

Recruitment Policy and Procedure

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1 Introduction

1.1 Policy statement

The purpose of this document is to set out the Practice's position and procedures on recruitment and selection. It will ensure clear processes are in place to enable the Practice to recruit and retain skilled people.

The Practice is committed to:

- Promoting the Practice as a good place to work
- Ensuring that the recruitment procedure promotes a positive image of the Practice
- Recruiting skilled people to enable the Practice to achieve its aims in delivering services to patients and the public
- Promoting objective, fair recruitment practices throughout the Practice
- Ensuring that selection decisions are based on objective criteria

1.2 Status

This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual and may be modified or withdrawn at any time.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.

1.3 Equality Act 2010

The Practice aims to design and implement policies and procedures that meet the diverse needs of our service and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Consideration has been given to the impact this policy might have in regard to the individual protected characteristics of those to whom it applies.

In particular, the Equality Act 2010 places a duty on employers to consider any reasonable adjustments (as far as practical) to ensure that people with disabilities are not disadvantaged during the recruitment process and are treated fairly when considering working arrangements and the working environment.

This includes when:

- An individual first takes up their position (whether or not this is preceded by a period of training)
- An existing member of staff is returning to work following a serious injury or illness and there is a need to assess whether they can safely return to their normal duties. Any assessment will need to be proportionate to the risks associated with the type of activities they will be required to undertake as part of their normal role
- An existing member of staff moves to a different job within the practice and this significantly changes the nature of the work they will be undertaking, for example, they are required to carry out exposure prone procedures (EPPs) for the first time or the environment they will be working in

1.4 Training and support

The Practice will provide guidance and support to help those to whom it applies to understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Additional support will be provided to managers and supervisors to enable them to deal more effectively with matters arising from this policy.

2 Scope

2.1 Who it applies to

This document applies to all employees of the Practice, partners and other individuals performing functions in relation to the Practice, such as agency workers, locums and contractors, and others who may be involved in the recruitment and selection process.

2.2 Why and how it applies to them

Everyone who works for the Practice is an ambassador for the Practice and may be involved, in some way, with the recruitment and selection process, even if that means speaking to applicants on the phone, welcoming them when they arrive for interview or just passing them in the corridor.

For those more closely involved in the process, it is important that they understand the advertising protocols and recruitment procedures. This document is to be used as both a reference tool and Practice manual for those involved in the recruitment and selection process.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Practice's;

- Equality and diversity policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Staff immunisation policy
- Employment of ex-offenders policy

3 Processes for the recruitment and selection of staff

3.1 Identifying a vacancy

It is usual for a vacancy to occur when an existing employee leaves a job or when a new job is created.

When a vacancy is identified it is essential to ask:

- Does the vacancy need to be filled?
- Has the job changed or is it now necessary to update the job description to meet any future objectives?

Once a vacancy has been identified, authority to recruit will be confirmed by the HR Manager.

3.2 Job description and person specification

Once agreement to recruit has been authorised, it is essential to review the existing job description and person specification to make sure they are up to date and compliant with legislation.

A job description is an important part of the recruitment and selection process. A job description describes the main tasks and responsibilities of the job and will include the job title, role summary and main duties of the role. A job description ensures that managers are clear about the job content and applicants understand the duties and content of the role.

A person specification provides details of the essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience, personal qualities and knowledge required to fulfil the duties identified in the job description. The person specification is a key part of the recruitment process and is used to compile the job advertisement, assist with short-listing and the interview questions. Both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification will be used to filter candidates at the short-listing stage.

A person specification will also detail what qualities are assessed at what stage of the selection process, i.e. application, interview or, if relevant, assessment stage.

When a vacancy is advertised, the application pack will include an up to date job description and person specification.

3.3 Advertising

The Practice will normally utilise the following methods/media for all vacancies:

- NHS Jobs
- Elmwood Family Doctors website
- Indeed.com
- Holmfirth Jobs

As a minimum, all permanent vacancies will be advertised internally within the Practice.

All adverts will be expressed in clear non-discriminatory language and be legally compliant.

