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| **Job Description** | |
| **Post title** | **Consultant Social Worker** |
| **JE Reference No** | **A5842** |
| **Grade** | **Grade 14** |
| **Service** | Adult and Health Services |
| **Service Area** | Adult Care, Mental Health |
| **Reporting to** | The Consultant Social Worker will be accountable to the Strategic Manager Operations (LD/MH/Substance Misuse) |
| **Location** | Your normal place of work will be **within County Durham** , but you may be required to work at any Council workplace within County Durham. |
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| **DBS** | This post **is** subject to an **enhanced disclosure**. |
| **Flexitime** | This post **is** eligible for flexitime. |
| **Politically restricted** | This post **is not** designated as a politically restricted post in accordance with the requirements of Section 1(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and by regulations made from time to time by the Secretary of State. |
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| **Description of role** |

Responsible for effective delivery of a practice education program in adult mental health services.

To supervise, assess and manage participants and allocated caseloads to a Think Ahead unit. The post

holder will lead and develop a practice curriculum that aims to strengthen mental health social work by

maximizing the contribution of social approaches to mental health support – by ensuring that effective

social work support is provided in each case in accordance with relevant legislation and local and national

policy. This post holder will lead on Social Care issues linked to Students and learning within the service

and carry a small caseload whilst teaching.

**About Think Ahead**

The programme has become one of the country’s most competitive graduate schemes, with high-profile support across the political spectrum, extensive media coverage, and 23 applications for each place on the programme. Through 2016-2019 cohorts have partnered with over half of NHS Trusts and around a third of Local Authorities, and have trained over 89 Consultant Social Workers.

Think Ahead aims to:

* Attract outstanding people to enter mental health social work.
* Promote excellence in training, to create superb mental health social workers.
* Support services to unlock the potential of social work.

**About the programme: Structure and focus**

Participants attend a four-week residential Summer Institute starting in July to ensure readiness for practice. In Year One there are a total of 200 days on placement. This includes a 30-day Contrasting Learning Experience in a children and families setting. Participants undertake a combination of face-to-face and online distance learning throughout their placement. They are awarded a PGDip in Social Work Practice at the end of Year One and register with Social Work England.

In Year Two, the newly qualified participants are employed by the organisation and complete their ASYE and work towards a master’s degree in Social Work. The Consultant Social Worker does not necessarily take responsibility for supervising them during Year Two.

Throughout the programme, participants study mental health social work and evidence-based social interventions at three levels (individuals, families and communities) which will become the foundation of their social work practice.

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| **Duties and responsibilities** |

**Key accountabilities**

Management of the Think Ahead unit

* Responsible for all cases allocated to the Think Ahead unit - ensuring that effective social work support is provided in each case in accordance with relevant legislation and local and national policy
* Role model outstanding evidence-based social work practice to Think Ahead participants
* Evaluate the effectiveness of social work interventions using routine outcome measures

Development of a high quality practice learning experience

* Allocate work to participants and develop their practice skills in line with their learning needs.
* Work with line manager to ensure a sufficiently varied caseload, so that participants are best-placed to become practice-ready at the point of qualification.
* Provide individual supervision, weekly unit case discussion and ad hoc support to participants.
* Work closely with participants as they are exposed to varied and increasingly complex casework as their placement progresses.
* Promote a growing degree of autonomy in participants’ practice to ensure practice-readiness at the point of qualification, while retaining accountability for all cases held within the unit.
* Support participants to develop leadership qualities in practice.
* Be proactive in suggesting improvements to the CSW and participant experience as a part of Think Ahead feedback initiatives.
* Active engagement in coaching sessions with Think Ahead Practice Specialist.
* Act as an ambassador for Think Ahead within your organisation, raising awareness of the programme and of the models of intervention that comprise the Think Ahead curriculum.

Assessment and performance management

* Formal assessment of written and practical work completed by Think Ahead participants on placement, including regular direct observations of practice, according to the Middlesex University assessment timelines.
* Complete midway and final reports for each participant at each placement stage.
* Provide feedback to participants, addressing performance issues together with Academic Tutor.
* Play and active role in improving the quality and management of social workers within the whole of the Mental Health Service and share learning from the Think Ahead Project
* Assist managers to address poor performance and quality concerns with social workers within the Mental Health Service
* Actively share learning from the Think Ahead Project within management teams and social work forums
* Assist Managers within the mental health service to support newly qualified social workers through the AYSE process and supervision and appraisal processes

Learning and development activities

* All Consultant Social Workers are required to attend teaching days on social interventions in mental health at Middlesex University in London, plus two days’ structured self-learning.
* Consultant Social Workers will also be required to complete assignments, direct observations with their academic tutor and other private study outside of teaching days towards their Post-Graduate Certificate in Advanced Social Work.
* There will be up to six further teaching days for Consultant Social Workers on practice education and supervision which will also be based at Middlesex University. If a Consultant Social Worker does not have PEPS2, they will be required to attend all of these days. We will confirm the dates shortly.
* The location for the teaching days will be Middlesex University, London with additional remote learning online. There will be a requirement for Consultant Social Workers to stay overnight at the training location.

