Consultant in Paediatric Neurology with a special interest in Neuromuscular conditions

JOB DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

This is a 10PA consultant post in Paediatric Neurology based at Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust, pending approval as a new substantive post. The post-holder will join a team of five Paediatric Neurology consultants. The department is engaged in an exciting expansion of its innovative tertiary and quaternary service provision, which the intended post-holder will play an active role in shaping together with other members of the team.

The intended post-holder will work to further develop the Regional Neuromuscular Service, and support the general paediatric neurology activity of the department. The new appointee will have experience in all areas of paediatric neurology and will be eligible for inclusion on the Specialist Register for General Paediatrics and Paediatric Neurology or be within 6 months of this.

This post offers the opportunity to develop a special interest in EMG.

ALDER HEY CHILDREN’S NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust in Liverpool is one of Europe’s biggest and busiest children’s hospitals providing care for over 200,000 children and young people each year. It is one of only four stand-alone paediatric trusts in UK and is staffed by 2,800 employees.

Alder Hey offers 20 specialist services including being the designated national centre for Craniofacial Surgery and a Centre of Excellence for Paediatric Oncology, Cardiac Surgery and Cardiology, Neurosciences (neurology and neurosurgery) and Orthopaedics. The Paediatric Intensive Care Unit has 23 beds and a separate HDU of 15 beds with frequent input from the paediatric neurology team. The Trust is one of the two paediatric Major Trauma Centres in the North West. It is a teaching hospital and trains 550 medical and 400 nursing students each year.

Alder Hey serves a catchment area of around 7 million, with around 60,000 children seen at the Emergency Department each year. The general paediatric and community paediatric departments provide secondary care for the local population, and neighbouring areas. In addition to the hospital site at West Derby, Liverpool, Alder Hey has a presence at more than 40 community outreach sites and its consultants hold 800 clinic sessions each year from Cumbria to Shropshire, Wales and the Isle of Man, helping deliver care closer to home.

Alder Hey hosts the UK Medicines for Children Research Network (MCRN) with a Department of Health grant of £22m. Alder Hey is also the lead centre for the Cheshire, Merseyside and North Wales MCRN. It leads the field in paediatric
pharmacovigilance, being recently awarded the only paediatric NHS programme grant (£2m) for work in this area.

Founded in 1914, Alder Hey was originally intended as a workhouse for infirm paupers. The Trust is now building a new, state-of-the-art 270-bed hospital – ‘Alder Hey Children’s Health Park’, in the adjacent Springfield Park. The hospital has been designed with the input of children to be a child-friendly environment, as well as being an exciting and functional design. The doors to the new hospital are due to open in late-2015. The new children’s hospital will have a combined 36-bed neurosciences ward admitting both neurosurgical and neurology patients. This will further integrate the excellent close clinical and research collaboration of the neurology and neurosurgery departments.

LIVERPOOL, THE CITY AND REGION

Liverpool is a cosmopolitan and vibrant world-heritage port city with a great history in England’s North West. Liverpool continues to attract people from all over the world who want to enjoy the good things in life whilst achieving their career aspirations. Liverpool offers very affordable housing, excellent state schools, easy access to all other parts of the UK and Europe via road, rail and air, and a low overall cost of living compared to other parts of the UK. Childcare costs are much less than in London and weekly travel costs are less than half those in the capital. And yet London is only a 2 hour journey away and with two nearby efficient international airports (Liverpool John Lennon and Manchester), the rest of Europe and the world are in easy reach for work and leisure.

With a population of 7 million, England’s North West incorporates the neighbouring sparring partner cities of Liverpool and Manchester, and is the UK’s largest economic region outside London and the South East. Lying at the geographical centre of the British Isles, over 400 million people across Europe are within four hours flight. Closer to home, for those who like the outdoors there is easy access to nearby beaches in Merseyside, as well as North Wales and the Lake District.