The advert will give a brief summary of the job and should include its location, salary and essential qualifications and experience to encourage suitable applicants and allow unsuitable applicants to self-select out of the process.

It is good practice to include a contact name with a telephone number from whom further information may be obtained by the applicant. If providing this facility, it is essential that the named contact is briefed properly and available during normal office hours should applicants wish to contact them.

All adverts will include a paragraph advising applicants that recruitment information is available in alternative formats, for example, large font or online.

3.4 Closing dates

All vacancies advertised in an external publication should run for a period of at least two weeks.

It is recognised that some jobs at the Practice attract a vast number of applicants. For those jobs, a disclaimer may be included on the advert and/or in the application pack which states:

“Please note that should this vacancy attract sufficient interest it may be necessary to close the vacancy at an earlier date. We therefore suggest that you apply at an early stage to avoid disappointment.”

3.5 Applications

The Practice only accepts applications through on-line applications through NHS Jobs website or CV's sent through to recruitment@elmwoodfamilydoctors.co.uk.

The Practice gathers and processes the personal data of job applicants as part of the recruitment process. The Practice's Recruitment Privacy Notice is made available to all job applicants and sets out how their data is gathered and used.

Recruitment documentation is also available in large font and/or online and a statement advising applicants of this is included in the Practice's adverts.

3.6 Short-listing

Short-listing will normally be undertaken by a minimum of two people. The short-listing panel will appoint a chair or lead person. The chair person will be responsible for making a final decision where the panel is unable to make a unanimous decision.

The purpose of the short-listing process is to identify applicants who meet the essential criteria for the job.

References should be sought after the interviews and will never be used as a means to shortlist.

When short-listing, a short-listing matrix will be used which contains the essential and desirable criteria that is assessed by means of the application form. The short-listing matrix will include objective, written reasons as to why unsuccessful applicants were not short-listed.

All applicants who are unsuccessful after short-listing will receive an email confirming that they have been unsuccessful. Each applicant will be given the opportunity to gain feedback from the short-listing panel.

3.7 Interviewing

All short-listed applicants will be contacted via telephone/email to attend an interview.

The invitation will ask applicants to inform the Practice if any adjustments need to be made for them to attend the interview.

The invitation will also remind the applicant of the documentation that they will be required to present at interview (see employment checks below).

The interview will normally be carried out by a minimum of two people and, wherever possible, one of the interview panel members should be the line manager for the vacant role.

The interview panel will appoint a chair or lead person who will be responsible for making a final decision where the panel is unable to make a unanimous decision. The panel should meet prior to the interview and plan the sequence of the interview questions and the structure of the interview.

The interview questions will assess the information highlighted in the “assessed by interview” section within the person specification.

Any tests that form part of the interview process will assess the information highlighted in the “assessed by assessment/test” section from within the person specification.

All applicants will be assessed against the same criteria and standard questions will be asked to establish how well (or not) the applicants meet the criteria. Follow up questions and more in-depth discussion may be required to enable the panel to make a fair assessment (and this may vary between applicants). Questions also serve to substantiate details from the application form and explore any gaps and anomalies.

Discriminatory questions, e.g. questions in relation to childcare arrangements, future plans for a family and trade union duties, will not be asked.

Pregnancy and/or disability are not reasons to reject a suitable applicant. The Practice has a duty to make any reasonable adjustments that would enable a disabled applicant to take up a post. Rejecting a candidate based on information or perceptions regarding their age, race, religion or protected belief, gender, marital status, or sexuality would likewise be unlawful unless a genuine occupational requirement for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 has been previously established and communicated.

The person chairing the interview will ensure that any essential information on the application form is checked with all applicants. Checks will also be made to ensure that applicants have the professional or vocational qualifications which are essential for the role. This is best done at the end of the interview.

All applicants should be informed at the end of the interview when a decision is likely to be made and how this will be communicated to them.

Only once all short-listed applicants have been interviewed can a decision to appoint be made. A structured scoring system will be used for selecting the most suitable applicant. Each applicant should be scored against each selection criteria to which questions were asked during the interview. Each applicant should be scored against the same criteria.

