of clinical equipment in the assessment and diagnosis 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 and polishing equipment – used in repair and modification of ear inserts which themselves are used in the custom fitting of hearing aids.SystemsThe 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 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.

**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 limited 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.Physical demands: Keyboard skills Regularly moving around department between rooms and furniture Kneeling and bending when working with clients Environmental: Potential exposure to aggressive patients Working in artificially lit/heated environmentPotential for exposure to earwax, ear discharge, ear canal debris and blood.Possible exposure to cleaning fluids |
| DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTSThe post holder is, under supervision, 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, whilst realising own limitations and seeking help and advice where required to ensure safe and effective patient care.The post holder 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. |
| MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOBBalancing the standards of care against the constraints of time.Dealing with patients with hearing difficulties which require the full use of modern hearing aid technology (advanced signal processing) and counselling skills to maximise the benefit for the patient.Dealing with family members of patients and their expectations Managing time well.Dealing with patients with a physical and/or mental impairment.Working with other agencies that have a different focus or agenda.Delivery of a modernising service. |