

THE MANOR SURGERY

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets out the process to be followed in the recruitment of staff and to all Practice staff involved in the recruitment process. It applies to recruitment for new posts and replacement staff for permanent, fixed-term or temporary contracts and to both full-time and part-time posts. The policy is designed to promote fairness and consistency of treatment.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed by [Practice name], including clinical, administrative, and support staff, who engage in paid work in [insert practice name]. This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not form part of your contract of employment.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Partner(s)

The Practice Partner(s) hold ultimate responsibility for all aspects of recruitment, including ensuring the safety of all staff.

Practice Manager

The Practice Manager plays a vital role in safe recruitment, this includes understanding safeguarding policies, crafting clear job descriptions, and conducting thorough checks such as DBS verifications and reference checks with a focus on patient safety. By following these steps, the Practice Manager can help build a qualified and trustworthy workforce dedicated to patient care.

Employees

To ensure a safe recruitment process, employees are responsible for honesty in applications and interviews, disclosing relevant information, cooperating with checks, and maintaining professionalism throughout

PROCEDURE

The following procedure will be adopted by the recruiting manager whenever Practice staff recruitment is required:

- Prepare a job description for the vacancy and they must agree the job description with the Line Manager and Practice Manager, plus a Partner if the job is of a clinical nature.
- Prepare a person specification and agree the person specification with the Line Manager and Practice Manager, plus a Partner if the job is of a clinical nature.
- Brief staff on handling of enquiries, with basic background and who is the first point of contact.
- Prepare an advertisement and decide where to place the advertisement in relevant media. This should be discussed with the Practice Manager and the Partners, as cost / relevance of media must be carefully considered to ensure appropriate applicants are targeted.
- Compile and issue a Practice procedure to handle enquiries (e.g. reception / a central contact person - this is usually the Line Manager, but for GP positions will be a member of the management team).
- Compile an application form if for example Indeed is not being used for the advertisement. If a CV is submitted instead of an application form, the shortlisting team must look for any gaps in employment.
- Screen initial applicants using the person specification and select successful applicants against the person specification and shortlist applicants. If there are more than 20 suitable applicants, apply weighting to each element of the person specification and re-shortlist. Where possible, a member of staff who has not seen any of the applications should be involved in designing the weighting, to ensure that no bias (whether deliberate or unintentional) has influenced any decision.
- Call or issue written interview invitations, informing applicants of the interview panel and details of any 'tests' to be undertaken, this can be done via e-mail.
- Prepare first interview questionnaire. This should be competency based and have columns for weighting.
- Undertake interviews by the selected panel (a minimum of 2 interviewers, one of who is to be the Line Manager where possible). If the interviewee submitted a CV and has had noted gap in employment, they should be questioned about this. Explanations should be recorded, but not weighted. The reasons may however be taken into account as far as assessing their suitability for the post.
- Select the successful applicant or consider the need for second interviews. If a second interview is required call or issue written second interview invitations, informing applicants of the interview panel and details of any 'tests' to be undertaken. Prepare second interview questionnaire and associated weighting. Select the successful applicant.
- Send a job offer to the successful applicant. This can be done by e-mail. Ensure it incorporates the main terms and conditions of employment and the requirement to accept the offer. It must also explicitly state that the "offer is subject to 2 satisfactory references, the receipt of a suitable Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure Document, and proof of eligibility of employment within the United Kingdom".
- When satisfactory references have been received and registration / licence / qualification checks have been satisfactorily completed, a medical questionnaire should be provided to the applicant. If there are any medical conditions that need investigating, inform the applicant that they will need to be referred to an occupational health specialist and will need to give consent for a medical report to be requested from their GP.

- If the applicant is deemed suitable to take the post, inform them that the job offer is firm and unconditional and confirm the agreed start date.
- Inform unsuccessful interviewees, collate and store all unsuccessful interviewee documents for a minimum of 12 months.
- Create a new employee file for the successful applicant and store all references, medical report, registration, licence and qualification documentation and any other relevant information e.g. indemnity insurance.

EQUALITY STATEMENT & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

In applying this policy, the Practice will have due regard and the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following characteristics protected by the Equality Act (2010); age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation, in addition to offending background, trade union membership, or any other personal characteristic.

