

Being a Support Worker

Job description, person specification and other information on why joining the Discovery team is a great choice to make!

Welcome

As part of one of the country's largest not-for-profit organisations, we are driven by our values. People with learning disabilities and their families are at the heart of everything we do and we want every person we support to have a great life, with excellent outcomes. We couldn't achieve that without all the great support workers who join our team. It all starts with you!

There is no such thing as a 'typical' support worker. They range from school leavers who want a job that involves helping people, to those who want a change of career, experienced support workers wanting to work for a company that truly places the people it supports at the heart of all it does and those at the end of a career in a completely different sector who want to give something back.

The one motivation that links all of them is a desire to work with people; to make their lives better and help them to learn something new or take a further step towards independence. Our support workers certainly don't see what they do as 'just another job'.



Our Values

We are a values based employer. We shortlist and appoint candidates based on how they demonstrate that they share our values:

Ambition:

Helping people to be the best they can be

Courage:

Being brave enough to make a difference

Integrity:

Being honest and fair in all the things we do

Partnership:

Working with other people to make a bigger difference

Respect:

treating everyone fairly and knowing that everyone's voice is important.

No matter what previous experience you have had, we can provide you with all the training and leadership needed to become a great support worker.

Active Support

Discovery is part of Dimensions: one of the pioneers of personalised support. Person-centred thinking is a set of values, skills and tools used to help us to get to know someone and discover what they find important and what they want out of life.

Matching our employees according to cultural needs, preferences and beliefs, skills, hobbies and interests helps to make sure we can deliver truly personalised support.

This model is proven to achieve an increase in active support and meaningful activity for people and a reduction in challenging behaviour.

What's more, colleagues who have used the model reported an increase in job satisfaction.

We have created a new award winning model of active support, which will be introduced over the course of 2019. It is an evidence-based, outcomes-focused support model built around eight structured domains which puts decision making closer to people we support by setting personalised and challenging goals with them, their families, and the people who support them.

Our approach will involve teaching new skills and enabling people to try new things, which our research has proven is how measurable improvements in quality of life for people and their support teams can best be delivered.



What's involved?

Joining the Discovery team as a support worker, you will be given support and leadership from your Locality Manager or Better Practice Lead.

Purpose of the role

As a support worker, you'll be helping the people you support to live the individual life they want, ensuring they have choice and control over the planning and delivery of their support.

Core duties

No two days will be the same, you will enjoy variety and assist people in the following ways:

- Supporting people to reflect, learn and grow through each of the Active Support domains using digitalised software (we will teach you how to do this).
- Recognising that every moment has potential.
- Helping people to learn the skills they need to live the life they choose.
- Co-producing and designing support in partnership with the people who are being supported, their families, and their support teams. This includes developing and delivering their support plan, and reviewing the support they receive against Discovery's values.
- Supporting people with their medication.
- Recognising and celebrating what the person can do for themselves.
- You will support people to shop for things they wish to buy including their clothes and food, and to prepare their meals as required.
- Helping, encouraging, supporting and teaching the people we support to do their housework, including cleaning and laundry.
- Supporting and encouraging people to find opportunities in education, employment and leisure, and enable them to take part.
- Helping the people we support to manage their own money.
- Supporting people with their day to day travel arrangements and holidays as required.
- Working in a supportive manner with colleagues, families and external parties, building trust by being open and honest.

- Supporting, encouraging and teaching people to maintain personal and intimate care as required, such as dressing themselves, showering/bathing, using the toilet, etc.
- You will have to keep some written records, using IT systems as required to help you. This includes support plans, financial information and health and safety records.

In addition to the above, a support worker is expected to:

- Be prepared to work flexibly. This could include working some weekends, waking nights or sleep-ins and bank holidays. This will be discussed with you during the interview process and you will be matched to people we support in line with hours and patterns of shifts you are able to work.
- Complete all required training either by e-learning or attending courses.
- Adhere to our policies, procedures and standards as published. Keeping information about the people we support, colleagues and the company confidential.
- We want you to develop professionally as a support worker. This means that you are expected to get involved and contribute in meetings, work towards gaining work-related qualifications, attend training courses and be willing to learn new things and ways of working.
- Be able and willing to wear all necessary PPE (personal protective equipment) such as surgical facemasks, gloves and aprons as required by Dimensions policies.

