

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**CONSULTANT PSYCHOLOGIST HEAD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SPECIALTY**

**BAND 8D**

**1. JOB IDENTIFICATION**

Job Title: **Consultant Psychologist (Head of Psychological Specialty)**

Responsible to: Professional Lead/Head of Psychological Services

Department(s): Psychological Services

Directorate: Mental Health Service

Operating Division: North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership

Job Reference:

No of Job Holders: 4

Last Update (insert date): September 2022

## 2. JOB PURPOSE

The Head of Psychological Specialty will be required to support and direct a group of Consultant Clinical Psychologists and others working to them across a significant service area. The post holder will fulfil the duties of a Consultant Clinical Psychologists and will in addition carry responsibility for the organisation, professional leadership and professional development of a defined staff specialty group.

The Head of Psychological Specialty is required to ensure the systematic provision of a high quality clinical psychology service within a defined highly specialised service or clinical team across a defined service area.

The post holder will work autonomously within professional guidelines and exercise responsibility for the systematic governance of psychological practice across the service and to ensure that systems are in place and working effectively for the clinical delivery and professional supervision and support of all other staff within the service for which the post holder has designated responsibility, including clear systems for effective recruitment, professional appraisal, and the identification of CPD needs across the service.

The Head of Psychological Specialty will act as a highly specialist resource to the wider professional community and, as a major requirement of the job, to carry out and co-ordinate research activities, audit, policy and service development.

The Head of Psychological Specialty will have responsibility for effective delivery of Clinical Psychology Services within the service area and will have overall responsibility for:

- The delivery of an effective and a efficient clinical service for the service area:
- Policy and Service Development of Psychology Services and;
- Initiating and developing Research and Development programmes within the service area as an integral part of their responsibilities

To fulfil this job purpose by utilising advances theoretical and practical knowledge acquired through Doctoral degree and supplemented by further specialist training over a period of approximately six years and which will be at least equivalent and is likely to be academically superior to (given that further clinical training requires the doctoral qualification) diploma level.

To take a clinical lead on a specialist area of practice such as advanced diagnosis or intervention. To Propose, develop and implement policy/service changes and to set up/co-ordinate services or systems which impact within and beyond own practice within psychology services.

## 3. DIMENSIONS

To include:

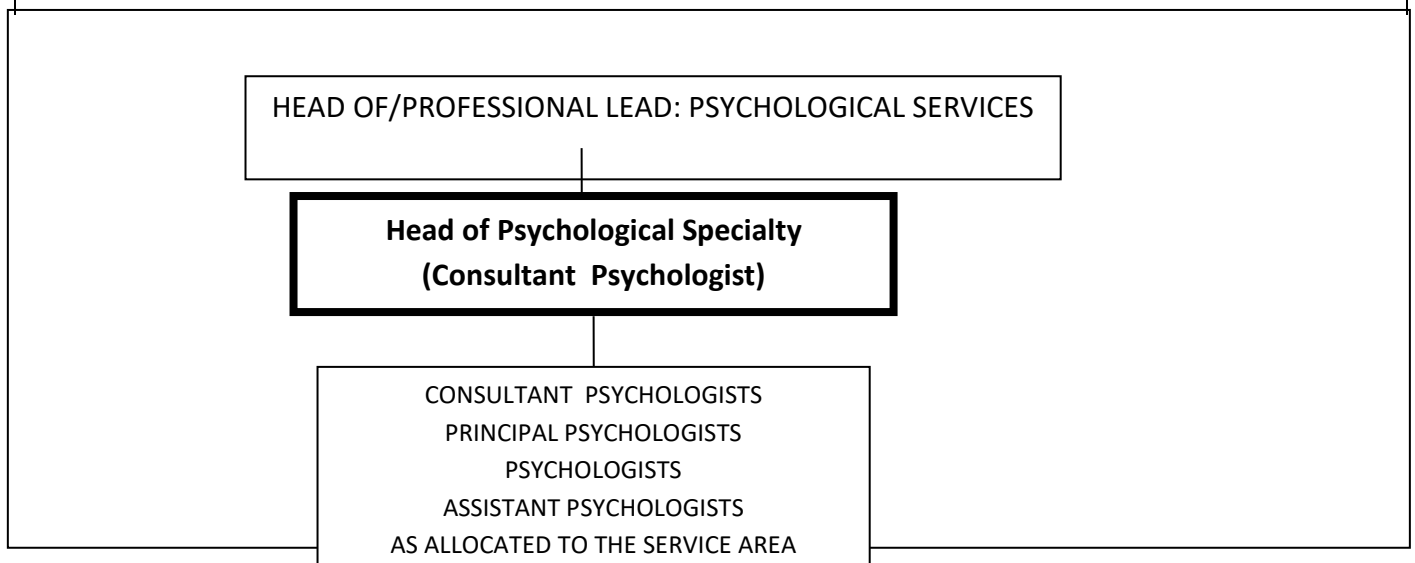
- Number and level of staff supported
- Staff Management/Supervisory responsibilities, including numbers and levels
- Budgetary Responsibilities (supplies ordering, petty cash)

