Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POST TITLE:** Peer Employment Specialist – Individual Placement and Support (IPS)

**BASE:** London House, Bracknell

**BAND:** 5

**LINE MANAGER:** Gurpreet Athwal, IPS Team Lead

**PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** Service Managers & Team Leads

## Living our vision, values and behaviours at Berkshire Healthcare

Our Trust's vision is 'To be a great place to get care, a great place to give care.'

This vision guides everything we do – for our patients, their carers, their families, our staff, and our partners. To achieve it, we are committed to a strong set of **values** that underpin the way we work:

- **Caring** for and about you is our top priority – we put people at the centre of everything we do.
- **Committed** to providing good quality, safe services – we strive for excellence in care and in our ways of working.
- **Working together** with you to develop innovative solutions – we collaborate with patients, carers, colleagues, and communities to deliver care that makes a difference.

These values are brought to life through our four **Trust Behaviours**, which are essential to how we work and the culture we create:

- **Compassionate** – Motivated to positively impact the wellbeing of self and others.
- **Curious** – Listening, learning and exploring new ideas and ways of working to continually improve what we do.
- **Inclusive** – Valuing diversity and championing equity by ensuring everyone feels recognised. able to contribute and committed to actively addressing unfairness.
- **Perseverance** – Demonstrates resilience and flexibility even during periods of uncertainty, to achieve goals that contribute to high-quality care and services.

## JOB SUMMARY

This post is full time as Peer Employment Specialist (PES) within Berkshire Healthcare's Individual Placement and Support (IPS) employment service team.

The Peer Employment Specialist will join an IPS team working under the direction of the IPS Team Lead to deliver IPS as a vital contribution to recovery for clients of specialist mental health services across Berkshire. The role will have a key focus on integration with an emphasis on generating referrals and actively promoting employment as part of recovery. You will be a core part of your clinical teams and manage a caseload of up to 20 people at any one time. You will use your lived experience of accessing secondary mental health services to support clients with mental health needs on their path to

fulfilling employment. Working with a multi-disciplinary team, you'll help clients find paid roles that align with their goals and foster a supportive referral system alongside your team.

You'll follow the IPS approach, for which training will be given. Working directly with all relevant stakeholders – including clients, clinical staff, consultant psychiatrists and employers, Job Centre Plus, and other employment support providers – you'll aim to enable most of your clients to gain, sustain or retain paid employment.

Our service operates across the Thames Valley so travel across our sites will be expected, some of these sites are not accessible via public transport. This role operates 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**Integration and Referral Generation**

- Act as a visible and active presence within CMHS, promoting IPS and employment as a core part of recovery.
- Build strong working relationships across CMHS to generate appropriate and timely IPS referrals.
- Attend and contribute to CMHS caseload reviews, identifying individuals who may benefit from IPS support.
- Support the Vocational Alignment Process (VAP) by helping to embed employment conversations into routine clinical practice.

**Clinical Team Presence and Engagement**

- Maintain regular CPE (Care Pathway/Clinical Pathway Engagement) presence, contributing a lived-experience perspective to team discussions.
- Work closely with specialist services such as Community Rehab Enhanced Support Team (CREST), Intensive Management of Personality Disorders and Clinical Therapies Team (IMPACTT), and perinatal services to name a few promoting IPS and supporting pathways into employment.
- Collaborate with the occupational therapy service working on the wards to ensure inpatients are aware of the support which will be available to them upon discharge from hospital
- Work with clinical teams to ensure IPS is offered to all patients with significant mental health issues - whether referred for a one team assessment or already open to a clinical service to ensure employment support is considered early and proactively.

**IPS Delivery and Caseload Management**

- Hold a caseload of around 20 clients, supporting individuals to explore employment goals in line with IPS principles.
- Act as a vocational generalist, supporting people across a range of employment interests and pathways.
- Share lived experience appropriately to instill hope, build motivation, and reduce stigma around work and mental health.
- Support clients to identify strengths, preferences, and employment goals, signposting to Employment Specialists where appropriate.

