



NHS

Birmingham and Solihull  
Mental Health  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Forensic Intensive Recovery Support Team (FIRST)

Community Psychiatric Nurse  
(CPN) Team

Become a part of  
Team BSMHFT

WE  
ARE  
HIRING

Candidate information pack

compassionate

inclusive

committed



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**Thank you for taking an interest in these exciting roles that will provide career opportunities in Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.**



## About us

**Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (BSMHFT)** provides a comprehensive health care service to those people living in Birmingham and Solihull who are experiencing mental health problems. Our Trust was established as Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust on 1 July 2008. Prior to us becoming a foundation trust our organisation had been created on 1 April 2003 through the merger of the former North and South Birmingham Mental Health NHS Trusts, which included mental health services for Solihull. We serve a culturally and socially diverse population of over a million, spread over 172 square miles, have an annual budget of in excess of £230 million, and a dedicated workforce of more than 4,000 staff – making us one of the largest and most complex mental health foundation trusts in the country. Our catchment population is diverse and characterised in places by high levels of deprivation, low earnings, and unemployment.

These factors create a higher requirement for access to health services and a greater need for innovative ways of engaging people from the most affected areas. As a foundation trust, we have more financial control over the services we provide, allowing us to provide even better services and to involve our local communities in the bigger healthcare decisions that we make. It helps us to actively engage our staff in shaping how BSMHFT is run, make sure the views of service users and their carers and families are central to everything we do, and better understand the different needs of our diverse communities to create services more in tune with local needs.

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## Our Trust values

Our values are our guide to how we treat ourselves, one another, our service users, families and carers, and our partners.

### Compassionate

- Supporting recovery for all and maintaining hope for the future.
- Being kind to ourselves and others.
- Showing empathy for others and appreciating vulnerability in each of us.



### Inclusive

- Treating people fairly, with dignity and respect.
- Challenging all forms of discrimination.
- Valuing all voices so we all feel we belong.



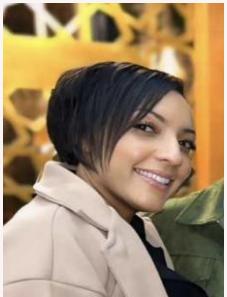
### Committed

- Striving to deliver the best work and keeping service users at the heart.
- Taking responsibility for our work and doing what we say we will.
- Courage to question to help us learn, improve and grow together.





## Welcome message from Dianna Dass-Farrell and Malcolm Payne



**Dianna Dass-Farrell is the Clinical Service Manager for FIRST.**

Dianna provides oversight and clinical accountability for the clinical service delivery for FIRST.



**Malcolm Payne is the CPN Manager for FIRST**

Malcolm provides line management, guidance and support to a team of Forensic Community Psychiatric Nurses.

'Thank you for considering joining FIRST for your next role.

FIRST provide high quality, evidence based mental health care in the community for individuals discharged from secure care, who have complex mental health problems and significant risk histories.

We are a warm, welcoming and dynamic service. Our teams are forward thinking, and recovery focused.

If you are looking for a role where your career and skills will flourish, please continue reading and don't hesitate to submit your application.'

Welcome to FIRST!

The FIRST service is unique in having substantial nursing resources. We currently employ around 20 CPN's which now includes B5 newly qualified RMN's who have joined us on the Preceptorship Development Programme.

Joining our team continues to expand our combined wealth of CPN experience as our staff have joined us from both acute and forensic inpatients, prison custody, and community mental health teams.

If you are contemplating a change in role and would like to know more about working in Secure Care please come and have an informal chat with us or shadow a Forensic CPN for the day to see if you think this is the team for you!



## About FIRST

FIRST is a specialist community forensic mental health service.

We provide a range of medical, psychological, and social interventions in the management of forensic mental disorders.

We monitor, support, and provide care for people discharged from secure units who are unsuitable for general community mental health services.

We Monitor the mental health of patients who have been assessed as being at risk of a serious mental illness relapse and assist in the development of proactive management plans.

We undertake needs and risk assessment of service users and develop individualised programmes of care.

Together with primary care services, we support with maintaining optimal physical health.

We offer advice on the use of medication and monitor patients' progress on drug regimes.

We act as social and medical supervisors for restricted patients in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice.

FIRST Support service users to live positive lives in the community using a recovery-based approach.

Our service consists of multiple disciplines which include:

- Administrators
- Social workers
- Approved Mental Health Practitioners
- Consultant Psychiatrists
- Occupational Therapists
- Psychologists
- Peer Mentors
- Recovery Workers
- Advanced Nurse Practitioner
- Community Psychiatric Nurses
- Family and Carer Lead



## What is it like working for FIRST?

'I have worked as a member of FIRST since 2016 where I joined as a Band 6 CPN. In 2021 I was successful in gaining the position of CPN and STR Worker Manager, and in 2023, I became the Hub Manager for FIRST.

