

## Job Description & Person Specification



Job title: Speech and Language Therapist  
Band: 8A

# Job Description

## 1. General Information

Job title: Speech and Language Therapist

Band: 8A

Department: Speech Therapy

Division: Clinical Support Services

Reports to: Therapy Team Lead

Accountable to Acute Therapy Service Manager

DBS Clearance required: Yes.

Enhanced: posts providing hands-on care to patients.

## 2. Key relationships

Doctors, nurses, housekeepers, catering staff, AHP's, Social Workers, Consultants, Community Professionals

## 3. Job Summary

This post comprises day-to-day clinical leadership, supervision and delivery of a quality, dynamic Speech and language therapy (SLT) service to patients at West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospital NHS Trust.

To practice at consultant practitioner level, providing clinical knowledge to an acute inpatient caseload and to the wider multi-disciplinary team.

To support the Therapy Team Lead by leading and co-ordinating the speech and language therapist team and support staff in delivering a specialised and tailored service.

To lead the planning and delivery of regular training and development for staff both within and outside of the SLT team, including support and supervising of undergraduate, and postgraduate SLT students on clinical placement.

To be actively engaged in the service delivery including business continuity, service planning, clinical governance and service innovation.

## **4. Primary duties and areas of responsibility**

### **Clinical**

1. To work at consultant level dysphagia and communication knowledge and skills.
2. To demonstrate high level leadership skills.
3. To have substantial experience of leading and working proactively within multi-professional teams with evidence of influence in service development.
4. To demonstrate in depth theoretical and practical knowledge of assessment and management of dysphagia and communication difficulties.
5. To have experience in training and supervision of junior and specialist colleagues.
6. To demonstrate excellent written and spoken communication skills.
7. To be able to communicate sensitive and complex information effectively and an awareness of the appropriate use of counselling skills.
8. To provide excellent skill including persuasion, motivation, negotiation and problem solving with patients, colleagues in the department, the multi-disciplinary team and other professionals.
9. To maintain highly developed communication skills including with people who have significant and complex communication difficulties and swallowing difficulties.
10. To have well-developed perceptual and auditory skills.
11. To demonstrate ability to absorb, interpret and summarise verbal information in a clinical environment.
12. To be systematic and organised.
13. To maintain and provide consultant level of knowledge and support for junior speech and language therapists, (including assistants) within the team; other clinicians within the Trust and for speech and language therapists outside of the Trust, including providing expert second opinions.
14. To work as an autonomous and independent practitioner, having personal, professional and legal responsibility for own complex caseload. To seek support from within and outside the Trust when required, and to carry out self-directed supervision.
15. To prioritise the caseload and take responsibility for the day to day service delivery.
16. To lead and coordinate the inpatient VFS service and lead and maintain excellent practice in tracheostomy management.
17. To develop and coordinate the critical care SLT service and inpatient FEES services.
18. To select, use and interpret accurately the appropriate specialist communication and/or swallowing assessments for own caseload.
19. To have high level understanding and ability to implement up to date evidence base surrounding management strategies relating to Speech and Language Therapy.
20. To make a differential diagnosis of a wide range of communication disorders e.g. dysphasia, dysarthria, dysphonia, dyspraxia that arise from a variety of conditions. This diagnosis will contribute to the medical diagnosis and be communicated to the medical team via verbal reports and documentation in the clinical record.
21. To communicate effectively with people who have significant and complex communication difficulties. To understand and make management decisions based on knowledge of prognosis of varying presenting conditions. Communicate effectively with patients, their relatives and the multiprofessional team about how symptoms might manifest themselves within the functional settings.
22. To provide and monitor structured communication and dysphagia programmes and strategies for carers, volunteers and other professionals.

