

The Specialised Supported Living Service

Support for who you are
Support for who you want to be

Information for prospective employees





Who we are

The Specialised Supported Living Service helps around 90 adults across Leeds who have varying degrees of learning disabilities, physical disabilities and complex needs to live independently.

Our team of around 250 staff offer people the opportunity to live in their own accommodation, and to lead active lives.

We believe that everyone, no matter what their disability, should be free to make choices about their lifestyle and have their needs, wishes and aspirations met whilst living in their own accommodation. We help people achieve this and ensure they stay safe and live healthy lives.

Our staff provide support directly into people's homes working in teams of between 10 and 18, depending on the degree of support required by people who access the service.

Our Mission

Support for who you are
Support for who you want to be

We are driven by our values. Quality support can only be achieved if those providing the support, the management and leadership of the service embrace a shared vision, putting the people we support at the centre of everything we do.

Our mission statement, chosen by the people we support and our staff, is ambitious and reflects our desire to deliver support that is tailored to each individual.

Our values and behaviours

We're part of Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – which is a leading provider of mental health and learning disability services in the country. In 2016 we contributed to the creation of the Trust's values and behaviours.

How we go about our work every day is influenced by our values – the beliefs that we hold dear and guide us on how we behave.

We commit to living our values every day and we show this through our behaviour and in our commitment to improving the health and lives of each and every person we meet.

Our values

We have integrity

We treat everyone with respect and dignity, honour our commitments and do our best for our service users and colleagues.

We keep it simple

We make it easy for the communities we serve and the people who work here to achieve their goals.

We are caring

We always show empathy and support those in need.

Behaviours that uphold our values

- We are committed to continuously improving what we do because we want the best for our service users. We consider the feelings, needs and rights of others.
- We give positive feedback as a norm and constructively challenge unacceptable behaviour.
- We're open about the actions we take and the decisions we make, working transparently and as one team with service users, colleagues and relevant partner organisations.

- We make processes as simple as possible.
- We avoid jargon and make sure we are understood.
- We are clear what our goals are and help others to achieve their goals.

- We make sure people feel we have time for them when they need it.
- We listen and act upon what people have to say.
- We communicate with compassion and kindness.



Our purpose

Our purpose, and what is important to us as a team is:

- We listen to the people we support, however they communicate.
- We develop support packages based on what people tell us.
- We find ways to give people the lives they want while staying healthy and safe.
- We act in line with the support package to help people have the lives that they want.
- We review our work to understand what is working and not working.

What is important to us as a team

- The people we support have the lives of their choice.
- We all take responsibility as teams and as individuals for the quality of our work.
- We give the people we support a voice – this influences the way we support them and enables us to help others hear what they are saying.
- We are ambitious for ourselves and our service, and we encourage the people we support to be ambitious too.

How we work with people

The people who use our service have staff to support them to live in their own home. This is due to the complexity of their learning disabilities and other needs.

Having a set support team helps the continuity of care and the development of trust, rapport, and understanding, and helps people feel settled in their own home.

We develop support packages with the people we support. These hold a range of information about who someone is and how we work with them.

The purpose of supported living is to enable people to live their lives as independently as possible. Support staff are present in order to promote autonomy and choice, as well as to provide direct care and support.

An important principle is that people should be supported to do as much as they can for themselves, and that staff should always seek to do things with, rather than for, people. As a service we use person-centred approaches to offer people the support that is right for them as individuals – which sometimes means we have to make decisions that are in people's best interests which they might not always agree with.

Working in a person's home

Our staff conduct themselves in a professional and caring manner and we work to standards set out in the Social Care Code of Conduct.

The relationship between staff and the people we support should be a therapeutic and caring relationship, focussed on meeting the needs of the person. The aim of the relationship should be to promote autonomy, independence, choice and control. The role of the support staff should be to help people reach their potential.

Our staff establish a rapport with the people they support which can develop into a befriending role which helps build trust. This is a professional relationship to meet the needs of the people they support.



What the inspectors said about us

“Exceptionally innovative”

In March 2018 the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which inspects and rates the quality of NHS services, gave us a glowing report. They gave us a rating of ‘good’ and said we were ‘outstanding’ for caring. For more detail see table below.

A running theme in the report is the person-centred culture of the service and inspectors could see that people were receiving their preferred care. The feedback also described how service users ‘were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible’.

Other praise for our dedicated team focused on their skills to problem solve and ‘work to support people to achieve their aspirations.’ The report also highlighted the ‘exceptionally innovative’ ways our staff support people to be actively involved.

Operational Manager Gill Galea (pictured) said:

“I am immensely proud of the team and service. The feedback from service users is continuously positive and their family and friends speak extremely highly of the staff and the care their loved ones receive.

“This recognition from the CQC is testament to the entire team for putting in so much time, hard work and dedication. Being rated outstanding for care is a credit to all the staff. ”



You can read the CQC’s full report online via our website at:

www.leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/specialised-supported-living-service

Are services					
Safe?	Effective?	Caring?	Responsive?	Well-led?	Our overall rating
Good	Good	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good



Why work for us

Being part of Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust we're able to offer a huge range of benefits and the chance to make a genuine difference to the lives of people with mental health conditions or learning disabilities.

There are too many benefits to list them all, but here's our top ten to give you a flavour:

1. Access to the NHS pension scheme – one of the best on the market.
2. Generous annual leave entitlements – 27 days as standard rising to 33 days with 10 years' service plus bank holidays.
3. Enhancements to your basic pay if you work in a 24 hour/7 day week shift pattern.
4. Family and carer-friendly work policies if you need to look after children or others who depend on you.
5. We'll support your career development – we have a diverse range of services which means you could get a wide range of experience within our organisation.
6. We recognise and celebrate staff achievement and those who 'go the extra mile' through our STAR Awards and yearly Trust Awards.
7. We invest in staff health and wellbeing; for example, we've got a dedicated staff physiotherapist and an Employee Assistance Programme for you and your family, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
8. You'll receive regular pay rises throughout your employment with us and benefit from national NHS pay awards.
9. You'll get access to our cycle to work scheme, salary sacrifice car scheme, childcare voucher scheme and health service discounts.
10. You'll get access to great chaplaincy, spiritual and pastoral care.