My experience of working with FIRST has been extremely positive. The team is comprised of fantastic, compassionate professionals who support each other and work together to get the best outcomes for service users.

We function as a large, integrated team with numerous support mechanisms in place to ensure our colleagues are happy and healthy. These range from Clinical and management supervision, case busting, reflective sessions and both peer and group supervision.

As a committed and integrated team, we focus on supporting and developing our workforce to ensure they have the best possible experience working within FIRST.

I have had the opportunity to manage a caseload, collaborate with MDT members to help improve people's lives and advance in my career.

I would recommend FIRST as a place to work, learn and develop'



***Jodi Trainor***

***FIRST Hub Manager***

*Jodi provides professional clinical leadership and management to staff and leads across FIRST*



## About the FIRST CPN Team

We embody a multi-disciplinary approach to care and working collaboratively with members of the team which means that our CPN's are not isolated in decision-making around care coordination or risk management. Our highly dedicated and committed nurses assess, plan, implement and evaluate all aspects of care for patients across the secure pathway.

Our CPN's offer excellent compassionate care and treatment to the patients and carers who access our services and we have a much envied team ethos where everyone helps each other out. CPN's enjoy the flexibility we offer here as staff can work across a number of Trust sites including Reaside, Ardenleigh, Tamarind, St Andrews, Hillis Lodge and Elliot House as well as working from home when needed. The majority of our nursing team work a full-time pattern 8am-4pm, 8:30am-4:30pm or 9am-5pm, some work compressed hours over four long days, some work a 9 day fortnight, some have retired and returned to the team working part time.

FIRST is a standalone service providing our own home treatment and crisis community support to our service users; our CPN's and SW's are on a rota to jointly provide cover for on call shifts (approx. 4 times per month) with support from On Call RC during evenings, weekends and bank holidays so that we can respond to urgent situations by telephone and complete home visits in emergencies (standby on call payments and overtime are payable).



## About the FIRST CPN Team continued

As a busy and dynamic team we regularly receive student nurses on placement who are keen to learn how to care and support forensic patients in the community.

We have introduced a CPN buddy scheme which ensures that each student has 2 named mentors, we have found this helpful in ensuring our students have maximum exposure to learning experiences as well as sharing the mentoring responsibility for our nurses; additionally, it ensures a robust safety net is in place when CPN's are absent from work, on training or on annual leave.

Working as a forensic CPN in our team is enjoyable (we all have a great sense of humour) and is hugely rewarding!

Like many roles it can also be challenging at times which is why we offer extensive support to our nurses which includes monthly CPN meetings, regular line management supervision, clinical supervision, joint supervision, reflective practice, art therapy, autism support and case-busting sessions.



## What is it like working for FIRST as a CPN?



**Grace Hancock,  
Forensic CPN**

tells us about her employment journey into FIRST.

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I began my career in mental health as a healthcare assistant and then staff nurse on an acute female ward in Coventry. However, it wasn't long after I qualified until I found myself working within my first secure setting in a locked rehabilitation unit. A challenging environment that offered me valuable experience in providing care for individuals with complex and enduring needs that required intensive support. Following this, I transitioned to working on the mental health ward at HMP Birmingham. These experiences were both demanding and rewarding, as they required balancing security measures with the provision of compassionate care. Working with individuals within these settings allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by this client population. This reinforced my commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of those who find themselves within forensic services which led to me FIRST.

Today, I am proud to be part of FIRST as a CPN and I have been part of the team since November 2021. In my time here I have been encouraged to pursue training related to my own interests and participate in professional networking to diversify my connections and experience, to facilitate successful integration and recovery.



## What is it like working for FIRST as a CPN?

I have worked as a CPN at FIRST team for 3 years, after working on the wards for many years and haven't looked back. I'm glad to be part of this great team and I can honestly say that I enjoy working here. There's a lot of personal fulfilment I get in knowing that I'm making a significant impact on our service users lives, being able to see the tangible effects of the care and support provided is rewarding. I find comfort in the fact the team is well resourced and there are always colleagues available to offer help and support in challenging times.

Other aspects I enjoy about the job is the encouragement for professional development and the offer of flexible working arrangements which gives me a good work life balance.

**Thabani Ndlovu**  
**Forensic CPN**



I really enjoy working in forensics and spent 12 years as an inpatient nurse at Reaside before coming into the community. I've now been a CPN with the FIRST service for over 15 years and love the variety, flexibility and autonomy the role gives me. I'm just about to take early retirement but love my job so much I've decided to come back part time! If you think that community forensic nursing is for you please come and join us!