Please note that this is a generic job description and person specification and should be read in conjunction with the personalised advert for this vacancy, which will outline other more specific duties of the role and requirements of the candidate. This job description is not exhaustive and reflects the type and range of tasks, responsibilities and outcomes associated with the role with Discovery.



Do you have what it takes?

Here is what we're looking for. Unless otherwise stated, we'll look for these qualities when we shortlist.

Ambition

It's essential that:

- You're committed to our values and the continuous improvement of our services.
- You can develop, with our support, motivating and enabling skills – for example, you can set challenging goals and have the ability to assist a person you support in making informed choices.
- You're able to listen to the people we support and demonstrate an understanding of what they are communicating. (This is checked at the interview stage only.)

Courage

It's essential that:

- You're willing to work with people with a learning disability and/or communication difficulties.
- You're able to gain the skills to challenge poor practice and implement improvements.
- You're willing to work with people who require additional support because of behaviour that is challenging.

Integrity

It's essential that:

- You're able to demonstrate a positive image of people with learning disabilities.
- You're able to communicate clearly, adapting what you say and how you say it so that each person can understand you.
- You're able to exercise confidentiality when supporting vulnerable adults – for example, financial and personal details.

Partnership

It's essential that:

- You're able to demonstrate an understanding of the varying needs and requirements of people with disabilities.
- You have the ability to develop positive working relationships with all those involved with Discovery – including those we support, families, carers, internal colleagues and external agencies.
- You're able to work as part of a team.

Respect

It's essential that:

- You understand and demonstrate the value and need to ensure people are treated fairly and with respect.
- You're able to work flexibly and to respond effectively to changes in workload and the needs of the people we support.
- You're able to demonstrate an understanding of our core values – including treating all people with dignity and respect.

Other requirements

It's essential that:

- You have basic computer literacy, are able to complete e-learning and can work with Word documents and forms using a computer.
- You have adequate literacy and numeracy skills for basic forms, financial administration, petty cash and recording on medical charts etc. (This will be assessed at interview and support provided throughout your probationary period if required).
- You're willing to undertake training.



Investing In You

We value our colleagues, and our sector-leading package of staff benefits really builds up.

Rewarding you

- Competitive salary & 10 % enhancement for working overtime or waking nights.
- 30 days annual leave entitlement (including bank holidays), rising to 35 days.
- Pensions, with employee and employer contributions.
- The opportunity of flexible working.
- Sleep-in payments of £30.50 available in addition to basic pay. If applicable, top-up payments will be awarded to meet National Minimum Wage obligations.
- Paid training with financial bonuses for completion of awards and diplomas.
- Discounts and cashback on shopping through Perks at work.
- Recognition of excellence in our Inspiring People awards.
- £200 bonus for recommending a friend to work for us if they're employed.
- You may also benefit from childcare vouchers, support with learning to drive and more.
- Free access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with a 24/7 helpline for advice – also available to family members.

Recognising you

- Everyday Heroes - Our colleague recognition scheme, awards Love2Shop vouchers to each quarterly winner and 2 runners up.
- Colleague Voice - Held quarterly, our feedback forum gives colleagues the opportunity to provide feedback and make suggestions for improvements. This helps us set our priorities for longer term organisational changes.
- Saying 'well done' - for every compliment received from an external contact, such as a family member or health professional, you will be awarded a £10 voucher. We also award vouchers to each colleague in a location receiving a CQC 'good' rating.

Developing you

- We'll pay for and support you to complete the Care Certificate
- We hold Welcome Events, to say 'well done' and 'thank you' when you pass your probation.
- We provide Career Pathways - detailed information about routes for career progression within Discovery.
- Potential to apply to be part of 'Aspire', our career development programme, which will support you to develop the skills, confidence and experience to progress your career within the Discovery or the Dimensions Group.
- We provide a thorough induction and training programme, followed by regular 1-2-1s and an annual performance review.





discovery

Get more from life

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I love what I do, and I have great fun supporting people to get more from life. Everyone I work with is an individual and what I love most it is that, even if someone is unable to tell you what they want; there are plenty of other methods of communication. You can still get to know them and what they like. I just can't put it into words how amazing this job is. I should have done it years ago.

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