
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE:	Assistant Psychologist
BASE:	West Berkshire
BAND:	Agenda for change Band 4
LINE MANAGER:	Principal Clinical/Counselling Psychologist or Highly Specialist Clinical/Counselling Psychologist
CONTRACT	Permanent
WORKING PATTERN	Full-time
PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY:	Principal Clinical/Counselling Psychologist

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Our Trust's vision is 'To be recognised as the leading community and mental health service provider by our staff, patients and partners.'

Our values are:

- **Caring** for and about you is our top priority
- **Committed** to providing good quality, safe services
- Working **Together** with you to develop innovative solutions

CONTEXT FOR THE ROLE

BOB (Berk, Oxford & Bucks) Integrated Care System has been awarded NHS funding to transform community mental health services for people with serious mental health problems, as outlined in the Community Mental Health Framework for Adults and Older Adults (*NHS England/National Collaborating Centre for MH-2019*). The framework supports implementation of new service models, to achieve the vision outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. Our community-based mental health support service, called the Mental Health Integrated Community Service (MHICS), is being established for adults with significant mental health and complex needs within the primary care setting.

MHICS promotes and provides assessment, treatment and improved access to evidence-based interventions for people with a significant mental illness (SMI). The service helps people to focus on achievable goals and access local community resources. The service is for people over 18 years old (including carers) with a specific focus on:

- Adults with mental health needs that exceed the access criteria for Talking Therapies (IAPT) and do not meet the access criteria for secondary care.
- People with serious or significant mental illness (SMI) who are in recovery and relatively stable in secondary care mental health services whose MH needs can be met within primary care and who require a short-term intervention to maintain mental health.
- Supporting a joint approach with the voluntary sector, considering the social determinants of mental health, and bridging to community assets where appropriate.

- People with SMI who are eligible for an annual health check and medication review and improved access to physical health interventions.
- Younger adults with SMI (18-25 years), particularly those transitioning between children's and adult services.
- Those diagnosed with, or presenting with traits of, personality disorder who will benefit from enhanced support across primary care.

JOB SUMMARY

The Assistant Psychologist (AP) will work as part of a multi-disciplinary team to support and enhance the psychological care of adults with significant mental health issues presenting to primary care services within Berkshire West. The AP will deliver a range of short-term interventions within MHICS under the supervision of a qualified psychologist. This includes helping service users to access and work with online CBT packages promoting mental health, often as an adjunct to additional therapeutic intervention being undertaken by other members of the team, but also potentially as a stand-alone intervention. The role also includes co-facilitating group work. The AP will work to promote and support independence and take a strengths and recovery based approach. The AP will liaise closely with other members of the team. The AP will undertake administrative, audit and service evaluation tasks as directed and deliver reports and presentations associated with any such undertakings as required. The post will primarily be aligned to one locality (West Berkshire) in Berkshire West.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To work under the supervision of a clinical/counselling psychologist to fulfil duties associated with the provision of psychological interventions to people with significant mental health issues.
2. To collaborate with service users and their families/carers as appropriate to develop individual and achievable goals and to enable service users to work towards recovery.
3. To provide specific, time limited support to service users accessing online CBT.
4. To provide additional psychological support within MHICS as required.
5. To communicate sensitively and effectively with service users to promote engagement, including those who are sometimes considered harder to reach.
6. To assess/monitor risks and act to manage these in discussion/collaboration with the supervisor or other qualified colleagues to ensure these are appropriately and safely managed.
7. To provide information to other team members and multi-agency colleagues to support the particular needs of service users and to ensure any risks are appropriately managed.
8. To ensure clinical records, letters, reports, and other data entry requirements are complete, up to date and of a good quality in line with relevant policies and are reviewed by the supervisor before being shared appropriately within the limits of confidentiality.
9. To develop and maintain relationships with other teams and professionals from other agencies as required to facilitate a coordinated approach and to provide mental health information and advice as required.
10. To work jointly with, and offer training to, other mental health workers to enable and support the delivery of evidence-based psychological interventions.
11. To undertake administrative, audit, service evaluation and research tasks as directed and to analyse and report the data and findings in good quality reports and presentations as required.
12. To ensure services are delivered in a manner that is appropriate, relevant and respectful to all community members, recognising the diversity of ethnicity, culture, belief, privilege and capacity of family members.

13. To advise the service manager and clinical supervisor on any aspects of the service where psychological and/or organisational matters need addressing and to propose changes to working practices or procedures in own work area.
14. The post holder must comply with all national, statutory, legislative, professional and local policy.

GENERAL

1. This is a varied role and you will be expected to undertake the range of responsibilities specified above, working together with your line manager, clinical supervisor and colleagues to ensure that the activities of this post make a real difference to our service users. Your line manager may ask you to undertake other reasonable duties to facilitate the smooth running of your service or team.
2. We are an equal opportunities employer and you will be expected to role model equality of opportunity, to represent the values of Berkshire Healthcare NHS and to operate in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy.
3. Health and Safety at work is important to us and we would like you to role model the highest standards of behaviour and go above and beyond by adopting excellent practice where it links to the health and wellbeing of our colleagues. It is important that you cooperate with us to ensure that statutory and departmental safety regulations are adhered to.

BEHAVIOURS

In addition to the responsibilities and requirements outlined in this job description, you should refer to the associated and expected behaviours that are relevant to this role - your line manager will be able to provide you with this detail.

Our values define the behaviours we are all expected to display during the course of our work and they underpin our organisational recruitment, appraisal, reward and development processes.