Liverpool is in the midst of exciting economic, cultural and social regeneration. The region is the 'arts spend capital of Britain'. Three times more money was spent last year on galleries and museums in the North West than on cultural buildings in London. It provides the history, culture and sporting attractions to create a work/life balance that you and your family can enjoy.

THE DEPARTMENT OF PAEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY

The department is based in the Littlewoods Neurosciences Unit at Alder Hey. The unit opened in 2005, thanks to a generous donation from the Littlewoods Group. The unit consists of a 14 bed Paediatric Neuromedical ward, outpatient facilities and Neurophysiology service. The ward admits children requiring inpatient neurorehabilitation with integrated facilities including therapy rooms and a specialist rehabilitation classroom.

The 16 bed neurosurgical ward (including 5 Neurosurgical HDU beds) is located immediately above the paediatric neurology ward. The neurology and neurosurgery consultant offices are co-located within the unit, enhancing collaborative working between the departments – a particular strength at Alder Hey. The Neurosciences Unit is adjacent to the PICU.
The neurophysiology department is integrated into the Neurosciences Unit with onsite videotelemetry, EMG, invasive EEG and expertise in performing respiratory and neurological sleep studies.

The neurology unit has close links with the Department of Community Child Health which provides community neurodisability services, Child Mental Health Services also provided by the Trust, Clinical Genetics (based at Liverpool Women’s Hospital) and also with the Walton Neurosciences Trust, the adult-based neurological centre located just four miles from Alder Hey. There is also close working with the radiology department with access to advanced neuroimaging techniques including a 1.5T and 3T intraoperative MRI scanner, SPECT and angiography. There are weekly neuro-radiology meetings.

Much of the work undertaken by the neurology department involves children outside Liverpool, including Merseyside, Cheshire, North Wales, the Isle of Man and parts of Lancashire and Shropshire as well as elsewhere in the UK. The five consultant neurologists undertake over 60 peripatetic outreach clinics in 13 separate hospitals and child development centres, in both general and specialist paediatric neurology in conjunction with the local general and community paediatricians. The paediatric neurology department is spearheading the development of tele-medicine clinics with these partner sites across the North West.

**Consultants**

The current paediatric neurology consultants are Dr Stefan Spinty, Dr Andrew Curran, Dr Richard Appleton, Dr Rachel Kneen and Dr Ram Kumar who each have areas of special interest as described below. The departmental ethos is forward-looking and consultant-delivered care.

**The Regional Neuromuscular service**

The regional neuromuscular service at AHCH has expanded very considerably over the years and continues to expand with monthly referrals averaging now 8.6. It is now one of the larger paediatric neuromuscular services in this country with a patient caseload of approximately 550. Following a national audit led by the muscular dystrophy campaign, the service was awarded ‘neuromuscular centre of clinical excellence’ status.

The established enthusiastic and comprehensive neuromuscular multidisciplinary team consists of:

- Consultant lead (Dr Spinty)
- Associate Specialist in neuromuscular diseases (0.6 WTE)
- Neuromuscular Care Advisors (1.5WTE)
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapist
- Dietician
- Speech and language therapist
- Psychologist
- Administrative coordinator
There is a weekly neuromuscular MDT meeting. There are currently eight dedicated weekly neuromuscular clinics including joint specialist orthopaedic, spinal, neuropathy and arthrogryposis clinics.

There are monthly joint neuromuscular cardiac, endocrine and LTV multidisciplinary meetings and three monthly joint spinal meetings.

Children/adolescents referred to the neuromuscular service are diagnosed with wide ranging conditions from the most severe, rapidly progressive and life limiting conditions with significant technology dependency to relatively mild, slowly progressive conditions that never the less have a profound impact on the children’s and their families life.

Alder Hey is uniquely set to meet the requirements of this complex patient group as, with a few exceptions, all required services are readily available in-house allowing for an increasing number of neuromuscular clinics to offer a “one stop” service and meeting currently virtually all of the national and international standards of care.

