

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| Job Title: | Audiology Practitioner |
| Department/Ward: | Audiology |
| Band: | AfC Band 5 |
| Division: | Surgery And Critical Care |
| Responsible to: | Clinical Lead In Audiology |
| Accountable to: | Head of Surgical Division |
| JOB SUMMARY: | <p>Job Summary</p> <p>Purpose An audiologist who provides specialised diagnostic tests for ENT and treatment of hearing. Duties include a comprehensive range of otological assessments, recommending and undertaking appropriate rehabilitation and management. Role is both challenging and varied with a need to be able to communicate effectively with people of all ages, to think logically and adopt a scientific approach combined with a caring and patient-focused attitude.</p> <p>Adults Assess the hearing of adults and offer rehabilitation. This may be providing a hearing aid(s) to a patient, counselling them and their significant others to facilitate their communication needs.</p> <p>Paediatrics Support the assessment of hearing in children from pre-school to sixteen years of age. Working closely with ENT Consultants, Health Visitors, Teachers of hearing impaired and Speech and Language Therapists.</p> <p>Special needs Work as part of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals to address the needs of those with special requirements. For example; children and adults with learning difficulties, hearing impaired and visually impaired adults and children.</p> <p>Research and Development Involved in local or national research projects developing knowledge of audiological matters and improving services for patients.</p> |

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS:

Clinical and Analytical

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Perform (objective and subjective) diagnostic aural assessments on adults and children of all ages and abilities to determine and implement specialist treatment.

- Evaluate aptitude of patient for instruction and testing, adapt criteria as necessary for clients with special needs, for example incoherent; uncooperative; illness or injury.
- Examination of the ear using otoscopy recognising contra-indications and appropriateness of further progress or discussion with other professionals for example; Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) or General practitioner (GP).
- Follow British Society of Audiology (BSA) guidelines to obtain accurate hearing thresholds using air conduction headphones and bone conduction vibrator with masking stimuli as appropriate (Appendix 1).
- Middle ear analysis (to BSA standards) to include tympanometry and acoustic reflex testing with probe tone insertion to determine the function and compliance of the middle ear.

Select, verify and program (objectively and subjectively) highly intricate hearing systems for adults.

- Interpret and correlate assessment results to prescribe and program complex hearing aid systems and communication aids using specialist computer hardware and software.
- Assess patient's individual mental and physical abilities, social needs and potential for choice of aid(s) and environmental program options.
- Verify and evaluate hearing aid(s) performance with subjective (free field and verbal appraisal) and objective Real Ear Measurement techniques involving precise insertion of probe tube microphones into the auditory canal.
- Apply adjustments to prescription of hearing aid(s) subject to clinical determination of outcome measures, involving fine manual dexterity.

Booked repair clinic sessions

- Direct queries and problems presented by patients and carers to resolution or establish care pathway with regard for need and urgency.
- Operate intricate apparatus to service or substitute complex hearing aid systems.
- Decontaminate and replace components as necessary.
- Supply hearing aid sundries, includes organising payment for lost-damaged aids and non-standard miscellany.
- Provide assistance and listening devices to inpatients on wards and outreach clinics (apparatus/supplies transported as necessary).
- Otoscopic examination and guidance on cerumen (earwax) management.

Accurate and safe impression taking for custom made earmoulds.

- On adults and children and special needs, requires precision and fine motor control.
- Impression procedure as defined by professional BSA standards.
- Prescribe the type of ear mould and material to enhance quality of amplified sound, comfort of use and insertion by patient.

Receive and modify custom made devices.

- Quality control and inspection of custom made ear moulds.
- Modification of all types of hearing systems including paediatric devices requires skill and dexterity, able to work to fine tolerances using specialist equipment (including dental drill and buffer/grinder) and safety equipment.

Perform clinical application of advanced auditory techniques in specialist areas.

- Diagnostic Audiology on adults and children including Speech Audiometry;

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Provide comprehensive and complex rehabilitation and counselling.

