**Autism Support Officer**

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| Reporting to: | Director of Family Support |
| Base: | Based at home and working within the Northern sector of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT). |
| Hours: | Part-time (30 hours per week). This is a fixed term post until 13th January 2027 |
| Salary: | £28,598 pro rata (£22,878.40 for 30 hours) |
| Main purpose of job: | The Autism Support Officer will provide parents/carers with  information and practical resources to enhance their knowledge and  understanding of autism through provision of parent  workshops and individualised home visits, focusing on  establishing and maintaining visual structure for children before  and after an autism diagnosis.  The ASO will also provide family members with  ‘signposting’, knowledge and support and will have the  opportunity to make a difference.  . |

1. **Specific Responsibilities**

* Work in partnership with line manager accepting referrals based on agreed criteria and service provision within the Northern Trust area
* Plan and facilitate small group workshops for parents, focusing on increasing understanding of autism, its impact on family dynamics, and provide practical strategies to support their child’s development and well-being.
* Provide 1:1 individualised home visit with parents/carers to support them in introducing and maintaining visual strategies within the home environment, to improve outcomes for their child.
* Produce individualised practical resources for use in the home environment.
* Work with parents to help them recognise their strengths and become more confident parents by providing information on autism, support and practical resources regarding visual structure.
* Delivery of small workshops, diary management and planning of family visits.
* Link parents with local support groups so they can feel supported, share ideas and learn about new coping strategies.
* Build links with statutory and voluntary providers in the area supporting (parental) family needs and promoting the work of Autism NI.
* Maintain records and provide monthly reports to the Director of Family Support.
* Keep up to date with current legislation and appropriate regional strategies relation to autism, children and families.

1. **Confidentiality**

Maintain confidentiality for all areas of Autism NI, its staff and its work. Comply with Autism NI confidentiality and data protection procedures. The nature of the work within the charity entrusts people with confidential information about people with Autism, their families, carers and staff. Any breach of confidentiality will constitute gross misconduct.

1. **General Responsibilities**

* Co-operate with all Autism NI staff in maintaining good relationships with outside agencies and the general public in order to uphold the charity’s image and win increased support for its work.
* Promote a positive image of Autism and Autism NI.
* Ensure that conduct within and outside work does not conflict with professional expectations of Autism NI.
* Actively support, promote and ensure awareness and observation of Autism NI policies including Equal Opportunities, Data Protection, Fire, Health & Safety and Safeguarding Children and Adults.
* Co-operate with all Autism NI staff in maintaining harmonious inter-personal relations.
* Attend meetings at various locations within NHSCT, staff meetings and training as required.
* Ensure the respect, dignity and rights of privacy of service users/clients as far as possible.
* Participate in regular Management, Support and Development sessions with the Director of Family Support.
* Carry out any other duties as are within scope, spirit and purpose of the job, the title of the post and its grading as requested by the Chief Executive.

# NOTE:

The job description reflects the present requirements of the post. As duties and responsibilities change and develop the job description will be reviewed and subject to amendment in consultation with the post holder.

**EMPLOYEE SPECIFICATION**

**Autism Support Officer**

1. A 3rd level qualification or equivalent in a relevant social care or educational discipline

At least one year of post qualification experience working in a multi-disciplinary team providing.

early intervention strategies with families who have an autistic child.

**Or**

Certificate level qualification (minimum NVQ Level 3 or equivalent) in a relevant discipline e.g. Childcare, Social Care or Health & Social Care.

At least five years’ experience working in a multi-disciplinary team providing early intervention strategies to families and children between 0-18 years in a home or community setting.

**AND**

* At least one year of inter-agency or partnership working experience
* A sound knowledge of autism as demonstrated by training, qualifications and/or experience.
* Awareness of the impact and support requirements for parents following diagnosis
* Experience of planning and delivering group sessions.
* Ability to monitor progress of supports through use of assessments and monthly reports.
* MS Office skills, including the use of PowerPoint, and email and internet.
* A valid driving license and access to transport appropriate for the post.

(Consideration will be given to candidates, who because of a disability, cannot hold a driving license but they must have access to a mode of transport that allows them to fulfill the duties of the post).

1. **Desirable qualifications and/or experience**

* An accredited qualification in autism
* An accredited qualification in training or presentation skills

1. **Personal qualities**

* Good communication skills
* Ability to work independently and be self-motivated
* Organisational skills and ability to manage time effectively
* Empathy
* Tact and diplomacy
* Ability to manage boundaries
* Confidentiality
* Committed to Autism NI’s policy of equality of opportunity
* Ability to work within the mission, ethos and values of the organisation.

**Pre employment:**

* All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory ACCESS NI check and references.

**Working conditions of this post are indicated below:-**

**Travel**

* Will be required to travel throughout the Northern Trust area to carry out family visits.
* Other occasional travel may be required to attend training or conferences.

**Anti-social hours**

* Will be required to work flexible hours including evenings and weekends to ensure service is available to all families. There is a “Time Off in Lieu” policy and procedure.

**Working environment**

* Based at home and travelling throughout the Northern Health & Social Care Trust area with designated office days.