The Practice will advertising Employment Vacancies in a Non-Discriminatory Manner, the Equality Act 2010 prohibits employers from advertising UK job vacancies in a discriminatory manner, whether or not this was intended, e.g. job titles implying a gender preference such as 'salesman'. Indirect discrimination can also lead to a contravention of the discrimination legislation.

Examples of Discrimination include:

- Setting an unnecessary or unreasonable level of qualification required for the type or standard of job.
- Recruiting only the friends or relatives of your existing workforce.
- Requiring applicants to attend an interview involving accessing an area that would be inaccessible to a disabled person.

Individuals may bring Employment Tribunal claims if they make job applications which are refused because of discriminatory selection criteria or recruitment policies and cases relating to discriminatory advertising may be taken up by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Discrimination Codes of Practice

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights; and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine "protected" grounds:

- Age,
- Disability,
- Gender,
- Race,
- Religion and belief,
- Pregnancy and maternity,
- Marriage and civil partnership,
- Sexual orientation and
- Gender reassignment.

FOREIGN / EEA RECRUITMENT

To ensure the Practice has the most current up to date information when considering to employ Foreign / EEA applicants, it must refer to the GOV.UK website for up to date information on visa requirements.

This includes permanent staff, staff on fixed-term contracts, volunteers, students, trainees, contractors, highly mobile staff, temporary workers (including locum doctors), and other workers supplied by an agency.

When using agency, contracted or other external bodies to provide services, the Practice must ensure, through regular audit and monitoring, that their providers comply with these standards. For advice specific to appointing agency staff, ensure employment checks have been made for:

1. Identity
2. Right to work
3. Professional registration and qualifications
4. Employment history and reference
5. Criminal record and barring
6. Work health assessments
7. The Recruitment Advertisement

The Practice is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, to achieve this, we ensure our recruitment process is fair and unbiased by applying the following:

- Our recruitment advertisements will avoid mentioning union membership, age limitations (unless essential), or any language that could be perceived as favouring a specific gender, ethnicity, or age group. We'll utilize clear and inclusive language, avoiding terms like "mature" or "energetic."
- Job descriptions and person specifications will be based on the actual requirements of the role, not age or background. We'll consider equivalent qualifications, including those from overseas, and ensure any age-related criteria can be objectively justified.
- We'll select appropriate media to reach a wide range of qualified applicants. This avoids using niche publications or agencies that might limit the applicant pool.
- We recognize that experience can be valuable in different forms. We'll consider relevant experience alongside qualifications to ensure a fair selection process.

By following these practices, we aim to attract the best talent, regardless of background, and build a strong and diverse workforce.

USING RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

To ensure a diverse workforce, we partner with recruitment agencies and vocational organisations that share our commitment to equality. We will select responsible partners by choosing agencies with strong anti-discrimination practices that comply with the Equality Act.

Our agreements with recruitment agencies clearly outline our shared responsibility for upholding equal opportunities. We will work with agencies to ensure they understand and apply our own anti-discrimination policies. This collaborative approach helps us source top talent while maintaining a fair and inclusive recruitment process.

RETAINING RECRUITMENT RECORDS

We take data privacy seriously, all candidate information collected during recruitment is securely stored for at least 12 months. This allows us to defend against potential discrimination claims and ensures fairness throughout the process.

SCREENING AND SHORTLISTING OF APPLICANTS

To ensure a fair and transparent hiring process, the following steps will apply;

Initial Screening

- Decisions will be based solely on the information provided in the completed applicant's job application.
- A pre-defined person specification will be used to evaluate all applicants against set criteria.

Fairness and Objectivity

- The Practice is committed to fair and objective selection processes.
- Decisions will not be based on assumptions about age, medical fitness, or any other discriminatory factors.
- Occupational health professionals will be consulted for any concerns regarding capability or medical fitness.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Staff involved in the selection and interview process will have up-to-date diversity training certification.
- This ensures a focus on inclusive practices and minimizes the risk of discrimination.

INTERVIEWS

All applicants will be required to take pre-interview tests, if specific skills tests are needed (e.g., keyboard skills), applicants will be informed beforehand with details about the format. Adjustments will be made for disabled applicants to ensure an equal opportunity.