- Instruct patient on effective use of aid(s), explaining realistic expectations and advice on the disabling effects of hearing loss. Use directive counselling and empathic skills to promote patient's rehabilitation and management of hearing loss.
- Encourage and support when poor motivation or attitude (denial of diagnosis) to having a hearing loss exists (barriers to understanding and communication may include hearing loss, visual impairment including deaf-blind clients, dementia and stroke patients with aphasia).
- Liaise with nursing/residential homes, day care centres to give advice and information to staff and residents on deaf awareness and guidance on communication strategies.

Communication

Establish and maintain good key working relationships with people from a diverse range of professions and knowledge levels.

- Consideration for departmental colleagues working within shared clinical facilities, use of planning and co-operation with limited resources.
- Update others on new techniques/protocols learnt or developed to improve service delivery.
- Collaborate with ENT Consultants and nursing staff to provide specialist clinics.
- Provide diagnostics for medical and consultancy staff for example paediatrics, Geriatric Medicine; General Practitioner Surgeries; and external agencies; Teachers for the Hearing Impaired; Speech and Language Therapists, fellow Audiology Departments.
- Advise and support carers/family; Social Services; Nursing/Residential Homes and Care Centres.
- Liaise with manufacturers to suggest developments in equipment/devices and supply.
- Deliver information and advocate ideas to management.

Impart highly complex and sensitive information and factual data comprehensibly by an appropriate method.

- Document communications from all sources for example; patients, medical staff and manufacturers on protected computer software and filed, actions or monitored as applicable.
- Devise and display clear notices and revise regularly, including contacts and opening times.
- Produce and distribute a variety of information and literature also includes Royal National Institute for the Deaf and British Tinnitus Association leaflets.
- Enter test results on specialist software and in highly confidential patient notes.
- Convey verbal and written reports to Consultants, GPs and agencies.
- Record statistics to facilitate better use of resources upon review.
- Present and discuss ideas for department with colleagues and managers at regular staff gatherings through various media.

Interact productively with others, able to demonstrate tact and empathy daily with people of specialist needs where barriers to communication, learning and understanding exist.

- Key relationship of audiologists is between those who complain of /diagnosed with hearing impairment from mild to profound hearing losses.
- Able to lead clients and carers through care plans and encourage their participation.
- Manage others who may be under stress, dealing with unpleasant/upsetting news and/or have challenging communication difficulties.

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- Extensive range of expertise communicating with patients with a variety of complex special needs.
- English as 2nd Language (local community, foreign students and visitors; British Sign Language users).
- Status (working and non-working people; carers; prisoners; students).
- Persuade and reassure to ease habituation to hearing impairment and use of hearing aid(s)/assistive devices.
- Negotiate and diffuse aggressive/hostile situations, avoiding escalation where possible.

Managerial and Leadership

Daily collaboration with Head of Clinical services and Specialist Audiologists to ensure the provision of highly specialist scientific services within clinical governance guidelines.

- Adhere to professional standards and protocols with supervision.
- Identify areas for training needs and improvement.
- Formulate professional development plans for self.
- Advise peers on issues of service delivery including shortfall, service pressures and initiate strategy to rectify and resolve.
- Autonomously prioritise own workload and stock/supplies across sites allocating clinical time and appointments with ongoing audit of own work.
- Provide advice and support for students on work placement.
- Responsible for safety of public, colleagues and visitors to facilities with constant review of Health and Safety levels.
- Contribute towards inter-agency/multi-disciplinary team building and policy development.
- Undertake delegated tasks as requested by Head of Clinical Service and/or other senior staff.

Financial and Physical Resources

Responsible for the security, care and maintenance of complex, sensitive equipment and medical instruments.

- Calibration daily of expensive diagnostic equipment to BSA standards to ensure safety and correct function.
- Faulty equipment taken out of service and appropriate personnel informed.
- Careful use of instruments with respect to self and others; for example noise exposure from hearing aids and audiometers.
- Infection control – including on-loan equipment.
- Rotation of stock to capitalise on guarantee dates; for example hearing aids and batteries.
- Levels of stock monitored and maintained, timely requested to ensure availability.
- Resources allocated and overseen to prevent wastage and depreciation.

Education and Research

Identify and improve personal/professional self and expand continuing professional development portfolio (CPD).