**Debbie Tomlinson**  
**Forensic CPN**





## Diversity and inclusion

Here at BSMHFT we strongly believe in the principles of inclusion and belonging, not only in our service delivery but also in the ways we work together. Through our Value Me approach we have advocated the importance of understanding people for who they are and the lived experience they bring, applying this to everybody, colleagues, service users and our local communities, really fostering a place where people can truly be themselves.

Are you looking at this role but feeling you don't meet 100% of the requirements? Studies have shown that women and people from racialised communities are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification and all the criteria. At BSMHFT we are dedicated to building a diverse, inclusive, and authentic workplace so if you are excited about this role, but your experience does not align perfectly with every

requirement in the job description, we encourage you to get in contact for a discussion or simply apply anyway. You might just be the right candidate for this or other roles.

**Take a look at our latest reports on equality, diversity and inclusion on our Trust website.**



## Our offer to you

You will be part of a Trust whose values are Compassionate, Inclusive and Committed. FIRST lives these values and welcomes all new recruits with a bespoke induction package.

We pride ourselves on developing staff and students that join us for their placements, indeed some of our staff joined as a Band 4 Nursing Associate and following the Trust Registered Degree Apprenticeship scheme have joined the team as qualified nurses.

The BSMHFT leadership team and FIRST Senior Leadership team are committed to continuing professional development to maintain and diversify the workforce.

All staff regardless of grade and experience receive and have access to clinical supervision, reflective practice, and annual development appraisals.

In addition to the mandatory training CPN's have access to work-based learning, leadership and management and clinical skills training opportunities. As a team we like to support staff to develop professionally in the areas they are interested in. For example, as part of Continuing Professional Development a number of our CPN's have accessed courses on Phlebotomy and ECG training to support physical health and blood monitoring for our patients. In addition, others have pursued formal qualifications in Non-Medical prescribing, Behavioural Family Training, Coaching and Mentoring and Reflective Practice. We also hold regular inhouse modules on Substance Misuse, Risk Management and HCR-20 training. Whereas others enjoy attending conferences and webinars to enhance their practice.

Further information on learning and developmental opportunities available within the Trust can be located at: [BSMHFT Training Prospectus - Overview | Rise 360 \(articulate.com\)](#)

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## The health and wellbeing of our colleagues is extremely important to us

We want to look after our staff as well as we can, and we have created a package of financial and health and wellbeing initiatives that are unique to our Trust.

As well as the NHS pension scheme and NHS discounts available to all those in the NHS, we offer:

- Salary sacrifice car benefit scheme.
- [Vivup](#) – a staff benefits and wellbeing portal which also gives access to discounts across the UK's major retailers.
- Excellent discounts for National Express travel.
- Access to our Employee Assistance Programme – a free, confidential service offering guidance and support 24 hours a day whatever your concern.
- 'Take a Moment' rooms for you to take a break during your working hours.
- A free physiotherapy service.
- Free online yoga sessions.



## Work-life balance

We are committed to creating a working environment where you can successfully balance your working and home lives. We understand that traditional work patterns do not suit everybody. We aim to be as flexible as possible, considering options that include variable hours and part-time working. We take health and wellbeing seriously. There is support and advice from our occupational health provider, this includes 24-hour confidential and independent information and emotional support and more.





## Flexible working

We are committed to offering a range of flexible working options as part of your standard working arrangements. Some examples of our flexible working options are described below.

Flexible hours – within service requirements, we can be flexible with start and end times for work.

- Term time only contracts – allows you to work in term time only but be paid throughout the year in equal monthly payments.
- Compressed hours – working full-time hours but over fewer days

## Part-time working

Working less than full-time hours (usually by working fewer days).





## Pay and starting salary

We offer competitive rates of pay and our reward and recognition systems operate in an equitable, fair, transparent, and objective way. Our pay scales include pay progression in accordance with the [Agenda for Change 22/23 NHS Pay Scales](#). New employees normally start at the bottom of the appropriate grade, although the recruiting manager can recommend a higher starting salary by considering relevant skills and experience.

## Pension

As soon as you start with us, you will automatically become a member of the NHS Pension Scheme, if eligible.

## Annual leave

We have a generous annual leave entitlement of 27 days per year, rising to 29 days after five years of service and 33 days after completing 10 years of service.

In addition, you will be entitled to eight bank holidays per year. Leave is pro-rata for part-time workers.

If you have been employed by the NHS before joining us and your previous service is counted towards your higher leave entitlement.