Client group

As Head of Psychological Specialty for the Service area, the post holder is responsible for:

- Operating as a member of the Senior Management Team in leading Lead the overall development of Psychology services for the service, including long term strategic planning, workforce planning and staff development.
- Leadership of all staff within the Professional group for a significant range of services, Directorate or functional area.
- Ensuring the provision of a specialist psychology service for all clients of the service.
- Developing with management appropriate policy, systems and programmes to promote effective delivery and quality of all psychologically-based interventions.
- providing training, or for advising service management on appropriate external training, to all staff within the service involved in the delivery of psychologically-based interventions.
- providing specialist clinical supervision to staff delivering formal psychological therapies, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy.
- managing the psychological resources available to the service in terms of staff, including other Consultants, Principal Psychologists, Psychologists and Assistant Psychologists and in terms of psychology materials employed in the assessment and the treatment of patients.
- leading local management groups and service development for psychological care.
- providing specialist psychological research expertise to the service.

#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



## 5. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT

Psychological Services provide specialist psychological services to the population of Ayrshire and Arran. All activities are performed in accordance with the prevailing evidence base and aim to reduce distress and enhance psychological and physical well-being of the patients, families and carers of Ayrshire and Arran residents.

Services are delivered to the population directly through specialist therapeutic intervention with patients with complex problems. Psychological Services provides expert advice, consultancy, training and supervision in order to develop the psychological skills of other health and non-health professionals. It also aims to enhance the delivery of psychological care across the whole healthcare system through formal contribution at strategic and planning levels.

## 6. KEY RESULT AREAS

### Professional Leadership

1. To provide professional leadership to a group of Consultant Psychologists and others working to them across a significant service area.
2. To ensure that clear systems for effective recruitment, professional appraisal and supervision of Psychology staff within the defined work area.
3. To be accountable to the Professional Lead: Psychological Services for their professional leadership responsibilities.
4. To be accountable for the direct delivery of clinical psychology services across the service area.

### Clinical:

1. To provide highly developed specialist psychological assessments of clients based upon the appropriate use, interpretation and integration of complex data from a variety of sources including psychological and neuropsychological tests, self-report measures, rating scales direct and indirect structured observations and semi-structured interviews with clients, family members and others involved in the client's care.
2. To undertake an agreed level of professional clinical work (total clinical time of 70/80% of working week) providing highly developed specialist psychological assessments of clients based upon the appropriate use, interpretation and integration of complex data from a variety of sources including psychological and neuropsychological tests, self-report measures, rating scales direct and indirect structured observations and semi-structured interviews with clients, family members and others involved in the client's care.
- 3.
4. To formulate plans for the formal psychological treatment and/or management of a client's mental and/or health problems based upon an appropriate conceptual framework of the client's problems, and employing methods based upon evidence of efficacy.,