The neuromuscular service at Alder Hey provides a comprehensive, accessible and holistic service for children and young people with complex neuromuscular diseases and their families which includes initial diagnosis, support, treatment and liaison with and advice to carers, allied professionals, and local services as well as subsequent prevention and/or diagnosis and management of complications of the underlying conditions.

The service monitors patient’s progress through regular follow-up appointments. A significant number of children are seen on short notice or as emergencies as their underlying condition has suddenly deteriorated and requires urgent intervention.

As a regional neuromuscular centre, the team provides support and teaching to other professionals in primary, secondary and tertiary care involved in the care of this complex and challenging patient group.

There are strong links with all tertiary sub-specialities including established regular joint clinics.

Our long-term ventilation service offers formal sleep studies and works very closely with the neuromuscular service with weekly parallel clinics and a monthly joint MDT meeting.

Joint multidisciplinary transitional neuromuscular clinics with The Walton Centre in Liverpool are well established. There are now monthly transitional clinics with two adult neurology consultants with a special interest in neuromuscular diseases. We have established a rapid access respiratory care pathway with the community respiratory physiotherapists for individuals affected by significant neuromuscular disorders. This has been very successful in reducing A&E attendance and length of hospital stay and has attracted national interest.

Advanced care planning for all individuals affected by a life limiting neuromuscular condition is routinely offered. This has led to major improvements in end of life care and to a reduction in hospital admissions. The neuromuscular team works closely with the palliative care team and the local children hospices.
Other sub-speciality areas

The Epilepsy Service: this provides a comprehensive and holistic service across the North West and North Wales and also outside the region. The service is supported by 1.5 WTE Nurse Specialists in paediatric epilepsy. The Roald Dahl EEG Unit, staffed by 3WTE senior, Highly-Specialised EEG physiologists (neurology), a Consultant Clinical Neurophysiologist (Dr Brian Tedman) and a Consultant Paediatric Neurologist (Dr Richard Appleton) provides an EEG service for Alder Hey and eight District General Hospitals. The EEG service includes routine and ambulatory EEGs and video-EEG telemetry (surface and invasive) and intra-operative cortical mapping. Over 1200 routine and video-EEG telemetry investigations are performed each year.

Alder Hey, in conjunction with Manchester Children’s Hospital, is one of four nationally-commissioned centres for children’s epilepsy surgery services (CESS) in England. It is envisaged that the Alder Hey and Manchester CESS (termed ‘NorCESS’) will provide the epilepsy surgery service for the North of England and Northern Ireland. Dr Richard Appleton is the medical and Ms Sasha Burn, Consultant Paediatric Neurosurgeon, the surgical lead for the Alder Hey site.

The Epilepsy Service also includes a dedicated multi-disciplinary ketogenic diet service which provides a regional but also supra-regional service. This is led by Dr Rachel Kneen, Consultant Paediatric Neurologist. The service has 1 WTE dietician.

The Epilepsy Service has a national and international reputation for the clinical care of children with epilepsy, teaching and active research, specifically in the diagnosis and management of the paediatric epilepsies.

Neurorehabilitation Service: inpatient management of acquired brain injuries is provided by the paediatric neurology department (main clinical input from Dr Ram Kumar and Dr Andrew Curran) in conjunction with a multidisciplinary therapy team (‘HIRT – Head Injury Rehabilitation Team’). There are weekly team meetings. There are approximately 50 complex neurorehabilitation patients referred from within the hospital each year, predominantly from neurosurgeons, oncologists and PICU. Currently all the paediatric neurologists share in the clinical management of these patients. It is envisaged that the new children’s hospital will have a dedicated rehabilitation ward.

Spasticity Service (lead Dr Ram Kumar): the spasticity service is a multidisciplinary service for children with tone disorders run in conjunction with a specialist physiotherapist. Multidisciplinary clinics with orthopaedics, neurosurgery and upper limb surgery are held regularly. Interventions provided include botulinum toxin for upper and lower limbs, intrathecal baclofen, selective dorsal rhizotomy with impending introduction of deep brain stimulation.