- Attend specialist courses, study days and advanced training in clinical area.
- Gain CPD awards and maintain competency to practice.

Represent Audiology service within Trust and externally within local and national frameworks.

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- Awareness of current advancements in audiological procedures and ENT surgery.
- Participation in national clinical trials; for example the Modernisation of the Hearing Aid Service Pilot Scheme.
- Collect and provide research data as required to medical Research Council and other governing bodies with patient consent as applicable.

Perform audit and outcome measures

- Audit the benefit of hearing aid use and patient satisfaction using recognised benefit profiles and questionnaires (information input onto software packages).
- Using outcome measures to identify further rehabilitative measures.

Physical Effort

- Sustain a raised voice level throughout working day to communicate with the hearing impaired.
- Regular assistance of elderly and infirm patients into/out of facilities and onto/off chairs within the department.
- Frequently manoeuvre patients into correct test positions with wheelchairs as necessary.
- Continuous change of posture from crouching/kneeling for examination and bending/stretching during testing and fitting of devices.
- Difficult positioning of self around patients in restricted areas; for example sound-treated testing booths.
- Prolonged use of keyboards/equipment for assessment/diagnosis and to input data onto patient record systems.
- Movement of sensitive apparatus to/from workstations and external locations including outreach clinics.

Mental Effort

- Flexible to the demands of the department with unpredictable work patterns and deadlines, managing all ages and abilities within various environments.
- Maintain intense concentration for prolonged periods to assess and distinguish patient's auditory and sensory capabilities.
- Adapt skills instantaneously to establish good rapport and clear understanding during face-to-face contact and over the telephone with hearing impaired, deaf and special need clients.
- Observe astutely and re-evaluate situation inspecting for visual clues in non-organic hearing losses.
- Teach for lengthy periods intricate tasks, frequently to patients of limited attention and knowledge, with constant encouragement and repetition.
- Common interruptions from others including carers/relatives, colleagues and staff for specialist advice and requests.

Emotional Effort

- Frequently impart details of hearing dysfunction and deafness to adults.
- Distressing results and prognosis discussed with respect to condition(s).
- Contend with aggression and confrontation due to disbelief of predicament and frustration.
- Sensitively counsel patients, their carers/families with highly complex needs; for example hereditary deafness and genetic counselling.
- Generate confidence in others to deal with situation, use of persuasion to instil positive action, including with working colleagues.

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- Ability to support people with mental illness and severely challenging behaviour.
- Disclosing of personal details by patients, erratic at times, needing emotional support on a wide range of issues; for example suicidal; bereaved; frightened or isolated.
- Emotional involvement of Audiology staff during lifelong care and familiarity with individuals throughout school, work, retirement – exposure to mental and physical decline and death of patients.
- Awareness and tact when dealing with difficulties at home, mistreatment or neglect, especially with children and vulnerable adults.
- Daily support to colleagues.

Working Conditions

- Physical hostility from patients and their carers/relatives regarding prognosis and outlook.
- Lack of cleanliness and odours from some clients – contact with fleas and head lice during examination and treatment recorded periodically.
- Direct contact with body fluids – regular exposure to infection and discharge of the ears, occasional exposure to blood/faeces/vomit.
- Dust and fumes from supply and maintenance of ear mould devices.
- Frequent noise exposure from medical devices/equipment and fittings and for example; hearing aids and modification drill.
- Prolonged use of VDU equipment.
- Consistent working in confined spaces for example audiological assessments in sound-treated booths with a lack of natural light and ventilation to maintain optimum sound levels.
- Recurrent use of heavy, forceful fire doors fitted in department to escort individuals in/out of appointments and movement of equipment throughout.
- Work in isolation for extended periods at outreach clinics.

Physical Skills

- Fine manipulation of tools; for example small screwdrivers for hearing aids and adjusting ear moulds with electric motorised power drill.
- Dexterity needed for probe insertion during assessment.
- Keyboard skills.
- Good hearing for calibration of equipment.

Clinical Governance.