5. To be responsible for implementing a range of highly specialist psychological interventions for individuals, carers, families and groups, within and across teams employed individually and in synthesis, adjusting and refining psychological formulations drawing upon different explanatory models and maintaining a number of provisional hypotheses.
6. To make highly skilled evaluations and decisions about treatment options taking into account both theoretical and therapeutic models and highly complex factors concerning historical and developmental processes that have shaped the individual, family or group.
7. To exercise full responsibility and autonomy for the treatment of and discharge of clients whose problems are managed as a psychologically based standard care plan, ensuring appropriate assessment, formulation and interventions, communicating with the referral agent and others involved with the care on a regular basis.
8. To provide expertise and specialist psychological advice, guidance and consultation to other professionals contributing directly to the analysis of clients' problems and disorders to ensure accurate formulations, reflecting an in-depth causal understanding, diagnosis and treatment plan.
9. To ensure that all members of the wider clinical team have access to a psychologically based framework for the understanding and care of clients of the service, through the provision of advice and consultation and the dissemination of psychological knowledge, research and theory.
10. To undertake risk assessment and risk management for relevant individual clients and to provide both general and specialist consultation and advice for other professionals on psychological aspects of risk assessment and management.
11. To act as designated care co-ordinator, in appropriate cases, ensuring the provision of a care package appropriate for the client's needs, co-ordinating the work of others involved with care, arranging client's care reviews as required and communicating effectively with the client, his/her family and all others involved in care; and to monitor progress during the course of multi-disciplinary interventions.
12. To communicate in a highly skilled and sensitive manner, information concerning the assessment, formulation which includes making available an explanation of how the problem developed, an indication of what maintains the problem and factors which may guide treatment options for clients under their care and to monitor and evaluate progress during the course of both uni- and multi-disciplinary care.
13. To provide expertise and advice to facilitate the effective and appropriate provision of psychological care by all members of the team.
14. To provide expert consultation and opinion about the psychological care of the client group to staff and agencies outside the Mental Health Service & Partnership.
15. To give expert advice to the Courts on cases where opinions may differ or in unique situations
16. To take part in regular professional supervision and appraisal and maintain an active engagement with current developments in the field of clinical psychology and related disciplines

### **Teaching, training and supervision**

The professional Lead is responsible for ensuring that continuing professional development needs are identified and systematically addressed. In addition there is a specific responsibility to provide

sufficient teaching opportunities and training placements for Trainee Psychologists and others so that individual psychologists are able to discharge their responsibilities for staff under their supervision. Additionally:-

1. To ensure appropriate systems for the clinical and professional supervision of qualified and unqualified psychologists across the service.
2. To provide clinical and professional supervision to qualified and assistant psychologists working in the service.
3. To manage the co-ordination of specialist clinical placements for trainee clinical and/or counselling psychologists within the service, ensuring that they acquire the necessary clinical and research skills to doctoral level where appropriate, and competencies and experience to contribute effectively to good psychological practice, and undertake the assessment and evaluation of those competencies
4. To provide specialist advice, consultation, training and clinical supervision/assessment to other members of the team for their provision of psychologically based interventions to help improve clients' functioning.
5. To provide pre and post-qualification teaching of clinical and/or counselling psychology.
6. To continue to develop expertise in the area of professional pre and post-graduate training and clinical supervision.
7. To ensure that all psychologists within the service/sector team maintain up to date knowledge of legislation, national and local policies and issues in relation to both the specific client group and mental health.

### **Management and Recruitment,**

1. As the Head of Psychological Specialty, a key responsibility is the development and management of a clinical governance programme for staff within the service. This includes identification of annual clinical governance targets; ensuring compliance with professional regulation, meeting professional CPD requirements, organising and managing a professional appraisal system and providing appropriate support to managers dealing with issues of under performance.
2. To ensure the delivery of a high quality, best-practice and evidence-based service across the service area.
3. To manage the psychological resources available to the sector team/service including line management responsibility for all qualified and Assistant/Trainee Clinical Psychologists psychological staff and psychological materials employed in the assessment and the treatment of patients. Manages and directs the work of all clinical staff within the Specialist Psychology Service.
4. Oversees and approves the recruitment of staff to the Specialty Service.
5. Ensures that there is a comprehensive appraisal system for all staff within the Specialty Service, including appropriate Continuing Professional Development and Personal Development plans are in place.
6. Maintains a regular supervision system in line with staff's national accreditation requirements.
7. To monitor the budget associated with the Psychological Service Specialty area and to advise regarding

decision as to how it is drawn up/allocated and to ensure most benefit for patients. To authorise financial payments such as those for extra hours/overtime