23. To act as an advocate for patients, particularly those with severe communication disorders, to facilitate the gaining of consent, where, by virtue of their communication disorder a patient may appear to lack the capacity to consent. E.g. locked in syndrome, severe aphasia/dysarthria
24. To assess the suitability of patients for communication devices and where appropriate action this provision; to establish the need for the loan or supply of communication devices for patients who are, or will become unable to communicate, and to refer on to other agencies as appropriate e.g. ACT (Access to Communication Technology)
25. To use advanced counselling skills when working with patients and their relatives regarding swallowing disorders e.g. when discussing end of life issues, or a poor prognosis.
26. To contribute highly specialist knowledge within multidisciplinary teams providing care packages to SLT patients for outpatients, who are acute and complex.
27. To take responsibility for the decision to discharge patients from the SLT Service and to refer on to other agencies as necessary.
28. To attend and make an expert practitioner SLT contribution to relevant clinical and management meetings for example specific case discussions and to contribute to weekly case conferences, clinical meetings and multi-disciplinary team meetings, participating fully in the multi-disciplinary team to ensure that communication and/or swallowing needs are taken into account in multi-disciplinary decision making.
29. To make informed judgements and recommendations on a daily basis, based on best practice evidence, to MDT with regard to swallowing disorders.
30. To facilitate or provide accurate differential diagnosis for specialist Speech and Language Therapists and less experienced staff for particularly complex patients.
31. To use specialist assessments for swallowing that require post graduate training e.g. videofluoroscopy / FEES.
32. To provide expert practitioner advice, support and facilitation of other professionals e.g. Physiotherapists, OT's, nurses, consultants, and Doctors with regard to general patient management issues.
- 33.** To initiate referrals for patients to other professionals when necessary.
34. To determine, advise on and carry out best practice for complex cases when there are no obvious solutions or conflicting evidence e.g. a decision of feeding for a patient who is continually pulling out their nasogastric tube and are unable to swallow safely.
35. To provide expert practitioner opinions on ethical decisions e.g. providing expert knowledge when negotiating with Consultants and clinical team on appropriateness of nasogastric tube versus PEG insertion
36. To work as an independent practitioner in specialist settings and specialist programmes supporting the work of other speech and language therapists.
37. To demonstrate empathy with patients, carers, families, and colleagues ensuring that effective communication is achieved, where barriers almost always exist, e.g. lack of communication as a result of multi-modality treatment and morbidity.
38. To persuade, motivate, negotiate and problem solve with patients, colleagues in the department, MDT, medical team and other professionals on a daily basis.
39. To document accurately all relevant information, regarding patient contacts (direct and indirect) in medical notes and Speech and Language Therapy databases, adhering to departmental, Trust and professional policies re: documentation
40. To develop and ensure the implementation of clinical guidance and protocols within the SLT service, ensuring where possible they are evidence based. This will include interpretation of national policies.
41. To contribute expert practitioner input to the development, implementation and evaluation of unidisciplinary and multidisciplinary guidance and procedures.
42. To lead and have innovative approach to service provision.

43. To adhere to National and local standards and guidelines relating to professional practice

## **Communication**

1. To provide written reports as required to GPs, consultants, specialist nurses, other Speech and Language Therapists, other referring agents, employers and Insurance Companies, adjusting the terminology of the report as appropriate.
2. To demonstrate empathy with patients, carers, families and colleagues ensuring that effective communication is achieved, where barriers almost always exist, e.g. lack of communication as a result of multi-modality treatment and morbidity.
3. To use advanced communication, counselling and interpersonal skills when delivering sensitive information, breaking bad news to patients and/or carers, or dealing with aggressive behaviour and contentious situations.
4. To use advanced cognitive behavioural therapy, reassurance and motivational skills to negotiate, motivate and counsel patients, their carers and other HCPs to help overcome barriers to change especially in situations of non-compliance.
5. To ensure that good working relationships are established and maintained with other team members and with other Speech and Language Therapists locally.
6. To attend meetings of the Department of Speech and Language Therapy and engage in appropriate professional activities.