Notes should be written up immediately after each interview. Subjective opinions or feelings about applicants will not form part of the decision-making process.

Following the interviews, unsuccessful applicants will be notified as soon as possible. Applicants will be offered the opportunity for feedback. Any feedback will be objective and handled sensitively.

3.8 Other selection methods

Any test undertaken by an applicant (before or after short-listing) will be relevant to the person specification requirements and free of bias and will be used in conjunction with an interview.

Tests should only be used to demonstrate skills and abilities which cannot be better tested with interview questions.

Psychometric tests can be used to measure ability, e.g. verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning or personality testing. Psychometric tests are often used to test a particular job or career area. Any such tests will be facilitated by a qualified practitioner.

Other assessment methods that can be used for individual recruitment exercise include presentations or in-tray exercises. So long as carefully and objectively designed and assessed, selection methods that allow patient or colleague feedback on candidates could also be considered as part of the process.

Short-listed applicants who are to be tested at interview will be advised in the invitation to interview of the type of test(s) or other selection methods they will be asked to undertake, and the likely duration.

3.9 Conditional offers of employment

Conditional offers of employment are offers that are offered after interview. The conditional offer makes it clear that the offer is subject to the relevant employment checks being satisfactory and met within a specified timescale.

The Practice will make it clear to successful applicants that any offer of employment is conditional pending the completion of post-offer checks, including a relevant health assessment.

3.10 Post-offer checks

Types of post-offer checks:

- Employment references
- Health screening
- Professional registration/licence
- Qualifications
- Identity and right to work in the UK
- DBS disclosure
- Registration authority ID (for Smartcard)

References and Employment History

Ordinarily, applicants are requested to supply the details of their two most recent employers to provide employment references. In some situations the applicant may not be able to provide this (E.g. lack of recent employment, previous employer uncontactable or no longer in existence). In those cases, the Practice must risk assess the situation from a safeguarding perspective, and consider accepting one or more suitable character or academic references instead.

The following will apply:

- References should where possible cover a minimum period of five years' previous employment/training
- All references will be in writing on an employer's original letterhead, or come from a verifiable email address
- All employment references must state dates of employment and position held
- Reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that referees and their Practices are genuine
- All employment references must be directed through a line manager or formal HR department or a clinical supervisor
- References may be cross-checked on the telephone if considered appropriate – a permanent record of this must be made and retained with the recruitment papers
- All reference responses will be cross-checked back to the original application
- References will be requested from a university or other learning Practice where an applicant has been in full-time education
- References will be requested from abroad where the applicant has worked overseas
- Confirmation of previous self-employment will be requested via the production of accounts or official documentation (e.g. HMRC documentation). If appropriate, references from previous customers may also be considered.

Post-offer health screening

Offers of employment for substantive, temporary and voluntary staff are subject to receiving a satisfactory health declaration. Applicants are required to declare any health issues that may have an impact on their ability to carry out the duties of the role. Any reasonable adjustments that may be required will be considered.

Should an applicant state that they do have a health issue that may impact their ability to conduct the duties of the role, and only after a conditional offer of employment has been made, the Practice may request that the applicant undertake an occupational health assessment.

When carrying out a work health assessment, the Practice will consider the requirements of the Equality Act, in particular Section 60 of the Act, which describes the specific circumstances under which employers can legally ask questions about any health or disability prior to making an offer of appointment. This applies regardless as to whether the offer is conditional or unconditional.

Assessments should take place after an offer of appointment (regardless as to whether this is a conditional or unconditional) but prior to the commencement of employment/placement or training, except for those individuals on work experience.

It is unlawful for employers to ask applicants to complete a post-offer health questionnaire or to ask health-related questions as part of their application or interview process, for any reason other than the exceptional circumstances outlined within the Equality Act.

All health assessments must be carried out fairly, objectively and in accordance with equalities legislation and good occupational health practice.

To ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, the Practice is required to ensure that all staff receive the necessary immunisations pertinent to their role. The Practice's Staff Immunisation Policy sets out this process in more detail.

