

## Job Description

Job Title: Best Interest Assessor/ Senior Practitioner

Directorate: Adult Social Care

Reports to: DoLS MCA manager

Location: Scott House/ Hybrid working

Hours: 37 hours per week

Post type: Permanent

Pay Grade: P2 - £41,045 - £44,062

### Overall purpose of the job

Cambridgeshire County Council's approach to social care is proactive, preventative, and personalised. This Best Interest Assessor role is key to achieving the aspirations of Cambridgeshire, to enable people to exert choice and control and ultimately to live healthy and fulfilled lives, where their human rights are upheld.

In the role you will be working with a team of Best Interest Assessor, DoLS coordinators and the DoLS Team Manager. You will need to be a strong team player whilst also being able to work independently, with confidence in your independent decision-making ability.

Your role as a Best Interest Assessor is to support the Supervisory body to meet its' statutory functions in relation to DoLS. You will need to have an excellent working knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and associated codes of practice. You will also need good working knowledge of other legislation such as The Care Act (2014) and The Mental Health Act.

The role includes but is not limited to:- completing high quality Best Interest Assessments and Mental Capacity Assessments, supporting with prioritising the referrals that come into the team, acting as a source of expert knowledge on Mental Capacity, Best Interests and DoLS for other internal and external professionals and working in a duty role. As a Senior Practitioner you may also be asked to deputise for the manager.

The DoLS team is a county wide team so a flexible approach is essential as the work may take you anywhere across Cambridgeshire County and neighbouring counties.

### Main accountabilities

Main accountabilities	
1.	Respond to need

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To undertake Mental Capacity Assessments and Best Interest Assessments in Care Home and Hospital settings, as part of the DoLS process.</li> <li>• To prioritise DoLS referrals into the team, using the ADASS prioritisation tool.</li> <li>• To provide professional leadership in situations which have highly complex case arrangements relating to mental capacity and deprivation of liberty, which may involve risk, complexity and safety of the service user and others.</li> <li>• To provide high quality written Best Interest Assessments for courts and other legal purposes. Reports should be concise, informative, based on analysis of complex evidence to support problem solving and resolution.</li> <li>• To be willing to train as a signatory and support with this work.</li> <li>• To provide cover for the Team Manager during short term absences.</li> <li>• To work flexibly to meet the needs of the service and be willing to undertake any other duties that fall within the responsibilities and grade of the post.</li> </ul>
2.	<p><b>Safeguarding and risk management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have a strong working knowledge of Safeguarding frameworks and be able to recognise where abuse or neglect is occurring and respond to this appropriately, referring to other teams and professionals as is needed.</li> <li>• Assess and balance risk and protective factors within the Best Interests framework.</li> <li>• Be able to apply effective risk management to complex situations, understanding when to take positive risks as appropriate.</li> </ul>
3.	<p><b>Service and team development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To lead the induction of Best Interest Assessors and Adult Support Co-ordinators as required.</li> <li>• To work with creativity and proactivity, to find solutions to challenges and issues that arise within DoLS practice.</li> <li>• To contribute to the development of services – including policy and guidance to promote new ways of working, taking account of national initiatives and performance indicators.</li> <li>• Take a role in the development of quality assurance systems within the team, ensuring the team achieve best practice.</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>Partnership Working</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To represent Cambridgeshire County Council in multi-agency networks and meetings, working jointly with partners to promote independence and choice for individuals.</li> <li>• To work regularly with clients, families, advocates, other professionals and care providers, to achieve positive outcomes for the client.</li> <li>• Work in partnership with other organisations at a strategic level to achieve positive</li> </ul>

	outcomes for service users and carers.
5.	<p><b>Professional development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and update knowledge regarding social policy and Best Interest Assessor practice and be fully informed of organisational policy and procedures and relevant legislation, acting as a resource for the team and helping to develop others.</li> <li>• Maintain annual Best Interest Assessor refreshers and work continually throughout the year to maintain knowledge of case law changes effecting Mental Capacity and DoLS practice.</li> <li>• To be able to deliver training briefings on DoLS practice to other internal and external colleagues.</li> <li>• To provide shadowing and support opportunities to trainee Best Interest Assessors or other colleagues seeking shadowing opportunities.</li> <li>• To take a key role in promoting and developing service user empowerment and recognise diversity and anti-discriminatory practice in all professional practice in the team.</li> <li>• To take responsibility for own professional development and record Continuous Professional Development.</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>Professional Values, Behaviours and Standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out duties in a timely and responsive manner, in line with Cambridgeshire County Council Standards, the Professional Capability Framework and Cambridgeshire County Council behaviours – working together, integrity, respect, excellence.</li> <li>• Keep and maintain accurate service user records, in line with professional requirements and departmental recording methods.</li> <li>• Is an ambassador for the profession internally and externally.</li> <li>• To be aware of the responsibilities to maintain a safe and healthy environment for visitors and staff.</li> </ul>

## Person Specification

### Qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

Minimum level of qualifications required for this job

Qualifications Required	Subject	Essential/ Desirable
Degree level qualification	Recognised Social Work, Nursing or Occupational Therapy qualification with at least two years post qualifying experience.	E
Relevant specialist post qualifying and or post graduate training	Qualification as a Best Interest Assessor	E
	Current Social Work England registration or equivalent professional registration if from a nursing or Occupational Therapy background	E
	Actively undertake a specialist role e.g. Practice Educator or AMHP or agreement to undertake within the first year.	E
	Approved Mental Health Practitioner	D

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this job

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
<b>Knowledge</b>		
	Proven knowledge, experience and understanding of needs of vulnerable adults including environmental factors and risk and protective factors.	E
	Working knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act/ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and associated codes of practice.	E
	Up to date knowledge of case law relevant to mental capacity and DoLS.	E
	Proven previous experience of summarising, analysing, and evaluating complex information	E
	Knowledge of relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, and procedures.	E
	Knowledge of the personalisation agenda	D
	Knowledge and awareness of issues relating to communities from different racial and cultural backgrounds and Equal Opportunities.	E
<b>Skills</b>		
	Ability to write concise reports and have excellent verbal communication skills	E
	Ability to create a rapport and build relationships with clients and their families	E

Ability to prioritise tasks, manage own workload and be accountable for case work	E
Able to work with a person centred, strengths-based approach.	E
Ability to operate in a fast pace, changing environment.	E
Active promotion of equality, diversity, and inclusion in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.	E
To be able to thrive in a complex and demanding environment.	E
Excellent communication and negotiation skills including the ability to deal with complex issues in a sensitive and appropriate manner.	E
Ability to lead and direct team members and other colleagues regarding professional practice	E
Excellent IT skills and ability to use a variety of IT devices, systems, and databases.	E
Ability to work from a variety of locations and travel countywide.	E
<b>Experience</b>	
Experience of working as part of a multi-disciplinary team.	E
Experience of identifying and assessing need, formulating, and implementing effective social work interventions.	E
Experience of using information management systems to produce good quality data in a variety of formats.	D
Experience of negotiating to reach a resolution.	E
Experience of successfully effecting change.	D
Broad range of experience in multi agency working.	E