**Collaboration and Communication**

- Work closely with IPS Employment Specialists, clinicians, and MDT members to ensure integrated and coordinated support.
- Provide feedback to teams on barriers, themes, and opportunities to improve access to IPS.
- Contribute to service development by identifying gaps in engagement or referral pathways.

**Professional Practice**

- Maintain accurate and timely records in line with service and IPS requirements.
- Work within agreed boundaries, safeguarding policies, and confidentiality standards.
- Engage in supervision, reflective practice, and ongoing development related to PES and IPS.

## GENERAL

1. This is a varied role where you'll be expected to undertake the range of responsibilities specified above, working together with your line manager and colleagues to ensure that the activities of this post make a real difference to our patients. 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'll be expected to role model equality of opportunity, live the values and always 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'll 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 don't 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

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.

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**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.

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**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

| **Education and Qualifications** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Essential** | **Measured by** | **Desirable** | **Measured by** |
| - Educated to a degree level (in any sector) or equivalent workplace experience, this can include one or more of the below<br>- Experience within the health and social care sector<br>- Experience within employment support services | Application | Mentorship or clinical supervision training | Application |
| **Continuous professional development** | | | |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** | | **Measured by** |
| N/A | - A good understanding of the principles and practice of supported employment<br>- Trained in the IPS approach<br>- Additional employability/careers counselling qualification, such as:<br>• Level 3 Diploma in Employability Services Sector Qualification<br>• QCF in Advice & Guidance (Level 3) | | Application |
| **Lived experience relevant to the job** | | | |
| **Essential** | **Measured by** | **Desirable** | **Measured by** |
| Own personal lived experience of accessing secondary mental health services | Application and Interview | Paid or unpaid experience as a peer support worker | Application |
| Own personal lived experience of recovery from mental health difficulties | Application and Interview | Accredited certificate in Life Coaching | Application |
| Experience of maintaining (self-defined) recovery for a substantial period | Application and Interview | Undertaken peer support worker training (preferably accredited). | Application |
| **Previous experience (Paid/Unpaid Relevant to the job)** | | | |
| **Essential** | **Measured by** | **Desirable** | **Measured by** |
| Experience of communicating and working with people on a one-to-one basis. | Application and Interview | Experience of working with people with mental health difficulties or a similar client group within the health, social services, or voluntary sector | Application and Interview |
| Experience of working within diverse communities. | Application and Interview | Experience of supporting people to obtain or keep work. | Application and Interview |

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|---|---|---|---|
| A commitment to learning about and working within the Individual Placement and Support Employment (IPS) model. | Application and Interview | An understanding of the Equality Act 2010 | Application and Interview |
| Experience of supporting people to obtain or keep work or achieve other recovery and inclusion goals. | Application | N/A | N/A |
| **Knowledge, Skills, Abilities** | | | |
| **Essential** | **Measured by** | **Desirable** | **Measured by** |
| A commitment to learning about and working within the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model. | Application and Interview | An understanding of the principles and practices of supported employment or the IPS model. | Application and Interview |
| Ability to engage and build rapport and trust with service users and clinical teams.<br>Able to demonstrate empathy, tenacity and hope when working alongside people with severe mental health issues | Application and Interview | Able to collaborate successfully within a mixed-disciplinary team applying effective communication and collaborative working skills | Application and Interview |
| Good verbal and written communication skills. | Application and Interview | An understanding of the Equality Act 2010. | Application and Interview |
| Good presentation, negotiation, and marketing skills. | Application and Interview | An understanding of the employment needs and difficulties of people who experience mental health challenges. | Application and Interview |
| Ability to engage with employers using a variety of methods such as face-to-face contact, social media, phone, and email. | Application and Interview | Basic counselling and coaching skills. | Application and Interview |
| Working knowledge of a broad range of occupations and jobs. | Application and Interview | Ability to provide vocational assessments and profiling. | Application and Interview |
| Strong word processing/computing skills, including power point | Application and Interview | N/A | N/A |
| Ability to work independently of direct supervision | Interview | N/A | N/A |
| **Additional requirements**<br>- A preparedness to work flexible hours through prior arrangement as the needs of the job dictate (e.g. some evenings)<br>- Ability to travel between locations using own or public transport | | | |

July 2026/KH




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