

Model Job Description for Designated Medical Officer (DMO) for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (England)

British Association for Community Child Health and British Academy of Childhood Disability (2014)

Job Purpose: To co-ordinate and improve health SEND planning and practice within XXX (District or Districts)

Sessional Commitment: 2 programmed activities per week
(To cover one Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Local Authority (LA), with child population of up to 70,000. Additional PAs if covering more than one CCG/LA or larger child population¹)

Based: Paediatric and Child Health Services

Accountable to: Provider Trust Chief Executive Officer and CCG Lead Commissioner

Person Specification:

The DMO in SEND should:

1. Hold medical qualifications and be employed at Consultant (or equivalent), in a Trust hosting Children's Services²
2. Have higher professional training in a relevant paediatric subspecialty e.g. Paediatric Neurodisability or Community Child Health or be able to show that they have acquired Level 3 competences in neurodisability, and are able to manage children with complex health needs
3. Have substantial clinical experience as a clinician in the field of SEND
4. Have up to date knowledge of legislation and regulations relating to SEND
5. Be clinically active in relevant fields such as neurodevelopment and disability
6. Have good negotiating and leadership skills
7. Have an enhanced DRB check

Duties:

1. To work closely with the paediatric multi-disciplinary team in supporting all activities necessary to ensure that the health provider services and CCG meet their responsibilities for children with SEND.
2. To provide overall strategic direction for the local health service in meeting statutory requirements for SEND, identifying priorities for development and facilitating improvement in implementation
3. **Inter-agency Responsibilities:**
 - a. Sit on relevant health and interagency committees
 - b. Advise Education Services, schools and other relevant agencies (particularly social care) on health matters relevant to SEND

¹ Amount of addition PAs for larger child population to be agreed between CCGs and Providers, and not necessarily on a pro rata basis of 2 PAs per each 70,000 child population. 2 PA is recommended as a minimum per DMO post.

² This model description has been developed jointly by BACCH and BACD for a Designated Medical Officer. If a district decides to recruit a professional from another background, this job description, including the person specification and scope of the role, may need to be modified, and should also state how the medical role is to be fulfilled.

- c. Support schools with their duties under the 'Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions' guidance, in conjunction with the multidisciplinary health team

4. **Advisory Role**

- a. Advise the LA and CCG on questions of strategy and planning with regard to SEND
- b. Advise on practice guidance and policies for those working within health, ensuring that they are appropriately reviewed and of a high standard
- c. Advise the CCG, in consultation with the Health and Wellbeing Board, informing commissioning priorities for SEND and contributing to Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

5. **Clinical Role and contribution to individual Education Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment**

- a. Be clinically active, including in children's neurodevelopment and disability services. This should be encompassed within the job description as part of their clinical role. This may include health assessments and provision of reports for EHC needs assessments.
- b. Be responsible for ensuring that identification, assessment, planning and health support is carried out for all CYP undergoing EHC needs assessment in the area.

6. **Co-ordination and Communication:**

- a. Provide a point of contact for local partners including service users and voluntary sector services, offering advice on health and SEND to ensure notification is made to the appropriate body/person.
- b. Engage and liaise with all children's health service providers relevant to the locality, including paediatricians, specialist nurses, therapists, child and adolescent mental health services and palliative care services to enable implementation of statutory requirements for SEND, and to decide with them an appropriate division of responsibilities relating to SEND
- c. Engage with relevant adult health services in delivering the statutory requirements for SEND
- d. Liaise with, advise and support Primary Care and all other providers of healthcare on SEND issues
- e. Liaise with other Designated Professionals e.g. for Safeguarding and for Looked After Children, improving support for vulnerable children with SEND

7. **Policy and Procedures:**

The DMO will be responsible for ensuring that health components of SEND policy and procedures are updated and communicated. This may include:

- Notification of children who have or may have SEND
- Health assessment and reports for EHC needs assessment
- Recommendation and delivery of health provisions in EHC plans
- Resolution of disagreement on health issues/provision with parents and young people, and with the Local Authority
- Personal budget for health provision within EHC plans

The DMO is not expected to establish and maintain all of the above policy and procedures, but is responsible for supporting relevant organisations and services in their development and dissemination

8. Training responsibilities:

Advise on training requirements for NHS, Education and Social Care staff relating to SEND and participate in the provision of training.

9. Monitoring and improvement:

- a. Advise NHS providers and commissioners on the information requirements to monitor the care of CYP with SEND
- b. Provide clinical expertise and for professionals contributing to SEND processes
- c. Oversee improvement plans

10. Personal Development:

Attend relevant regional and national Continuing Professional Development events in order to maintain up-to-date skills in the area, equivalent to at least 4 CPD points per year. This may need to be increased according to individual needs.

11. Appraisal:

Annually, by accredited consultant appraiser, covering both provider and commissioning roles

12. Accountability:

- a. To the Chief Executive of the employing Trust and CCG lead commissioner.

Job Plan

PA's/week

Total: 2.0 (covering one CCG/LA, with child population up to 70,000)³

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