Professional registration/license

Where an advertised role requires a professional registration with a licensing or regulatory body in the UK or another country, all applicants should have entered their registration details on their application form. All short-listed applicants must provide documentary evidence of their registration at the interview stage.

Qualifications

All short-listed applicants are required to provide original documentary evidence of the necessary qualifications, as stated in the person specification, at the interview stage. All qualifications will be checked using original certificates and/or checked back with the registering or awarding body. Relevant training certificates may be requested for the last five years.

Checking identity and right to work in the UK

All applicants are asked to bring to the interview evidence to confirm their identity and right to work in the UK. Details of what is acceptable evidence will be provided in the invitation to interview letter.

DBS checks and criminal convictions

Clinical roles or those that otherwise involve contact with patients will usually require a DBS check before the successful candidate starts in the position. For full information about DBS checks and which positions they apply to, you should refer to the Practice's Disclosure and Barring Service Policy.

Clinical vacancies that require an NMC or GMC registration and "regulated" roles as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) are automatically exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore, all applicants applying for such vacancies are required to disclose any convictions that are not 'protected' (i.e. filtered out) as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013).

All applicants will be assessed in relation to the criteria identified in the person specification for the post. Being in possession of a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent an applicant from employment, this will depend on the circumstances and background to the offence in relation to the relevance of the role. It is, however, important to note that some offences (e.g. involving violence or sexual abuse) will preclude an applicant from having access to patients.

Where a criminal record check/disclosure certificate contains criminal convictions and/or reveals other information, the overall responsibility for decisions relating to the recruitment of staff lies with the partners. Applicants with a criminal conviction should be given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the HR Manager as part of this process. A person's criminal record should be considered in the light of all the relevant circumstances and judged on a case-by-case basis.

Registration authority checks

These checks are required for the creation of a Smartcard which is used to access NHS systems. The checks are consistent with those required for the right to work process. The Smartcard contains a photographic ID. A Smartcard will be produced for the first day of employment.

3.11 Unconditional offers of employment

Unconditional offers of employment are offers that are offered once all employment checks have been completed and are returned as satisfactory. The successful candidate will be asked to confirm acceptance of the unconditional offer. From April 2020, employees and workers will be entitled to a written statement of employment particulars (often referred to as “the contract of employment”) from day one of their employment.

3.12 Internal transfers/promotions

From time to time employees of the Practice may wish to change their usual place of work or apply for a new role or promotion.

Selection will always be a competitive process except in cases of Practiceal change, disability, ill health or maternity or where there is only one candidate.

Employees wishing to transfer from one site to another site into the same role will require the approval of their current and prospective line managers (even where they are not subject to a competitive interview).

Account will be taken of individual circumstances, for example, in relation to requests for (or existing) flexible working arrangements to ensure equality of opportunity for all employees.

3.13 Confidentiality and data protection

At all times, managers and employees involved in any aspect of this procedure will comply with the requirements of the Practice’s Confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulation Policy and the principles of good record keeping.

Returning, storing and destroying recruitment documentation/storing records

All recruitment documentation including short-listing and interview notes are to be fully recorded and retained for a period of at least 12 months after which time the documentation will be confidentially destroyed.

Information relating to an applicant’s medical condition, verification of identity or right to work documentation should be confidentially destroyed (shredded) for those applicants who were unsuccessful at the interview stage unless the reason for not employing the applicant was related to this documentation in which case it will be necessary to retain this documentation with the short-listing and interview notes in accordance with the Practice’s data retention protocol.

Subject access requests

The Practice gathers and processes the personal data of job applicants as part of the recruitment process. The Practice is committed to being open and transparent about how that data is gathered and used and to meeting the data protection obligations which are set out in the Practice’s job applicant privacy notice which is made available to all job applicants.

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, individuals have the right to a copy of any information held about them. The individual (or data subject) requesting the release of information about themselves must complete a Subject Access Request form and the Practice will comply with the necessary procedures in accordance with the Data Protection Act.