Please note, terms and conditions apply to some of these staff benefits.

Training and development within our service

We are committed to the development of staff within our service and we offer a variety of training to ensure staff are equipped to carry out their roles. An example of some of the training we offer includes:

- Level 2 and 3 Diploma in Health and Social care
- Postural management
- Positive behaviour support
- Makaton (a language using signs and symbols to help people to communicate)
- Person-centred planning, reviews and thinking training
- Intensive interaction
- Medication administration training
- Support planning
- Supporting people's health including epilepsy training

We also focus on individual development needs, through individual appraisals and personal development planning. It is possible to progress to more senior roles by undertaking the necessary vocational and leadership programmes.



Leeds and York Partnership NHS
Richard Wood
Deputy Support Manager
Leeds and York Partnership NHS

Meet some of our fantastic people

Richard Wood Support Manager

Richard tells us how we got to where he is today

I started as a Support Worker in the Specialised Supported Living Service when I was 21. Prior to this, I worked in sales and catering but I never quite fitted into those roles and wanted something more from what I was willing to put in. However my choices were a bit limited as I only had a few qualifications.

In my sales job I took a call from a support worker who was involved in setting up a service for people with learning disabilities. I spoke at length with him, and became fascinated with the idea of it. I shared this with a neighbour who knew someone working in SSLS, who shared the same enthusiasm for the role that I had just found. They explained that the service was recruiting. Within a few months, I was in post as a support worker.

It was the first time that I found myself doing something of real worth, something genuinely challenging, and something that provided me with fond memories that I carry with me still to this day. As support workers, we are set apart from many other professions. We come to work every day to promote independence, challenge assumptions and advocate for each person's right to a life that is directed by them.

We offer support to a wide range of individuals with varying and complex needs. This means that I can work across many diverse services, gaining experience, developing skills and improving my understanding of person-centred practices.

As I've gained more experience, I've been supported by my manager to develop the skills necessary to instil in others the values, philosophy and practices that I found essential to my early years as a support worker. The service has supported me to gain the qualifications I need to further my career, including a diploma in Leadership and Management. I've also tailored my working hours so that I could work towards a degree in Psychology through The Open University.

In a short period of time, I went from being a Support Worker to a Support Manager, working as a Senior Support Worker and Deputy Support Manager in other services on my way. This progression was intense, but reflected the experiences and skills that had been offered to me, and my own determination to work at a level reflective of my capabilities.

Today, I manage two teams of support staff who help 10 people living in their own homes. My role is challenging and it asks me to work at many levels. It is also immensely rewarding, naturally motivating, and it guarantees a unique purpose each day.



Abigail Dominy

Support Worker

Postural champion Abigail enjoys helping her service users do fun stuff

My journey began in 2012 when I was studying health and social care at sixth form. In 2014 I successfully applied for an apprenticeship at the Specialised Supported Living Service.

The apprenticeship was for a year, attending Leeds City College every Friday to complete health and social care level 2, as well as learning new skills and knowledge throughout the year in the workplace.

It gave me the opportunity to develop new skills as well as things like communication, organisational and physical skills. Importantly, it built my confidence working with people with physical and learning disabilities and allowed me to develop a good understanding of people's needs.

At the end of the apprenticeship I was guaranteed an interview to become a full time support worker, it went really well and I was offered a full time job. I also won an award for the work I'd done throughout the apprenticeship at Leeds City College.

I've been a support worker for four years now. In this time I've completed a level 3 health and social care diploma (alongside my day job) and I've had many opportunities to develop my skills, such as administering medication and enteral feeding.

I am proud to be a Postural Management Champion for the service. Postural management is a team approach involving the assessment and management of all positions that a person uses. This includes lying in bed, sitting and standing, and is part of the rehabilitation process for people with disabilities. I get to work alongside physiotherapists to get new pieces of equipment that might help the people we support in their daily lives. I attend regular meetings with other postural management champions in the service to discuss where we can develop and what we can do better.

I enjoy helping people do fun things - like go out to eat, go to the cinema and even go on holiday. I enjoy taking our service users on day trips to the coast and the zoo.

I am currently attending the intensive interaction courses to develop my communication skills even further with the people I support. Intensive interaction is a way of communicating with a person on their level by using skills such as mirror image of their actions, vocalisation and eye contact.

With my manager's help I hope to apply for a senior support worker role in the near future.





Perry-Jo Sorren

Deputy Support Manager

From apprentice to deputy support manager. . .

For three years I learned so many new skills and gained experience in more areas of the job such as administering medication, writing support plans, risk assessments and capacity assessments. I developed a lot more confidence so when a senior position became available I decided to apply for it.

The process was quite hard; I completed the application form, did a maths and English test and a 'talent screening'. Luckily I passed all these tests and did well at interview which meant I become a Senior Support Worker. I worked in this role for 2 years.

I expanded my knowledge and skill base through on the job training and also learning and development. I felt so much more confident in my role that when the Deputy Support Manager job came up I felt it was the right time to apply for the role. I was successful in February 2019 and have been really enjoying the role and new challenges it brings.



If you like what you've heard so far, get in touch with us.

The Specialised Supported Living Service is based at:

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Visit our website:

www.leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/specialised-supported-living-service

You can find out more about Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust at:

www.leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk

Or use your smartphone camera to scan this QR Code