Neuroinflammatory Service: this new service started in 2012 due to the increasing recognition of autoimmune limbic encephalitis. Dr Rachel Kneen runs this service with the rheumatology team. Dr Kneen also has a clinical and research interest in CNS infectious diseases. Liverpool has an international reputation for research into
CNS infection and the department is involved with running a course, teaching and different research projects in this area.

**Supporting staff**

There are 3 specialty doctors of ST4+ (Specialist Registrar) level, an ST3 and an F2 grade doctor (SHO level) allocated to the department by the Mersey Deanery on a rotational basis. One of the ST4+ level doctors is a National Grid Trainee in Paediatric Neurology. All consultant paediatric neurologists are assigned a trainee as educational supervisor. There is a full paediatric neurology teaching programme, with additional sessions from individual consultants.

There are three secretaries allocated to the paediatric neurology department, shared between the consultants. Office space is provided.

The neurology ward staff are trained and experienced in caring for children with a range of both acute and chronic neurological problems, including the medium and long-term rehabilitation of children with traumatic and non-traumatic brain injuries. Cross-training with the neurosurgical ward nursing staff is under way, pending the eventual integration of the two wards in the new Alder Hey Children’s Health Park Neurosciences ward.

The neurology inpatients benefit from access to a comprehensive range of specialist therapists from physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, clinical psychology with additional neuropsychological expertise. The educational rehabilitation unit sited within the neurology ward allows assessment and educational re-integration of children following brain injury, including those who have been discharged.

**Clinical management**

The paediatric neurology department is within the Neurosciences, Head, Neck and Specialist Surgery Clinical Business Unit (CBU). The CBU is led by a Clinical Director (Mr Christian Duncan) and General Manager (Rachel Greer) who have shared accountability for the overall clinical and financial performance of the CBU. The medical director is Professor Ian Lewis. This structure has been in place from January 2011.

**DUTIES OF THE POST**

The post-holder will provide both inpatient and outpatient neurology service including participating in a number of the peripheral clinics provided across the North West and North Wales. In relation to the neuromuscular service, the post-holder will participate in the regular weekly MDT as well as the Neuromuscular service consisting of both elective and emergency inpatient as well as outpatient clinics at Alder Hey.

The team share on-call duties for unscheduled new consultation requests from within and outside the hospital on a weekly rota basis. The consultants’ routine clinics are
cancelled during this ‘hot week’ to allow effective supervision of the junior doctors. The post-holder will provide neurology on-call as part of a consultant rota (1 in 6). The on-call is on an ‘immediate’ basis (Category A).

**JOB PLAN**

**JOB PLAN TEMPLATE – COLD WEEK (wk1-5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day and Session</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Programmed Activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday AM</td>
<td>Neuromuscular MDT 9-11am</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday AM</td>
<td>Administration/audit</td>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday PM</td>
<td>General Neurology Clinic</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday AM</td>
<td>Neuromuscular Clinic</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday PM</td>
<td>Patient administration</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday AM</td>
<td>Ward Round Monthly LTV MDT</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday AM</td>
<td>Monthly Neurogenetics MDT</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>0.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday PM</td>
<td>Monthly Neurogenetics MDT</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>0.125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday PM</td>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>0.75</td>
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<td>Thursday AM</td>
<td>Neurology Department MDT meeting (alt weeks)</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>0.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday AM</td>
<td>Radiology meeting alt weeks</td>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>0.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday PM</td>
<td>Neuromuscular Clinic</td>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Predictable Emergency Work</td>
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<td>Unpredictable Emergency Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-call Arrangements and Category</td>
<td>1 in 6 (5% supplement)</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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## JOB PLAN TEMPLATE – HOT WEEK (wk 6)