8. To exercise responsibility for the systematic governance of psychological practice within the sector team/service and to interpret National Clinical Guidelines such as NICE and SIGN Guidelines and ensure that services are meeting all relevant standards.
9. To manage the resources available to the service in terms of the delivery of psychologically based interventions for clients delivered by non-specialists.
10. To ensure appropriate professional psychology recruitment within the service.
11. To advise on the skill level required to undertake psychological practice within a service development framework
12. To monitor and evaluate the psychology service provision with the service to ensure that it meets required service and practice standards.

### **Policy, Planning and Service Development**

1. To develop a high quality, responsive and accessible service for clients, their carers and families within the service, including advising both service and professional management on those aspects of the service where psychological and/or organisational matters need addressing.
2. To plan and implement service developments and projects as they affect the entirety of the defined service that respond to Government initiatives and targets and that may impact across other teams and services. For example, the development of innovative service components to reduce waiting times or enhance patient satisfaction and outcomes.
3. To take a lead role in the delivery of Care Pathways which may require changes in psychological practice to meet patients' needs.
4. To take a lead role in the workforce and resource planning for the psychological interventions and therapies component of the wider service/clinical team.
5. To identify gaps or resource issues in the service and to initiate and implement developments.

### **IT responsibilities:**

1. Use I.T. systems to record clinical activity, caseload, waiting list etc and to report on the performance of psychologists within the area and on the activity of the service.
2. Undertake the collection, processing, interpretation, reporting of information using appropriate software, including advanced statistical, and presentation packages.
3. Use of IT systems to access the NHS e-library for keeping up-to-date with current developments.

### **Research and service evaluation:**

1. As a major job requirement to plan, develop, commission and undertake formal research programmes relevant to the service.

2. To undertake collaborative research activity across services, including the evaluation of, monitoring and development of the service/sector team's services, through the deployment of professional skills in research, service evaluation and audit.
3. To utilise theory, evidence-based literature and research to support evidence-based practice in individual work, work with other team members and across other services and teams.

### **7a. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY**

1. To use a variety of technological equipment for the purposes of clinical work, e.g. video cameras, tape recorders, video players etc.
2. To exercise responsibility for the appropriate and safe use of specialist psychological equipment within the area including appropriate systems of stock control.
3. Use I.T. systems to maintain up to date records of; clinical activity, caseload, waiting list etc and to report on the performance of psychologists within the service/team.
4. Use specialist psychometric test equipment to identify language, memory, intellectual and other cognitive deficits.

### **7b. SYSTEMS**

1. To ensure the highest standards of clinical record keeping including electronic data entry and recording, report writing and the responsible exercise of professional self-governance in accordance with professional codes of practice of the British Psychological Society and Health & Care Professions Council.
2. Use I.T systems to maintain up to date records of clinical activity, caseload, waiting list etc and to report on the performance of psychologists within these areas.
3. Use I.T. systems relevant to clinical interventions, e.g. for scoring psychometric tests.
4. Use management and I.T, systems to ensure adequate performance management information is provided in a timely manner.
5. Use management and IT systems to ensure national workforce data and clinical activity data are provided for e.g. ISD workforce and CAMHS mapping

## **8. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK**

The postholder will be managed by the relevant Professional Lead: Psychological Services. Clinical Supervision will be provided in accordance with HPCP regulations. In terms of clinical service delivery, the postholder is an autonomous practitioner.



## **9. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS**

As Head of Psychological Specialty, the post holder is required to lead the development of the psychology service, making decisions based on the clinical needs of clients, strategic development of the service, the evidence base and national policy drivers.

As a Head of Psychological Specialty, the post holder is required to make decisions on the deployment and training of clinical psychologists and has line management responsibility for such staff within the general management arrangements. In this capacity, the post holder will take decisions on implementation of Policy and Service Developments as they affect the entirety of the defined service.

