**Care Officer / Care Worker**

Example Person Specification:

1. Ability to work as part of a team
2. Ability to use initiative
3. Ability to attend to the personal care needs of service users
4. Ability to communicate well, verbally and written
5. Ability to follow written and verbal guidelines
6. A willingness to learn and adapt to change
7. Ability to relate to people of all ages, some with mental health needs and / or challenging behavior
8. Willingness to develop the basic ICT skills needed to use information systems within services

Example application:

1. Ability to work as part of a team:

I am used to working as part of a team and enjoy doing so. For me, working in a team means supporting each other and covering work when needed. I am good at communicating with my team in an open manner and asking for help when I need it, but also helping my colleagues as well. It is important to be reliable so you don’t let your team down and also to be flexible and friendly to create a good team environment. In my current role, we pull together as a team, helping each other with ideas of activity plans or ways to best handle service users who have challenging behavior, we use all of our experiences to help improve things for the service users.

1. Ability to use initiative

I am able to use my own initiative and understand this is very important when working as a care officer as there are often unexpected situations or activities that need to happen that are not in the care plan. I am able to determine when I should contact my supervisor for support and when I can resolve a situation myself following guidelines and procedures. Working night shifts meant that I was often working unsupervised and would need to use my initiative when unexpected situations occurred, for example when a service user became unwell I called the ambulance and then contacted my supervisor to let them know what was happening. I then write everything down so that it was documented properly and the manager would understand what had happened when they came into work the next day.

1. Ability to attend to the personal care needs of service users

For the last four years I have been working in care giving jobs. I have worked in both a residential care home and a supported living home. These roles have included personal care for service users as well as feeding, cooking, cleaning, administering medication, planning and doing activities. I treat all the service users with kindness, respect and dignity and try to let them have as much control over their daily lives as possible. I work with them to write activity plans so that they can enjoy their days as much as possible and also where possible to remain independent.

1. Ability to communicate well, verbally and written:

As part of the care giving jobs I have held, I have needed to keep daily written reports of the activities undertaken with the service users as well as reporting any incidents. It was important that these reports were clear so that the managers of the units could act on them. It is also very important to keep clear records about medication or illness so that the next care giver knows what the service user has taken and still needs. This is often a part of my daily routine.

I am talkative and sociable so that I can get along with service users with a range of needs and interests. Some of the service users do not speak English as a first language and so I need to be able to communicate slowly and clearly and be patient to make sure they understand what is happening

1. Ability to follow written and verbal guidelines:

Because I have needed to administer medicine to some service users it is very important that I can follow written guidelines. I have also followed written instructions for a range of things such as cooking and activities and also being able to deal with some difficult behavior by using good manual handling techniques that I have been trained in.

I am also very good at following verbal instructions, for example from service users who can explain to me how they like things to be done.

1. A willingness to learn and adapt to change:

I have had a number of jobs and these have all been in different types of situations – for example in residential care homes and supported living accommodation. I have been able to adapt to this change by learning how things are done in each place I have worked. I like to learn about new places and new services users which helps. I moved countries 10 years ago and had to learn how to live in a new country, this has taught me very well how to adapt to change.

1. Ability to relate to people of all ages, some with mental health needs and / or challenging behavior:

I have worked in shops as well as care homes and this means I have very good customer service skills and can work with a range of people of all ages and with all different needs. One of the residential units I worked in had people with mental health needs living there and I was trained to work with people with different conditions. I am very caring and I like to meet and help all kinds of people. I understand that each person has their own needs and that some people like more support and structure than others, I respect people’s wishes regardless of their age, background etc. I am very good at putting people at ease so that they can explain to me how they are feeling and I am trained and confident when working with people who have challenging behavior.

1. Willingness to develop the basic ICT skills needed to use information systems within services:

I like to learn new things and would be willing to learn how to use new IT systems. I have a computer at home which I have learned to use mostly by myself. I have also used a computer system in the shop I worked in, which we used to look up if stock was available in other shops.