

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title</b>	Best Interests Assessor (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards)		
<b>Directorate</b>	Adults Services		
<b>Reporting to</b>	MCA and DoLS Service Manager		
<b>Grade</b>	10		
<b>Evaluation ref:</b>	H1404	<b>Job ref:</b>	<b>Family</b>
<b>Role purpose</b>			
<p>To undertake Best Interests Assessments under the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) in order to protect the human rights of service users who may lack mental capacity to consent to their care arrangements. To ensure recommendations arising from DoLS assessments are followed up. To advise professionals, partner agencies and service users family members about the Mental Capacity Act and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.</p>			
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Common Elements:</b>			
<p><b>A. Make ongoing assessments of allocated cases to reflect individual circumstances including assessment of risk, enabling independence and need to ensure that service users are protected from significant harm.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Responsible for a rolling caseload of specialist DoLS assessments (3-4 per week full time equivalent), receiving and responding to requests for advice from various sources.</li> <li>2. Comply with appropriate legislation, policy and procedures.</li> <li>3. Assess client situations in a way which maximises their participation and considers the views of family members and relevant professionals.</li> <li>4. Engage with people who may be objecting to the service provision made for them and who may be a risk to self or others.</li> <li>5. The need for sensitive negotiation when assessing service users and carers where there is conflict or lack of insight.</li> <li>6. Effectively manage people presenting in crisis needing a quick resolution, using relevant legislation and resources.</li> <li>7. Provide advice and guidance about the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.</li> </ol> <p><b>B. Prepare and present reports as necessary to facilitate proper decisions being made in respect of service users.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide information, written assessments, reports and statements to support other service professionals, managers and agencies in making decisions related to care. In particular use agreed assessment formats to make recommendations to The Supervisory Body about the authorisation of deprivation of liberty.</li> <li>2. Maintain client records to a high standard in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and procedures.</li> </ol>			

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### **C. Establish appropriate professional relationships with service users, their families and other professionals to enable effective partnerships in the provision of services.**

1. Promote people's equality, diversity and rights, by developing, maintaining and evaluating systems and structures in an anti-discriminatory way.
2. Establish appropriate professional relationships when working with service users and their families and carers.
3. Contribute to multi agency team working and participate in team meetings. Act as link worker as required advising other professionals relating to specific areas of expertise.
4. Communicate with individual's families and carers to address issues which affect their health and social wellbeing.

### **D. Build upon existing knowledge and practice with research and training to develop individual skills and new approaches for improvement in service provision.**

1. Work with IT systems relating to client information, complying with practice requirements. A significant amount of work is involved in the input, manipulation and retrieval of information.
2. Develop one's own knowledge and practice and contribute to the development of the work of the DoLS team and more widely within the adult social care service.
3. Participate in agreed further relevant training activities as required by the legislation.

### **Other Elements and Specialised Areas:**

1. Provide learning opportunities for qualified professionals undertaking the Best Interest Assessor qualification under the direction of the DoLS service manager.
2. As and when appropriate to develop an area of expertise and liaise with other agencies as necessary.

### **Impact**

#### **Facts & Figures**

- Typically hold an active case load of 3-4 assessments per week if full time.

#### **Supporting Processes**

- Ability to prioritise and work with competing deadlines and frequently changing demands. To understand and interpret legislation to meet service requirements.
- Make professional recommendations about the authorisation of care arrangements amounting to deprivation of liberty.
- No special physical effort is normally required, although there may be occasions when manual handling relating to clients and equipment will be required. Work is undertaken in a variety of environments, including offices, hospitals, and care homes, and rarely, in client's homes. It is recognised that work may involve a risk to personal health and safety from time to time.

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- Occasional work alone outside of the office and to adhere to lone working arrangements and health & safety policies.

### Contacts & Relationships

It is an essential element of the job to build and maintain a range of close contacts and relationships with service users and other professional staff. Frequent contacts with statutory bodies, public services, and voluntary agencies as an integral part of assessments and care provision. Frequent involvement in multi-agency and joint working arrangements.

### Knowledge / Experience / Skills

	Essential	Desirable	
<b>Knowledge, Skills &amp; Experience</b>			
Detailed knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act and DoLS, and of associated legislation such as the Mental Health Act and the Care Act.	X		
Up to date knowledge of relevant case law.	X		
Understanding of physical and mental health conditions and disabilities, which can affect mental capacity, and of the range of care services to meet the needs of people with these conditions.	X		
Knowledge and understanding of social care practice.	X		
Evidence of ability to build and maintain a range of close contacts and relationships with service users and other professional staff.	X		
Sound verbal and written communication skills.	X		
<b>Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications</b>			
Professional qualification as defined by the DoLS regulations (Social Worker/Occupational Therapist/Nurse/Psychologist) and current registration with the relevant professional body.	X		
Evidence of Best Interest Assessor award.	X		
Evidence of further relevant training for the BIA role within the last 12 months.	X		
<b>Working Conditions</b>			

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### Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

### Corporate Responsibilities

- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practice.
- Deliver the aims of the council's equality, diversity and inclusion policies; health, safety and wellbeing of self and others; and Organisational values in everything you do, ensuring team members are also aware of their responsibilities and maintaining their understanding that Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

Date: November 2024