LOCATION/MOBILITY

We may require you to work at or from a different work base or location from time to time, to meet service demands and deliver an operational service. Given the geographical nature of the Trust, you may be required to travel between Trust premises as part of your role.

We also may need to change your work base on a permanent basis and if this is the case, we will consult with you in line with our policies and procedures.

FLEXIBILITY

We may need to amend your job description and/or your duties from time to time in order that we can continue to provide the best possible service to our patients. It is important that you work with us to deliver our services, by complying with lawful and reasonable instructions, by adapting to new ways of working, and by attending training courses as requested from time to time.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

You will be expected to attend and contribute to staff meetings and forums, supervision sessions, training courses, seminars and workshops, all of which will contribute to the development and enhancement of our current working practices.

You will also be expected to participate in all personal review meetings and to take responsibility for your own personal and professional development and the professional accountability for your role.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

We are all expected to be aware of the Data Protection Act and to follow the local Codes of Practice to ensure appropriate action is taken to safeguard confidential information.

HEALTH & SAFETY

We all have a responsibility for health and safety, risk assessment and workplace inspections, and you will be expected to take reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others.

You will also be expected to co-operate with your colleagues to ensure that statutory regulations, policies, codes of practice and departmental safety procedures are adhered to, and to attend any training programmes that we consider to be relevant.

INFECTION CONTROL

We all have a responsibility to make sure that Infection Control remains a priority in terms of attention and resources. If you work in a role that provides direct patient care then you'll be expected to follow our policies and procedures which are designed to reduce the risk of passing on the organisms that can cause infections.

We all, collectively and individually, have a duty of care to follow best practice and adhere to any guidelines which underpin the management of Infection Control.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We all have a responsibility to make sure that we do not disclose any information of a confidential nature relating to the services we provide or in respect of any service user, client or third party. This applies both during and after your employment.

You must not remove or copy any documents or tangible items including software which belong to the Trust or which contain any confidential information unless you have specific permission to do so. When you leave our employment, or if you are asked, you must return all documents and tangible items which are in your possession or are under your control, but which belong to us or contain or refer to any confidential information.

You should be aware that a breach of confidentiality may result in your dismissal and that, regardless of any disciplinary action that we may take, a breach of confidence could result in civil action for damages.

DATA QUALITY

We are all responsible for making sure that our data and electronic records are updated, accurate, relevant, reliable, and completed in line with our record keeping standards and policies.

CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

We aim to provide the highest standards of care. To help us achieve this aim, you are expected to follow acceptable working practices as defined in our policies and guidelines. You also have a personal responsibility to your colleagues and patients to keep yourself up to date with any changes to policies and to report any practice that you consider to be unacceptable through the appropriate channels.

ASYLUM & IMMIGRATION ACT 1996 AND AMENDMENTS



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We need to make sure that we comply with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. To do this, we check the documentation of all applicants to confirm that they have the right to work in the UK. We won't offer employment to any applicant who does not have valid leave to remain and work in the UK or whose leave is subject to conditions which prevent them from taking up employment with us.

If your leave to remain and/or right to work status changes during the course of your employment, we will determine what impact this may have on our ability to continue employing you.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

We all have a responsibility for safeguarding individuals who come into contact with our services, whether they are a child or young person, a person with Learning Disabilities or an older or vulnerable adult.

We adhere to the Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children Boards Child Protection Procedures, which places a duty of care and responsibility on us all to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

SMOKE FREE

We operate a smoke free policy which means that smoking is not permitted on any of our sites. This also applies when you are travelling in vehicles (including owned and lease cars) whilst on official business, parked on our premises in privately owned vehicles, or transporting services users or visitors. We will not support taking additional breaks during the working day to smoke off site. Further information can be found in the Staff Smoke Free policy.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

CATEGORY	ASSESSMENT METHOD Essential (E) Desirable (D)		
	Application Form (E/D)	Interview (E/D)	Selection Tool (A/I)
1. Education/Qualifications/Training			
An upper second class (2:1) honours degree or higher in psychology accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS)	E		A
Entitlement to graduate membership of a core professional body (e.g., BPS, BABCP, Social Work England, HCPC, NMC, or equivalent)	D		A
2. Continuous Professional Development			
Able to demonstrate additional interest and/ or learning in relevant areas of applied psychology and mental health practice	E	E	A/I
3. Previous Experience			
Previous experience of delivering CBT informed interventions under supervision	D	D	A/I
Experience of providing direct care provision	D	D	A/I
4. Knowledge, Skills & Abilities			
Awareness, knowledge and skills of evidence-based psychological interventions as relevant to this role, particularly Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)	E	E	A/I
High level communication skills (written and verbal) including an ability to communicate and work in settings in which the atmosphere may be highly emotional	E	E	A/I
High standard of letter and report writing	E		A
Appreciation of the needs and difficulties of people with mental health difficulties.	E	E	A/I
Ability to apply existing professional knowledge within a mental health context	E	E	A/I
Excellent IT skills including knowledge of Microsoft Office	D		A
Ability to communicate sensitive information to service users, carers and colleagues	E	E	A/I
5. Additional Requirements			
Ability to accept and use supervision appropriately and effectively	E	E	A/I



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Ability to interact and engage with people who may be experiencing mental health difficulties	E	E	A/I
Ability to interact effectively with staff from other disciplines	E	E	A/I
Ability to work independently, reliably and consistently to deliver work as agreed and managed at regular intervals	E	E	A/I
Ability to recognise the limits of own competencies and to seek supervision and support as required to practice safely and within professional guidelines	E	E	A/I
Able to commute or travel between localities	E		A

DATE OF ISSUE: July 2023