## **Management and Training**

1. To take operational responsibility for SLT service, quality and clinical governance within WHTHT, ensuring that service standards are monitored, evaluated and improved upon, in line with relevant national, professional and local clinical guidelines.
2. To co-ordinate the day-to-day provision of inpatient SLT, leading and supporting the work of other specialist and less experienced speech and language therapists and SLT assistants, to ensure the delivery of a safe, effective, efficient and responsive service, advising the Therapy Team Lead as required.
3. To provide clinical leadership to the specialist SLT members of the team including the development of clinical practice.
4. To ensure robust supervision, ongoing training, support and clinical leadership for the SLT assistants, including monitoring competencies.
5. To undertake appraisals for designated members of the SLT team and to ensure an equitable and proactive process is in place across the service.
6. To lead on developing initiatives to proactively manage the demand on the service, and the complex need of the clients e.g. prioritisation and waiting list management.
7. To delegate responsibilities/tasks to ensure smooth running of the team and its members' personal development.
8. To lead and contribute to relevant clinical, non-clinical and managerial meetings.
9. To be responsible for infection control within own area of responsibility and to take a lead in ensuring safe practices across the service.
10. To contribute to the recruitment of SLT staff (and other AHPs as required) by actively participating in short-listing and on interviewing panels.
11. To advise Therapy Team Lead on service development needs, providing underpinning statistical information.

12. To ensure that the SLT working environment is safe and ensure risk assessment and management plans where there are concerns.
13. To provide supervision and training for experienced SLTs to further develop their skills and competencies.
14. To engage in a structured programme of professional and personal development based on a system of performance review.
15. To provide information, observation sessions, and training to other professionals including medical professionals.
16. To keep up to date knowledge and skills through a personal development programme and membership of relevant CENs.
17. To provide performance management, absence management for immediate and wider team as/when required.
18. To contribute to the evaluation and development of SLT services in the Trust including leading surveys and audits.
19. To use highly developed skills of persuasion, negotiation, and problem-solving with colleagues and other professionals regarding speech and language therapy provision and clinical decision making.
20. To advise the Therapy Team Lead on equipment and resource needs for the department.
21. To be innovative and proactive in observing, highlighting and problem solving in terms of resource management.
22. To ensure that therapy treatment materials are procured and where necessary tailored for use with communication impaired patients working within the constraints of the manufacturer's guidance.
- 23.** To maintain accurate records of staffing levels and support Therapy Team Lead with budget management.

## Person specification

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**Band: 8A**

	Essential Requirements	Desirable Requirements
Education and Qualification	<p>A good standard of secondary education including A-Level or equivalent.</p> <p>BSc or recognised MSc degree in Speech and Language Therapy.</p> <p>Masters level or equivalent of study or development.</p> <p>Membership of RCSLT.</p> <p>Registration with HCPC.</p> <p>Completed RCSLT Level D/ EDS Level 5 dysphagia competencies (or above).</p> <p>Substantial advanced post-graduate training, through attendance at recognised short courses and via personal study, practical skill development and in-depth experience.</p> <p>Advanced theoretical knowledge in area/s of clinical practice, at a Masters level or equivalent.</p> <p>Leadership training.</p> <p>Advanced training in e.g. videofluoroscopy (level 4), FEES, tracheostomy and/or surgical voice restoration</p>	

<p><b>Experience and Knowledge</b></p>	<p>Significant experience of working independently with adult caseload at an expert level.</p> <p>Experience working with a dysphagia caseload at an expert level.</p> <p>Significant experience of working independently within an acute hospital and/or outpatient setting.</p> <p>Significant post-graduate training, through attendance at short courses and via personal study, practical skill development and in-depth experience in a multi-disciplinary setting in specialist fields.</p> <p>Experience of working successfully as part of a multi-disciplinary team.</p> <p>Evidence of attendance at national conferences.</p> <p>Demonstration of people management at either an individual or team level.</p> <p>Experience of training Speech and Language Therapy undergraduates and junior SLTs.</p> <p>Substantial experience of leading and working proactively within multi-professional teams with evidence of influence in service development</p> <p>Application of evidence-based practice principles and research methodology</p>	<p>Membership of a relevant Clinical Excellence networks.</p> <p>Recruitment experience.</p> <p>Post-graduate education or research.</p> <p>Knowledge of the strategic direction of the Trust</p>
<p><b>Skills</b></p>	<p>Advanced theoretical and practical knowledge of assessment and management of dysphagia and communication disorders.</p> <p>Advanced theoretical and conceptual knowledge and of</p>	