Consultant Psychologists are autonomous Practitioners responsible for their own work and the interpretation of agreed guidelines and policies. The post holder is guided by general health organisational and broad operational Policies which they are required to interpret and initiate appropriate action as required. Specifically the post holder expected to:-

1. Make highly skilled evaluations and decisions about treatment suitability, assessment, formulation, diagnosis, treatment and discharge,
2. Offer expert opinion where this may draw on highly complex and conflicting information.
3. Advise on the development of clinical specialisms and other service developments, making decisions based on the clinical needs of clients, strategic development of the service, the research/evidence base and national policy.
4. Make judgements on the best use of psychology resources and of resources to the service / team, in the area of responsibility, often where there may be significant difference in opinion. This will include making decisions and judgements involving highly complex facts, maybe in unpredictable situations, which require analysis and interpretation of consequences of a range of options.
5. The post holder will be an expert in their field and will be required to make judgements in new or unique situations where there is no obvious solution.
6. As a Consultant the post holder will have the freedom to undertake appropriate actions based on their interpretations for example, of relevant clinical and professional policies

Work will be the subject to appraisal meetings with the Head of Service who will set Key Result Areas and agree a personal development plan for the year.

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

- The post involves working with individuals who present significant challenges to those supporting them either through the risks they themselves face or present because of their behaviour or through significant mental health difficulties or serious physical health problems. In addition, there is a need to respond to the sometimes conflicting needs of patients, referrers and staff in a manner that maintains high quality service and staff morale.
- Forming lone judgements and offering expert opinions in relation to highly complex and diverse problems / disorders, often under emotionally charged circumstances.
- Managing a diversity of patient needs and service demands in a context of restricted resources.

- Making decisions concerning allocation of Psychological resources and service developments/redesign balancing management and clinical responsibilities.

## 11. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

In support of our core purpose of Working together to achieve the healthiest life possible for everyone in Ayrshire and Arran we are committed to a culture that is Caring Safe and Respectful. The post holder is required to work collaboratively in a safe, caring and respectful way.

In addition .....

The post holder is required:

- To manage staff.
- To provide and receive highly complex information in a highly skilled and sensitive manner, concerning the assessment, formulation and treatment plans of clients under their care and to monitor and evaluate progress during the course of both uni- and multi-disciplinary care.
- To communicate effectively with patients suffering from severe mental illness, including patients with personality disorders who may exhibit a significant degree of hostility, manipulation and antagonism.
- To address subjects such as a client's past sexual abuse, traumatic events, exposure to violence etc. in client's lives or suggesting management strategies for individuals where there is considerable conflict regarding the approach to adopt.
- To manage barriers to acceptance or understanding (e.g. head injury, learning disability, sensory impairment), which need to be overcome using the highest level of interpersonal and communication skills.
- To develop and maintain effective communication systems with
  - Senior Managers and Clinicians to ensure effective delivery of the service
  - External agencies including GPs, the Courts, Universities and Social Work
  - Patient Groups and voluntary bodies
- To communicate effectively with patients when significant barriers to communication exist e.g. learning disability, sensory or physical impairment
- To undertake formal presentations in public, professional and academic settings.
- To maintain communication with wider networks, including national networks, such as the British Psychological Society and its Division of Clinical Psychology, national special interest groups and Patient and voluntary groups.

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

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

#### **PHYSICAL EFFORT:**

Post holder will demonstrate advanced sensory skills as well as the speed and accuracy necessary for neuropsychological testing. This requires a high level of multi tasking i.e. psychological dexterity at speed, specialist observational skills and concurrent intellectual analysis. Neuro and cognitive testing requires co-ordination of a range of test materials and simultaneously timing and recording of patient performance. This is a Clinical requirement of the post and the post holder will have received training and assessment of this skill during Doctoral Training. The post holder is also required to rehearse/practice the skill. Purchase and use of formal test equipment is only permitted by licence to certain practitioner groups who have the necessary training and test administration/delivery and interpretation competencies. In addition, assessment of patients (especially those with suspected cognitive impairment) requires advanced sensory skills e.g. listening and observational skills for identifying language defects, or to identify dyspraxia, dysphasia, executive dysfunction etc.