- To be familiar with and practice at all times within the relevant national legislation, professional standards of practice and organisational policies and procedures.
- To play a role in the delivery of clinical governance and promotion of continuous improvement. To be involved and lead in agreed clinical governance activities e.g. audit projects.
- To maintain clinical records which are organised, factual, clear and accessible to any authorised person.
- To produce written resources in line with Clinical Governance guidelines.
- To play an active role in the assessment of health and safety risks within the workplace and to actively remove hazards as and when notified by staff members of the Audiology team in our working environment
- To be aware of own responsibility for self and others under the Health and Safety at Work Act. To operate at all times within the organisational and service health and safety rules.

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- To report all incidents and near misses and assist other team members to do so.
- To participate in mandatory training e.g. fire, manual handling, BLS, child protection and completion of Trust Mandatory training workbook.
- To be respectful of office, equipment and personal security within the department.

Service Development

- To contribute to and comment on draft policies and consultations from a wide range of sources e.g. UHMB, Local PCT's, Department Of Health, British Society of Audiology and British Academy of Audiology.
- To contribute to service development by implementing agreed change within own practice
- To contribute to the development and implementation of service improvement plans by e.g. pilot projects, reviews and audits

Professional and Personal Development

- To engage in annual appraisal and the self directed implementation of an agreed personal development plan.
- To maintain a portfolio of Continuous Professional Development evidence to demonstrate the development and maintenance of dietetic skills relevant to the pos
- To effectively use clinical supervision on an informal/formal basis to reflect on practice, examine significant events and improve performance of self and others.

This job description is not exhaustive and will be reviewed and amended, with the post holder, when necessary.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This post will be subject to the terms and conditions of the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information relating to patients, employees and business of the Trust must be treated in strictest confidence. Under no circumstances should such information be discussed with any unauthorised person(s) or organisations. All staff must operate within the requirements of the Freedom of Speech policy.

SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN

Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, irrespective of individual roles. As a senior manager you will need to be aware of your responsibility in relation to safeguarding and protecting children. You will be expected to provide effective leadership in ensuring safeguarding children is a priority within all service delivery and developments.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust are committed to sustainable development, social value and achieving the NHS Net Zero Carbon reduction targets. All employees must play their part and adhere to the principals in the Green Plan, this will ensure our services are efficient, sustainable and carbon emissions are reduced. As an employee you will be expected to conserve energy / water, minimise wastage in all formats, actively promote biodiversity and use sustainable transport whenever possible.

- Energy: Switch off non-essential electrical equipment and lighting when not in use. Report heating issues such as when buildings are too hot or too cold to the Estates Team.
- Water: Do not leave taps running and report all drips, leaks, and condensation issues to the Estates Team.
- Waste: Follow the Trust waste policy – Reduce – Reuse – Recycle. Do not over order equipment or medicines. Healthcare waste must be disposed of in line with the Trust's Waste Management policy.
- Biodiversity: Enhancing biodiversity has a wealth of positive outcomes for our colleagues, services users and the environment. Think of your site, can an area be improved to have a quality green space, specific planting for habitat improvement or the installation of a couple of bird boxes? Contact the Estates Team for further details.
- Transport & Travel: Where possible lift share, cycle, walk or use public transport.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health and Safety at Work Act stipulates that it is the responsibility of each employee to observe all rules governing safety and conduct and as such safety equipment and Personal Protective Equipment provided must be used.

INFECTION CONTROL

The Trust is committed to protecting the health of all staff, patients and visitors to the Trust. As such all staff is personally responsible for compliance with all Trust and department infection prevention and control policies. Failure to comply with such policies and associated procedures is likely to lead to disciplinary action and may result in dismissal.

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MANUAL HANDLING

The post holder will be provided with adequate training in correct lifting techniques by a recognised lifting instructor.

NO SMOKING POLICY

A No Smoking Policy operates across all Trust sites.

QUALITY OF SERVICE

The trust is committed in its use of available resources to obtaining the best possible service for patients and staff. The Post holder must share this objective and seek to maintain and improve the quality of service provided.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Trust is pledged to equal opportunities for all and is committed to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, age, race, colour, sexual orientation, creed, nationality, ethnic or national origin or disability. We promote flexible working opportunities wherever possible to enable staff to balance their work with their private lives.