	<p>evidence based practice in own specialist area.</p> <p>Excellent written and spoken communication skills.</p> <p>Ability to communicate sensitive and complex information effectively and an awareness of the appropriate use of counselling skills.</p> <p>Excellent skills of persuasion, motivation, negotiation and problem solving skills with patients, colleagues in the department, the MDT and other professionals.</p> <p>Effective communication skills with people who have significant and complex communication and or swallowing difficulties.</p> <p>Well-developed perceptual and auditory skills.</p> <p>Ability to absorb, interpret and summarise verbal information in a clinical environment.</p> <p>Systematic and organised.</p> <p>Skills in training students and peers including presentation skills.</p> <p>Able to manage and negotiate complex discussions or disagreements with patients, relatives and professional colleagues in a professional, supportive manner.</p> <p>Well-developed knowledge of relevant local and national guidelines and policies.</p> <p>Advanced training in e.g. videofluoroscopy, FEES, tracheostomy and/or surgical voice restoration.</p> <p>Keen to embrace change consistent with delivery of service whilst</p>	
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	<p>keeping the patient as an individual at the centre of care.</p> <p>Ability to integrate workload of direct and supportive patient activity with clinical and service leadership.</p> <p>Punctual and reliable in service delivery.</p> <p>Ability to work independently and as part of a team.</p> <p>Organisational skills.</p> <p>Excellent time management.</p> <p>Excellent interpersonal and team working skills.</p> <p>Thriving in a fast-paced environment.</p>	
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Date: - 3/10/2023

## Additional information

- The duties and responsibilities outlined in the job description although comprehensive are not definitive and you may be required to perform other duties at the request of your manager.
- This job description is designed to reflect duties currently incorporated in this post. These may change in the light of changes in the service provided by the Trust. Any such changes will be fully discussed with the post holder.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of the risks in their working environment and to ensure that all working practices are undertaken in such a way that risks are minimized. All staff must report risks in line with Trust policy and take the necessary action to ensure that colleagues, patients, and visitors are not exposed to unnecessary or avoidable risk.

<b>Dignity &amp; Respect</b>	The Trust requires that you treat others with dignity and respect and that you do not harass or otherwise discriminate against any other member of staff, patient or visitor to the Trust or employees of any associated employers or contractors of the Trust on the grounds of sex, age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
<b>Values Based Appraisals</b>	All staff employed within the Trust will be expected to participate in the annual values based appraisal process for themselves and any staff accountable to them.
<b>Rehabilitation Of Offenders Act</b>	Under this Act, offences which are 'spent' need not be revealed to a potential employer. However, there are some occupations which are exempt from the Act. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, all employees of the Trust are not protected by the Act and therefore employees and applicants do not have a right not to reveal 'spent' convictions if asked. Further information can be found via: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service</a>
<b>Health Clearance</b>	All appointments are conditional upon prior health clearance. Failure to provide continuing satisfactory evidence if required, e.g. of immunization, will be regarded as a breach of contract.
<b>Professional Registration</b>	Staff undertaking work which requires professional registration are responsible for ensuring that they are registered with the appropriate professional body and that they comply with any Codes of Conduct applicable to that profession. Proof of registration must be produced on appointment and at any time on request.
<b>Work Visa / Permits / Leave To Remain</b>	If you are a non-resident of the UK or EEA you are required to have a valid work visa and leave to remain in the UK, which is renewed as required. The Trust is unable to employ or continue to employ you if you require but do not have a valid work visa and/or leave to remain in the UK.
<b>Confidentiality / Data Protection / Freedom of Information</b>	Post holders must maintain the confidentiality of information about patients, staff and other health service business in accordance with the Data Protection Act of 1998. Post holders must not, without prior permission, disclose any information regarding patients or staff. If any member of staff has communicated any such information to an unauthorised person those staff will be liable to dismissal. Moreover, the Data Protection Act 1998 also renders an individual liable for prosecution in the event of unauthorised disclosure of information. Following the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2005, post holders must apply the Trust's FOI procedure if they receive a written request for information.