The postholder is required to portray by appearance, body language, tone, etc the appropriate “therapeutic” message to patients in often emotionally charged settings.

The postholder is frequently required to sit in a restricted position for long periods – for example during client therapy and clinic sessions. (3½ hours).

The postholder is required to operate a computer and have basic keyboard skills.

The postholder is required to have a driving licence.

The postholder is required to undergo on an annual basis, breakaway techniques training.

The postholder is required to use specialist psychological test equipment.

#### **EMOTIONAL EFFORT:**

The postholder is likely to encounter verbal aggression on a frequent basis. The postholder may encounter physical aggression (rare). (Panic alarms are supplied).

The postholder is frequently required to deal with highly distressing situations and information, and with clients who themselves are emotionally disturbed (for example, provision of therapy for clients with severe and complex disorders, and for those who have suffered highly distressing trauma such as distressing accidents or sexual abuse).

The postholder is required to provide distressing diagnoses.

The postholder is required as appropriate to deal with staff disputes and conflict and to support staff who themselves are dealing with distressing situations.

#### **MENTAL EFFORT:**

All core duties of this post require the postholder to engage in frequent, intense concentration. Examples

include:

- Clinical sessions providing assessment, formulation and therapy for clients

(typical clinic requires minimum of 3 hours of intense concentration)

- Clinical supervision sessions with staff and Doctoral Trainees
- Observation sessions with trainees ('live' and via listening to tapes of their assessment and treatment sessions)
- Production of detailed clinical and medico legal reports
- Meetings with Lawyers
- Preparation for and attendance at Court as expert witness
- Preparation of major projects and research proposals
- Clinical analysis of academic, research and policy papers
- Formal presentations
- University teaching
- Own training and other CPD activities
  
- Interviews, staff appraisals
- Formal meetings

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:**

The postholder should expect some exposure to hazards such as verbal and physical face to face aggression. The postholder will be supplied with a panic alarm and will be required to be trained annually in Breakaway techniques. There is frequent exposure to unpleasant working conditions due to patients' disabilities (e.g.) being in the vicinity of body fluids/odours. The patient group will be such that verbal aggression and other expression of emotional disturbance (such as inappropriate comments/actions) are common. In addition patients occasionally pose a risk i.e. are

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

Minimum required to undertake the role.

Demonstrates advanced theoretical and practical knowledge as a clinical psychologists which requires to be obtained through:-

- Post-graduate doctoral level training in psychology or its equivalent as accredited by the HCPC, including specifically models of psychopathology, clinical psychometrics and neuropsychology, two or more distinct psychological therapies and lifespan developmental psychology.
- Post-doctoral training in additional specialised areas of psychological practice.
- Demonstrates experience of working as a Consultant Psychologist.

Requires experience of working with a wide variety of client groups, across the whole life course and presenting with the full range of clinical severity across the full range of care settings including outpatient, community, primary care, in-patient and residential care settings. This includes skill in maintaining a high degree of professionalism in the face of highly emotive and distressing problems, verbal abuse and the threat of physical abuse.

Experience of exercising full clinical responsibility for clients' psychological care and treatment, both as a professionally qualified care co-ordinator and within the context of a multi-disciplinary care plan.

Experience of teaching, training and/or professional and clinical supervision.

Skills as a Senior Clinician to undertake clinical leadership roles and tasks within multidisciplinary and multi-agency contexts

Professional approval for clinical supervisor status

A high level ability to communicate effectively at both a written and oral level complex, highly technical and clinically sensitive information to clients, their families, carers and a wide range of lay and professional persons within and outside the NHS.

Skills in providing consultation to other professional and non-professional groups.

Doctoral level knowledge of research design and methodology, including complex multivariate data analysis as practiced within the field of psychology.

Knowledge of legislation and its implications for both clinical practice and professional management in relation to the client group and mental health.

Evidence of continuing professional development as recommended by the HCPC.

Formal training in supervision of other psychologists and those delivering psychological interventions.

#### **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:

Date:

Head of Department Signature:

Date:

