Staffordshire County Council

Service Manager – Emergency Duty Service

Grade 13

About the Service

Our strategic ambition for children and young people in Staffordshire: Happy, Healthy, Safe, Belonging and Achieving.

The Emergency Duty Service operates 24/7 outside normal office hours, providing a statutory crisis response across three domains:

- Children's Services – including child protection, emergency placements, Section 47 decision making, and immediate safeguarding action
- Adults Services – including Care Act duties, urgent assessments, emergency placements, and protection of vulnerable adults
- Mental Health Act Response – supporting MHA assessments, coordinating with AMHPs, police and health partners, and managing out of hours mental health crisis work

The service delivers urgent safeguarding interventions, crisis management, emergency placements, Mental Health Act responsibilities, and coordinated multi agency response when situations cannot be safely delayed to daytime services.

About the Role

The Service Manager – Emergency Duty Service provides strategic and operational leadership for the countywide out of hours service, ensuring the delivery of safe, timely and lawful decision making across Children's, Adults' and Mental Health statutory responsibilities.

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The role provides direct line management to Team Managers and oversight of all EDS practitioners, ensuring consistent professional practice, workforce resilience and robust out of hours safeguarding responses.

The postholder leads system wide collaboration with daytime Heads of Service, police, health partners, AMHP services, emergency accommodation providers and other urgent response agencies.

This is a senior leadership role requiring expert knowledge of safeguarding legislation, high risk decision making and multi agency emergency response across all age groups.

Reporting Relationships

Responsible to: Head of Service – Integrated Front Door, Emergency Duty Service and Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams

Responsible for: Team Managers and associated EDS practitioners

Key Accountabilities:

1. Strategic Leadership & Service Development

- Provide strategic leadership for the Emergency Duty Service, ensuring statutory responsibilities are met across children's, adults' and mental health work.
- Develop, refine and maintain effective out-of-hours operating models, decision-making standards and emergency pathways.
- Lead a culture of professional curiosity, high-quality analysis and confident risk management under urgent and high-pressure conditions.
- Ensure learning from reviews, audits and inspections is embedded into out-of-hours practice.
- Oversee the development of countywide emergency responses including emergency placements, safeguarding pathways and crisis-specific protocols.

2. Partnership & Collaborative Working

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- Build strong relationships with key partners including police, acute hospitals, AMHP services, mental health trusts, emergency accommodation providers and daytime social care services.
- Lead and contribute to multi-agency emergency planning, risk assessments and critical incident responses.
- Ensure consistent application of statutory frameworks including the Children Act, Care Act, Mental Health Act and Working Together.
- Resolve operational barriers and support joint decision-making across agencies operating 24/7

3. Service Delivery & Performance Management

- Ensure the EDS delivers safe, proportionate and timely statutory responses.
- Provide oversight of performance frameworks, quality assurance, workload patterns and demand analysis.
- Use feedback, audits, complaints and reviews to drive continuous improvement.
- Ensure decision-making is lawful, child-centred, adult-focussed and compliant with safeguarding responsibilities.
- Work with daytime services to ensure seamless handover of urgent and complex work.

4. User Engagement & Co-production

- Promote the voice and lived experience of children, adults and families within out-of-hours service design and decision-making.
- Use feedback from service users and professionals to improve EDS practice and pathways.

5. Resource & Project Management

- Lead effective deployment of staffing resources across the 24/7 service.
- Manage operational risk, workforce pressures and on-call arrangements.
- Lead and support transformation and modernisation programmes relating to out-of-hours safeguarding and crisis response.
- Identify and escalate risks relating to emergency demand, workforce capacity, mental health pressures and complex safeguarding risks.

6. Service-Specific Accountabilities

- Provide strategic oversight of the out-of-hours response for children, adults and mental health crises.
- Ensure robust triage, screening, assessment and emergency decision-making.
- Oversee urgent safeguarding interventions, including emergency protection and emergency placements.
- Ensure effective arrangements for Mental Health Act responsibilities including coordination with AMHPs and health partners.
- Ensure safe, timely information sharing and joint safeguarding activity.
- Maintain oversight of handover processes into daytime services.

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Person Specification

Qualifications/Professional membership

- Degree or equivalent level qualification.
- A qualified and registered Social Worker.
- A relevant professional/management qualification or evidence of management training.
- Approved Mental Health Practitioner

Knowledge and Experience

- Extensive post-qualification experience in children's social care, adults services or mental health.
- Experience managing emergency, crisis or safeguarding teams.
- Strong understanding of Children Act, Care Act, Mental Health Act and emergency safeguarding frameworks.
- Experience making high-risk decisions under pressure.
- Demonstrable performance and quality assurance experience.
- Substantial supervisory and management experience and knowledge of relevant HR guidance and procedure.
- Experience of managing investigations and complaints
- Significant Knowledge, understanding and experience of working with relevant legislation policy and procedures.
- In-depth understanding of statutory frameworks, national agendas, and best practice in Emergency Duty Team activity.
- Proven ability to embrace innovative practices and developments, lead change and project manage/ pilot new initiatives
- Proven ability to make sound judgements and hold risk appropriately based on analysis of the relevant facts in planned and unplanned circumstances.

Skills

- Proven leadership qualities and the ability to inspire, motivate, and manage teams towards successfully achieving organisational goals
- Effective inter-personal skills with proven ability to develop and sustain effective relationships; and foster positive culture
- Effective verbal and written communication skills with the ability to communicate complex information clearly to a variety of audiences
- Highly organised and analytical with a logical approach to problem solving and an ability to analyse complex information and situations to make effective evidence-based decisions

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- Developed negotiating and influencing skills, able to build consensus and secure commitment from a wide range of stakeholders
- Interpersonal skills for building and sustaining effective relationships with staff, partners, and stakeholders.
- Ability to develop, monitor and report on performance frameworks and quality assurance processes
- Effective budget and resource management skills
- Ability to manage and implement change programmes and service improvements
- Evidence that you can advocate for the empowerment and development employees
- Evidence of and commitment to ongoing professional learning and development
- Flexible, autonomous, and able to manage competing priorities as part of a wider team.

**An Enhanced DBS will be needed for this post*

This post is designated as a casual car user
The content of this Job Description and Person Specification will be reviewed on a regular basis.