## Our commitment to you

West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust is committed to recruiting the best person for the job, based solely on their ability and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the role; through a process that is fair, open, consistent, and free from bias and discrimination.

We are committed to being a diverse and inclusive employer and foster a culture where all employees are valued, respected and acknowledged. All applicants will be considered for employment without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

We particularly welcome applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, people with disabilities and/or long-term health conditions and LGBT+ community members. We have policies and procedures in place to ensure that all applicants and employees are treated fairly and consistently. We are proud to be accredited as a Disability Confident Employer, with a number of active staff networks. Staff network members create a positive and inclusive work environment at West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust by actively contributing to the Trust's mission, values and efforts specific to inclusion.

We ask all applicants to tell us about their personal information to help us monitor our processes and ensure that we treat everyone fairly.



# Staff benefits and rewards

## Supporting you

- Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a free service for staff provided by Vita Health. It's here to help you manage all of life's events 24/7 365 days a year.
- We have a spiritual care team offering support to people of all faiths.
- The Trust offers health and wellbeing days which includes free massage and relaxation treatments, in addition to fitness classes.

## Annual leave

- You get 27 days on starting, 29 days after 5 years and 33 days after 10 years' service (excludes bank holidays).
- If you already have NHS service, then we will honour this in terms of your annual leave entitlement.
- We have a range of flexible working options across the Trust including part-time hours and home working.

## Discounts

- You can order bikes and safety accessories with our Cycle to work scheme staff benefit.
- Discounted childcare at our onsite Busy Bees nurseries.
- Free eye tests.
- £2 subsidised onsite meals at Watford.
- Free quarterly health checks, massages, and fitness classes.
- Discounted gym memberships including Anytime Fitness and Nuffield Health.

## NHS Pension

- One of the UK's best pension schemes, the NHS pension offers an excellent package of benefits. Visit: [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pensions.aspx](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pensions.aspx) for more information on NHS Pensions.

## Maternity/Paternity Pay & Shared Parental Leave

- Female staff with at least one years' service can benefit from up to a year's leave, 8 weeks of which are full pay, then 18 weeks at half pay plus Statutory Maternity Pay.
- The Trust also provides two weeks paternity leave for partners at full pay, for those with at least one years' service. Further information outlined in the policy.

## Development Opportunities

- The Trust offers over 300 online courses that staff can undertake either at home or in the workplace.
- Staff may be eligible for funding to undertake an apprenticeship or a foundation degree, or undertake courses provided by the University of Hertfordshire or an

alternative course provider.

- The Trust has a Coaching Network and trained coaches within the Trust are matched with staff of all disciplines to provide a powerful development opportunity.

### **Staff Recognition**

- The Trust recognises its staff through Long Service Awards, Stars of Herts Awards and through an Annual Stars of Herts event.

### **Library**

- The library staff are committed to providing an efficient service, offering the latest and most appropriate collections, along with a study environment supported by advice and guidance on finding information.
- Staff can ask the library to search for information, evidence and publications.

### **Staff Networks**

- The Trust has an equality and diversity staff network providing support for staff. This includes Disability, Carers, BAME and LGBT+ networks.

- The Trust recognises several trade unions and works in partnership with Unison, Unite, BMA and RCN to name a few.
- The Trust has a range of peer support networks which include Wellbeing Champions and Mental Health First Aiders.

#### **Temporary Staffing via Bank**

- A fantastic opportunity to gain additional experience and keep your skills up to date
- Flexible shift patterns
- Competitive weekly pay and access to 'NHSP Stakeholder pension' for eligible members

#### **Schwartz Centre Rounds**

- A forum where all staff (clinical and non-clinical) can come together regularly to discuss the emotional and social aspects of working in healthcare.
- Helps staff to feel more supported in their jobs and allows them the time and space to reflect

#### **Engagement Events**

- Annual engagement events at West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospital include, Well Fest All Stars Awards Night, Afternoon Tea's and much more.