



**Job Title: Assistant Psychologist (0.8 WTE/4 days per week, Fixed 1 year term)**

**Reporting to:** Clinical Manager for Advocacy and Research (Diabetes Ireland).

**Location:** Head Office, 19 Northwood Business Campus, Santry, Dublin 9 & Psychological Medicine Department in St James's Hospital, Dublin

### **About Diabetes Ireland**

Diabetes Ireland is the national charity in Ireland dedicated to helping people with diabetes. We achieve this by providing support, education, and motivation to everyone affected by diabetes and their families. We raise public awareness of diabetes in the community and foster programmes for early detection and prevention of diabetes complications and its burden. We also support and encourage advances in diabetes care and research that improves Quality of Life and Standards of Care.

With our comprehensive range of education, care and support services and activities, we constantly strive to provide what our members need to optimally manage their diabetes. One of these needs is to improve access to mental health support for people with diabetes and their families.

Positive mental health & wellbeing is a key goal of diabetes self-management. However, mental health problems within diabetes have been well documented as occurring more frequently and resulting in significant challenges in managing diabetes. This can increase the risk of diabetes complications. Moreover, people with diabetes may suffer from diabetes-specific psychological issues, i.e. diabetes distress, diabetes burnout, fear of hypoglycaemia, fear of complications, or experience diabetes-specific disordered eating behaviour - diabulimia. All of these might lead to severe psychological complications and in some cases might be life-threatening.

### **The Role**

We require an assistant psychologist with a keen interest in diabetes to develop a mental health support forum for people with diabetes via a dedicated microsite on [www.diabetes.ie](http://www.diabetes.ie) that will offer a range of accessible, approved, and effective mental health resources to support people with diabetes and their families.

## Main Duties and Responsibilities

- 1) The role will primarily involve developing a new Diabetes Ireland support service to include a dedicated emotional wellbeing microsite on [www.diabetes.ie](http://www.diabetes.ie) with a range of resources accessible.
- 2) Secondly, there will be further opportunities to participate in diabetes specific in-person wellbeing programmes that will provide access to clinical expertise and advice on how to manage diabetes and recognise the psychological issues associated with living with diabetes on a daily basis.
- 3) Thirdly, the Assistant Psychologist will be based 1 day per week in St. James' Hospital under the supervision of a Principal Clinical Psychologist. It is hoped that this 1 day per week would provide further hospital-based research and clinical experience for the Assistant Psychologist.

More specifically, responsibilities to include:

### *Within Diabetes Ireland:*

- Identifying the types of mental health problems common in people with diabetes.
- Developing an array of innovative, effective and appropriate information on coping with diabetes related mental health problems (e.g. diabetes distress, diabetes burnout, fear of hypoglycaemia, depression, binge eating, diabulimia, fear of complications etc).
- Providing resources (leaflets/videos) and signpost to other useful resources (eg HSE mental health resources) to help people with diabetes understand and learn how to cope with mental health problems.
- Developing a range of interactive 2-hour Workshops on Diabetes Emotional Wellbeing, specific to parents of children with diabetes under/over 13 years of age, adults living with type 1 diabetes and adults living with Type 2 diabetes that can be delivered by appropriate healthcare professionals in a group setting online and offline. These programmes will be delivered in an interactive format to allow participants to share their thoughts on topics such as psychological burden associated with living with diabetes, emotional reactions related to the diagnosis of diabetes, age-specific difficulties (i.e. pre-schooler care, college years, alcohol, work issues etc.), developmental stages and diabetes-related challenges, emotions and psychological complications associated with diabetes distress and burnout: depression, anxiety, eating disorders; and tips focusing on healthy support, building resilience and coping skills.
- Assisting, and potentially delivering, a pilot of the workshop programmes in conjunction with the overview committee and evaluating the outcomes.
- Liaising with key professionals and patient advocates in the development of above-mentioned resources.
- Provide access to support and information webinars on the topics of mental health and coping.
- Supporting the development of Diabetes Ireland Strategies and Programmes for families of children living with Type 1 diabetes, adults living with Type 1 diabetes and

Type 2 diabetes following diabetes diagnosis (from a mental health and wellbeing perspective).

#### *Other*

- Effectively support the CEO of Diabetes Ireland, colleagues and other stakeholders in the development of Diabetes Ireland services and programmes as required.
- Be a diabetes resource and spokesperson for Diabetes Ireland as required.

#### *Psychological Medicine team, St. James's Hospital (1 day per week)*

- Developing an understanding of the role of a psychologist in a hospital setting.
- Attending a weekly continuous professional development journal club.
- Attending departmental meetings with the Psychological Medicine Team.
- Shadowing agreed team members in MDT meetings and patient assessments where possible.
- Offering literature reviews for the psychologists on request.
- Opportunities to be involved in research initiatives within the Psychological Medicine Team.
- Shadowing psychology screening appointments where possible and appropriate.
- Assist in the development and running of group work within the psychology department.
- Attend clinical supervision with a focus on personal and professional development.

#### **Reporting**

The successful candidate will report to, and be supported by an overview committee of Clinical Psychologists and Diabetes Ireland representatives. The overview committee will supervise and direct the Assistant Psychologist in the development of the programme content. Line Management will be provided by Clinical Manager for Advocacy and Research of Diabetes Ireland.

#### **Training and Development**

The successful candidate will have an opportunity to develop their portfolio of psychology experience focusing on living with a chronic condition and learning about mental health. Direct contact with people living with diabetes will be provided through clinical work within Diabetes Ireland, alongside the experience of hospital psychology and adult mental health with Dr Austin Bayley (Principal Clinical Psychologist). Hence, the successful candidate will work 1 day a week in St. James's Hospital and 3 days per week in the development of the full programme reporting to Dr Kate Gajewska, Psychologist, Clinical Manager for Advocacy and Research, Diabetes Ireland.

**Essential Criteria for application:**

- Attainment of 2:1 or higher grade in a BA in Psychology Degree or equivalent.
- Interest in and passion for supporting patients with diabetes / chronic conditions and their family members.
- Understanding of the challenges of living with diabetes and or other chronic conditions.
- Previous clinical and/or research experience.

**Desirable Criteria for application:**

- Undertaking or completion of a Masters/PhD level qualification in area of psychology or similar discipline.
- Previous supervision with a clinical psychologist.
- Previous experience of the development of support materials for patients or family members.

Salary: €30,280. The contract of employment will be for a 12-month period.

**Letter of application and CV should be sent to: Gillian Reynolds, Diabetes Ireland, 19 Northwood House, Northwood Business Campus, Santry, Dublin 9, or Email: [gillian.reynolds@diabetes.ie](mailto:gillian.reynolds@diabetes.ie).**

**The closing date for applications is 25 January 2023 (5pm). Enquiries to Gillian Reynolds. Interviews will be held in person on either 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023.**