Personal Qualities

* Leadership: the ability to act as a professional role model, demonstrate initiative, and engage others and enable them to achieve their goals.
* To act as Champion on social care issues:

1. Providing professional support, supervision and consultation with Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs), and mental health Social Workers
2. Providing advice and guidance to staff and managers on Adult Safeguarding issues.
3. To ensure that Children and Adults Services quality standards are promoted, maintained and developed. This will include providing advice to managers in relation to complaints, the leadership and participation in the audit of social care practice to ensure the quality of care is continually improved.
4. To provide advice on social care issues and undertake professional social care supervision of mental health service members (including other professionals) at the discretion of the relevant managers.
5. To provide support and supervision to NQSW’s on the ASYE programme.
6. To act as a source of expertise in relation to the Care Act, Mental Capacity Act. Mental Health Act, Continuing Care criteria and other relevant legislation
7. To assist Social Workers in their continued professional development by offering; mentoring and direct observation. To provide advice to managers in relation to Durham County Council Human Resources issues, e.g., support for managers undertaking the appraisal process in relation to social care staff.
8. The post holder will also be expected to provide a professional resource to current social care day service provision, promoting values of recovery and social inclusion.
9. To support the Social Care lead and Service Managers in enhancing the role of Social Work and Social Care in the delivery of mental health services in the County. This will take place in the context of National and Countywide evidence of positive practice developments.
10. To develop and promote good practice networks. The post-holder will also be expected to hold a reduced, complex caseload.

* It is anticipated that this post may vary in balance of duties depending upon the circumstances of the County.
* To assist with training and development as required, e.g. practice leading, participation in, or arranging workshops and action learning sets, sharing good practice, etc.
* Where appropriate to undertake the Lead Officer role in recruitment panels.
* To manage a reduced, complex caseload of service users.
* Commitment to continuous professional development.

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| **Organisational responsibilities** |

* **Values and behaviours**

To demonstrate and be a role model for the council’s values and behaviours to promote and encourage positive behaviours, enhancing the quality and integrity of the services we provide.

* **Smarter working, transformation and design principles**

To seek new and innovative ideas to work smarter, irrespective of job role, and to be creative, innovative and empowered. Understand the operational impact of transformational change and service design principles to support new ways of working and to meet customer needs.

* **Communication**

To communicate effectively with our customers, managers, peers and partners and to work collaboratively to provide the best possible public service. Communication between teams, services and partner organisations is imperative in providing the best possible service to our public.

* **Health, Safety and Wellbeing**

To take responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing in accordance with the council’s Health and Safety policy and procedures.

* **Equality and diversity**

To promote a society that gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live, free from discrimination and prejudice and ensure our commitment is put into practice. All employees are responsible for eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination in everything that they do.

* **Confidentiality**

To work in a way that does not divulge personal and/or confidential information and follow the council’s policies and procedures in relation to data protection and security of information.

* **Climate Change**

To contribute to our corporate responsibility in relation to climate change by considering and limiting the carbon impact of activities during the course of your work, wherever possible.

* **Performance management**

To promote a culture whereby performance management is ingrained and the highest of standards and performance are achieved by all. Contribute to the council’s Performance and Development Review processes to ensure continuous learning and improvement and to increase organisational performance.

* **Quality assurance (for applicable posts)**

To set, monitor and evaluate standards at individual, team and service level so that the highest standards of service are delivered and maintained. Use data, where appropriate, to enhance the quality of service provision and support decision making processes.

* **Management and leadership (for applicable posts)**

To provide vision and leadership to inspire and empower all employees so they can reach their full potential and contribute to the council’s values and behaviours. Managers and leaders must engage in personal development to ensure they are equipped to lead transformational change; always searching for better ways to do things differently to meet organisational changes and service priorities.

* **Financial management (for applicable posts)**

To manage a designated budget, ensuring that the service achieves value for money in all circumstances through the monitoring of expenditure and the early identification of any financial irregularity.

*The above is not exhaustive and the post holder will be expected to undertake any duties which may reasonably fall within the level of responsibility and the competence of the post as directed by your manager.*

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| Person specification | | |
|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Qualifications | * social work qualification at degree level and current Social Work England registration * aptitude and intellectual curiosity for further study at post-graduate level | * Practice Educator Professional Standards Stage 2 qualification * post-qualification CPD in social work practice and/or training and leading others * Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Social Work |
| Experience | * significant social work experience in community mental health settings * highly skilled in mental health social work with individuals, groups and communities * direct experience of supervising students in practice and in supporting the application of social models of practice. | * experience of supervising or mentoring other practitioners |
| Skills & Knowledge | * excellent risk assessment and risk management skills * ability to employ own knowledge, experience, practice skills, networks and values to create a rich and inspirational learning experience * confidence in critically and constructively reflecting on others’ social work practice * knowledge of relevant legislation and policy, with the ability to apply this knowledge to practice * awareness of theories, models of intervention and research activity that underpin best practice in adult mental health social work * excellent analytical, influencing and negotiation skills * excellent written and verbal communication skills * IT literacy * Current driving licence/ car owner or access to a means of mobility support. (If driving must have current valid driving licence and appropriate insurance |  |
| Personal Qualities | * We expect Consultant Social Workers to role-model the personal qualities that we expect of our participants: * Adaptability: resilience and flexibility in changing circumstances with the ability to work under pressure and deal with uncertain or unexpected outcomes. Managing workplace stress, an organised work style and the ability to prioritise to meet deadlines are also important. * Motivation: a personal commitment to improving people’s lives through better mental health, with an understanding of the positive impact of social work and Think Ahead’s mission. * Relationship building: Empathy and respect for all individuals, with the ability to build relationships and understand people’s motives and perspectives. * Problem-solving: The ability to objectively analyse situations, using evidence and clear judgement to generate effective solutions. * Self-awareness: The ability to understand, and reflect critically on, both your own personal development and how your actions affect others. * Communication: The ability to collaborate with and influence a wide range of people, in person and through written communication |  |