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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>PICU/Ward rounds/ward work Neuromuscular MDT</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Ward work/clinical admin</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>PICU/Ward rounds/ward work</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Rapid referral clinic Ward round/ward work</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>PICU/Ward rounds/ward work</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Clinical Administration Admin/audit</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>PICU/Ward rounds/ward work Neurology Department MDT meeting /teaching</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<td>PM</td>
<td>Ward work</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>PICU/Ward rounds/ward work Audit/admin</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Ward work</td>
<td>DCC</td>
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<td><strong>Predictable Emergency Work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unpredictable Emergency Work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>On-call Arrangements and Category</strong></td>
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The job plan is subject to annual review with the Clinical Director, with any changes being agreed within the department.
RESEARCH

The Trust has a comprehensive research programme and all consultants are encouraged to be involved. The Research and Development Directorate ensures that research is incorporated into the management infrastructure and is part of the Trust’s overall service plan and strategy. The Trust's Research and Development Manager, along with research group leaders, promote research within the overall strategic aims.

Areas of direct relevance to child health in which there exists a critical mass of expertise are focused around research subject groups. The Research and Development Manager, research group leaders and a nurse lecturer practitioner also provide support to new initiatives which fall outside the strategic focus, especially those with potential to develop into programmes of research.

Quality assurance of all Trust-based research is achieved through peer review of all proposals by the Research Committee.

The University of Liverpool Institute of Child Health is co-located with the hospital allowing collaboration on research projects. There are also close links for collaborative research with Liverpool John Moores and other universities in the area.

A new £2m bespoke fully-staffed Clinical Research Facility sited within the hospital has recently been opened for undertaking clinical studies offering exciting opportunities to those interested in clinical therapeutics development in children.

The Neuromuscular service has a number of research interests including:
- Recruiting patients for national and international neuromuscular trials (most recently PCT124 and oligonucleotide trial)
- Local PI for mitochondrial national cohort study (Newcastle)
- Local PI for international FOR-DMD steroid trial

Other active research projects in the department are in the areas of epilepsy, encephalitis and neurorehabilitation.

TEACHING

The Trust provides a significant number of placements for Undergraduate Medical Students from the University of Liverpool: in excess of 600 are placed with the Trust each year. A problem-based curriculum is in place and students from years 2, 3, 4 and 5 attend placements. The Trust also offers a wide range of special study modules for students. The paediatric neurology team receive many requests from medical students wishing to undertake additional clinical experience, audit and research.

Postgraduate teaching is co-ordinated by the Postgraduate Tutor, his/her deputies and the staff in the Education Centre. There is a curriculum for all grades of doctors in training. There is also a large amount of multidisciplinary teaching and individual clinical teams provide teaching for their juniors.
The post holder will be expected to be involved in the teaching of undergraduate students in clinics, on ward rounds and in problem based-learning sessions, and to contribute to postgraduate teaching for speciality doctors and Foundation Years teaching programmes. Consultants are eligible to be honorary clinical (or higher) lecturers of the University of Liverpool.

AUDIT AND CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

The appointee will be expected to participate in audits and the development of protocols and care pathways specific to the service.

Consultants are expected to be aware of the principles of clinical governance and to contribute to the aims of the Trust in achieving continuing improvement in all aspects of delivery of the service.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Consultants are expected to maintain their personal portfolios in accordance with the requirements of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, including the acquisition of the appropriate CPD points. The Trust has introduced an Appraisal system for all consultants which includes a review of Continuing Professional Development. The annual appraisal also informs the revalidation process for the consultant.

Further Information

We encourage interested applicants to contact the following consultants for further information:

Dr Stefan Spinty
Consultant Paediatric Neurologist
0151 252

Dr Ram Kumar
Consultant Paediatric Neurologist
0151 252 5164

Mr Christian Duncan
Clinical Director, Consultant Cranio Facial Surgeon
Neurosciences, Head and Neck Clinical Business Unit
Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust
0151 228 4811