The following points will be taken into consideration when interviews are conducted:

- Location, timing, and interview structure are designed to be comfortable and inclusive for all candidates.
- We will ask the same, pre-prepared, and relevant questions to each candidate to ensure a fair comparison and avoid bias.
- Questions will centre on skills, experience, and suitability for the role, not personal characteristics.
- We will adhere to anti-discrimination laws and avoid questions related to protected characteristics such as age, disability, or religion.
- Only when absolutely necessary, and related to performing the job functions, will we ask questions about health or disability.

Record Keeping

The practice will record interview notes and pre-test results for transparency. These notes are objective and applicants have the right to request them. They will be kept on file for 12 months.

First Interview

- The interview marking sheet must be completed, ensuring non-discriminatory reasons are given for the success or non- success of each applicant.
- If a disabled candidate is chosen, the Practice will make adjustments to support them.
- Interviewing staff will ensure that no female applicant can be refused a job solely because she is pregnant – she must be offered the job if she is considered to be the best applicant.

Second Interview

- If, after the first interview, it is deemed necessary to hold a second interview to a final shortlist of applicants, the same procedure as undertaken for the first interview will to be followed.
- The requirement for a different Interview questionnaire will be considered and one produced if appropriate.

JOB OFFER

The successful applicant will be offered the job, and the e-mail / letter will incorporate the main terms of the offer and the conditions attached to the job offer (e.g. subject to satisfactory references or passing a medical examination).

Should the take up and receipt of satisfactory references be required, this will be incorporated in the job offer letter and be used. The replies to these references will be considered carefully. References should be chased up at least once if not received within one month. Non receipt of references will not automatically mean that the job offer is revoked, but a longer probation period may be required.

DBS CHECKS

Management will determine the level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check required for the role. Where a DBS check is required, the manager shall ensure clearance is obtained before the applicant commences employment.

OBTAINING A MEDICAL REPORT

After an offer of employment has been made, should a medical report be required the Practice will arrange for the applicant to have an occupational health assessment.

Should the Occupational Health Practitioner subsequently decide that a medical examination is necessary, they will communicate directly with the successful applicant to arrange this. When the occupational health department have concluded their appraisal (either with or without a medical examination), they will inform the Practice of the outcome.

CHECKING THE QUALIFICATIONS OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS POLICY

Any offer of employment, whether conditional or absolute, should have a clear statement to the effect that the offer may be withdrawn, or that employment may be terminated at any time in the future, if the candidate knowingly withholds information or provides false or misleading information regarding their status or suitability for the position.

Qualification and registration checks should only be carried out with the express consent of a candidate. In addition, contracts should contain the clause that should an employee cease to become qualified or become “de-registered” at any time during their employment, that the employment will be deemed to have terminated.

There are three key regulatory bodies, of which 3 may be relevant to the traditional general practice:

- General Medical Council (GMC)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

The three main steps to follow are:

- Check registration for the role is current
- Check whether the candidate is subject to practising restrictions
- Check whether there are any investigations recorded against them

Where possible, original documentation should be checked. Where this is not available, alternative methods of verification may be considered based on the importance and relevance to the qualification to the overall role.

PROVIDING A WRITTEN STATEMENT OF THE EMPLOYEE’S TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

A written statement of the employee’s terms and conditions of employment will be provided prior to the employee’s start date, and will indicate whether or not their position is subject to a probationary period.

PENSION

The Practice reached the staging date for auto-enrolment in October 2015.

We offer enrolment in the NHS Pension scheme to eligible employees.

INDUCTION

After recruitment, a good induction programme is the way to help a new employee settle into the organisation and become effective quickly. The Manager will conduct an induction on all general issues, including health and safety. The Manager should complete the induction covering any areas specific to the role. Induction checklists should be used to ensure that all areas are covered.

See also: Induction Policy

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Partners and Practice Manager is responsible for formal approval and monitoring compliance with this policy. Following ratification the policy will be disseminated to staff where required.

REVIEW AND REVISION

The policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically by the Partner(s) and Practice Manager in conjunction with other policies where applicable. Where review is necessary due to legislative change, this will happen immediately.

References

- Equal Opportunities policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy