



# South Tyneside Council

## CHILDREN, ADULTS AND HEALTH

### JOB DESCRIPTION

**POST TITLE:** Principal Social Worker - Practice and Assurance

**GRADE:** SM2

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** Head of Adults and Integrated Care

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** Improving the quality and effectiveness of social care practice

### Overall Objectives of the Post

To support the Head of Adults and Integrated Care in the delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategy and our commitment to Adults in South Tyneside Living Better Lives. The strategy is just one element of our journey to transform how we work which will see us moving to a model of delivery where best practice is the foundation of this.

The role of Principal Social Worker for Adult Social Care is fundamental to the development of a culture of innovation, excellence and professional accountability. Providing both visible and strategic leadership that is grounded by sound and evidence based social work and best practice, the role will challenge the status quo and lead social work change to ensure Adults within South Tyneside are supported to **Live Better Lives**.

The role will act as a key link and channel of communication between front line practitioners, the Head of Adults and Corporate Director. In addition, the role will have an academic basis in leading on the development of research, working closely with the Management Team to ensure appropriate horizon scanning around new policy drivers and ensuring up to date knowledge of practice, theory and legislation are applied to promote leading edge and innovative ways of working as an exemplar of best practice.

The Principal Social Worker will ensure they maintain links to direct practice, as well as providing training and coaching opportunities for team members, newly qualified social workers / ASYEs and students through a variety of methods including group supervision, quality of practice groups and action learning sets.

### Professional Duties and Responsibilities:

***As the Principal Social Worker for Adults and Integrated Care, you will support the Head of Adults and Integrated Care and the Director of Adult Social Care to ensure the provision of high quality Adult Social Work that promotes independence and wellbeing, and improves outcomes for people in South Tyneside. You will:***

- Support the Head of Adults and Integrated Care to lead and champion a culture of improvement through quality of practice and effective management of risk in relation to the work of the service.
- Lead, develop and champion professional social work practice within Adult Social Care, with a focus on the identification of opportunities for service improvement and to provide independent scrutiny of practice and standards.

- Influence and contribute to the national agenda for Adult Social Work through Social Work England and the PSW Regional and National Networks, providing challenge to and assurance of Adult Social Work services, including working with partners to improve service quality.
- Help drive service improvement, best value and quality improvement within services by challenging existing practice and actively seeking ways to achieve better service outcomes, ensuring that key performance and financial targets are met and corrective action taken where necessary.
- Support the delivery of a robust Quality Assurance programme, by providing challenge and acting as a change agent, through critical analysis of practice and by facilitating an environment of continuous learning and improvement which is influenced and informed by practitioners.
- Lead on the development and review of all policies, procedures and standards relating to Adult Social Work practice ensuring these are all outcome-focused and maximise the use of resources at all times.
- Ensure compliance with HCPC and professional standards, ensuring the service meets the statutory requirements of the Care Act, influencing colleagues to implement the necessary changes to practice and quality.
- Support the development of a learning culture by championing core social work values and providing training and coaching opportunities for team members, newly qualified social workers undertaking their ASYEs and students on placements through group supervision, quality of practice groups and action learning sets.
- In the role of critical friend, work closely with practitioners to champion professional social work practice and development and act as both a challenge and change agent with a focus on quality and improvement.
- To understand and value quality improvement within services learning from both compliments and complaints.
- To provide analysis and reports on all aspects of quality assurance in respect of Adult Social Work in South Tyneside, including details of current performance, learning from complaints and compliments as well as understanding the drivers for change and future needs.
- Develop methods of engagement with Adults, their families and carers in a consultation and research role to ensure their voices are heard and they can influence strategic and organisational decision making.
- Establish clear benchmarking systems for quality on a local and national level and prepare reports and make recommendations for improvement activity, including strategic and operational improvement plans which are owned by the service and play a key role in strategic planning for the service, drawing on the findings from quality assurance work, legislation, policy and sharing of best practice.
- Support the development of the Adult social care workforce in line with the Professional; Capabilities Framework (PCF), ensuring staff have up-to-date skills, knowledge and experience, to do their role effectively and support the shift from a dependency and compliance culture to one that recognises the importance of the person, what matters to them and the outcomes they want to achieve.
- Complete, review and publish an annual health check to assess the practice conditions and working environment of the Adults social work workforce. To take the lead in respect of actions and developments that will be informed by the outcome of the health check.
- Ensure we provide good quality practice placements, other types of practice learning, and effective workplace assessment to help provide professional support and development for social work students and newly qualified social workers undertaking their ASYE.
- Provide opportunities for individual and group consultations such as practice development forums, support practitioners with complex case work and practice development.
- Provide leadership and guidance to the Practice Educators and Advanced Practitioners in their service development role.

- Ensure that high quality reflective supervision and employee performance management is embedded across Adult Social Care and is not treated as an isolated activity.
- Have a robust understanding of performance management within the corporate framework to monitor and evaluate standards of service and performance which prioritise person centred care and take account of customer, service user and carer needs and the provision of efficient and effective services which provide value for money.
- Prepare reports on service related issues for Elected Members, Senior Managers and partner agencies as required.
- Contribute to strategic workforce planning and the development and implementation of relevant plans.
- Undertake investigations with respect to complaints as requested and ensure any learning is utilised to effect service improvement.
- Work with Senior Management team colleagues to develop services, which promote independence and wellbeing and are underpinned by the principles of self-directed support.

***Play a key role in working with partners within the organisation and externally to ensure we are at the forefront of best practice. You will:***

- Actively promote, develop and sustain excellent relationships with a wide range of key strategic partners, service providers, commissioners and other stakeholders, building effective relationships and partnerships to meet the needs of people of South Tyneside.
- Ensure that services and individual practice is subject to continuous improvements and meets with local and national professional and regulatory standards, including attending training, regional networking events and activities relating to sector led improvements.
- Ensure that Council and partner services learn from the findings of Safeguarding Adults Reviews and put in place appropriate improvement plans.
- Champion a commitment to equality and diversity throughout the service and to implement relevant anti-discriminatory policies in all aspects of the service's work. Ensuring that all aspects of the equalities legislation requirements are understood and acted upon with the service and beyond as appropriate.

South Tyneside Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to produce an Enhanced Certificate of Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

All employees have a responsibility to undertake training and development as required; assisting, where appropriate and necessary, with the training and development of fellow employees.

All employees have a responsibility of care for their own and others' health and safety.

The above list is not exhaustive; other duties may be attached to the post from time to time. Variation may also occur to the duties and responsibilities without changing the general character of the post.

Ref: VP/LC/CL

Date 09.07.18