

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Job Title</b>	Best Interest Lead		
<b>Service</b>	Adult Operations		
<b>Reporting to</b>			
<b>Grade</b>	9		
<b>Evaluation ref:</b>	AG0763	<b>Job Family ref:</b>	
<b>Role Purpose</b>			
<p>The Best Interest Lead is responsible for providing professional leadership and operational oversight of the countywide Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) service, ensuring timely, lawful and high-quality best interest decision-making in line with the Mental Capacity Act. The role leads and quality-assures complex and priority Best Interest Assessments, supports and develops Best Interests Assessors, and works closely with internal teams, partner agencies and legal services to ensure statutory duties are met, risks are appropriately managed, and the rights of individuals who lack capacity are protected.</p>			
<b>Accountabilities</b>			
<p>Common Elements: -</p> <p>Provide advice and guidance to frontline social care teams, to care providers, and to staff in partner agencies about the application of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) including the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)</p> <p>Responsible for a caseload of urgent and complex DoLS Best Interests Assessments.</p> <p>Participate in the AMHP rota as agreed.</p> <p>Contribute to raising awareness of the Mental Capacity Act and DOLS.</p> <p>Contribute to complex case discussions where issues of mental capacity and risk are present.</p> <p>Contribute to the development of learning resources for a variety of social care professionals.</p> <p>Lead the day to day running of the DOLS service.</p> <p>Co-ordinate the work of the DoLS team on a weekly rota basis including providing guidance to the administrators.</p> <p>Prioritise DoLS applications from care homes and hospitals.</p>			

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Liaise with other professionals, care providers and managers within the County Council and other local authorities to ensure that assessments are completed within the legal timescales.

Quality assure assessments completed by Best Interests Assessors and Doctors as part of the Supervisory Body's scrutiny function ensuring that documentation is completed to a high standard in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and procedures.

Prepare legal documents for the granting of DoLS authorisations and other decisions made by the Supervisory Body.

Monitor the implementation of conditions attached to DoLS authorisations and ensure that recommendations for commissioners and care managers are channelled appropriately.

Prepare evidence for Deprivation of Liberty applications to the Court of Protection in conjunction with the SC legal team.

Deputise for the Service Manager as required.

Contribute to the development of the SC DoLS service.

Provide feedback and support to assist the professional development of the qualified Best Interests Assessors based in the Community Support teams.

Provide learning opportunities for trainee assessors.

Act as Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty experts within SC including in relation to applications to the Court of Protection.

Plan and contribute to the delivery of the 'further relevant training' required of qualified assessors by the DoLS regulations through quarterly meetings and annual refresher training.

Participate in the quality auditing of mental capacity assessments and best interests decision making by SC staff.

Participate in and share the leadership of monthly DoLS team meetings.

Contribute to the development of MCA and DoLS policy and guidance.

Contribute to multi-agency team working and participate in team meetings.

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

Promote people's equality, diversity and rights, by developing, maintaining and evaluating systems and structures in an anti-discriminatory way.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

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

Use IT systems relating to client information, complying with practice requirements. Input, manipulate and retrieve information.

Responsible for own continuing professional development as a Best Interests Assessor by maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of relevant MCA and DoLS case law and policy developments.

Participate in agreed Post Qualifying training and regular professional development programmes.

Other Elements and Specialised Areas: -

Maintain an awareness of key legislative and practice developments both locally and nationally by participating in relevant professional networks.

Develop resource materials to address the learning and guidance needs of professional staff.

Liaise with the County's Personal Finances Manager about cases where there may be a need for corporate management of individual's finances via the Court of Protection

Understand, uphold and promote 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. Equality and Diversity practice covers both interaction with staff, service users and communities and includes challenging discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all.

### Knowledge / Experience / Skills

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Knowledge</b>		
In-depth working knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, associated Codes of Practice, and related legislation.	X	
Strong understanding of best interest decision-making, mental capacity assessment, and positive risk management.	X	
Knowledge of safeguarding responsibilities and statutory duties within Adult Social Care.	X	

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Awareness of the legal framework relating to the Court of Protection and supervisory body responsibilities.	X	
Knowledge of current national policy, guidance and best practice relating to MCA, DoLS and adult safeguarding.		X
<b>Experience</b>		
Significant experience of undertaking complex and high-risk Best Interest Assessments.	X	
Experience of working with people who lack capacity and with families, advocates and partner agencies.	X	
Experience of providing professional advice and guidance to practitioners and external partners.	X	
Experience of contributing to complex case discussions involving capacity, risk and legal considerations.	X	
Experience of quality-assuring professional practice and written assessments.	X	
Experience of leading, coordinating or supervising staff or professional groups.		X
Experience of service development or contributing to policy, guidance or learning resources.		X
Experience of working with legal services and contributing to Court of Protection processes.		X
<b>Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications</b>		
Social Work qualification (or other relevant professional qualification) with current professional registration.	X	
Qualified and approved Best Interests Assessor (BIA).	X	
Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) qualification or willingness to participate in the AMHP rota.		X
<b>Skills</b>		

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Ability to apply legislation, policy and professional judgement to complex and sensitive situations.	X	
High level of analytical skills with the ability to evaluate risk, evidence and best interest options.	X	
Strong written skills, with the ability to produce clear, accurate and legally robust documentation.	X	
Effective communication skills, including the ability to explain complex information to a range of audiences.	X	
Ability to prioritise and manage a caseload of urgent and complex work within statutory timescales.	X	
Ability to work collaboratively across multi-disciplinary and multi-agency environments.	X	
Ability to support, mentor and contribute to the development of other professionals.	X	
Ability to contribute to and deliver training or learning activities.		X
Confidence in contributing to audit activity and service improvement initiatives.		X

### Working Conditions

### Dimensions of the role

### Working Arrangements

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

### Corporate Accountabilities

Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise.

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



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Date: