



CANDIDATE PACK FOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

**THE DEAF HEALTH
CHARITY
SIGNHEALTH**



WELCOME

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the exciting and important role of Director of Operations at SignHealth.

Originally established in 1986, SignHealth has been providing services to the deaf community and campaigning for more deaf awareness and better access since then. We have produced ground-breaking reports uncovering health disparities and changed practices in the NHS to reduce the barriers that we face as deaf people in the UK.

We've recently developed a new Three Year Plan to build on our previous growth and accelerate it. We want to increase our integration with the NHS and enhance our partnerships to eliminate health inequity and to grow our social care provision. Our services are spread across England and are wide ranging, having evolved from residential social care and independent living support to include advocacy, psychological therapies, domestic abuse support services and resources which are specifically designed for children and young people. Our services are the cornerstone of what we do and the focus of our growth as a charity. As our Director of Operations, you will have a key role to play in the shape and impact of our work now and in the future.

We're looking for a dynamic and strategic leader who brings a strong track record operating at a senior level in social care, the NHS, children and young people's services or other related fields of operations. You will be experienced in developing or transforming systems, services and ways of working to deliver growth with the skills to coalesce a committed team around this shared goal and build effective relationships with commissioners and wider stakeholders.

About half our staff work directly face-to-face in the delivery of our social care services in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and London. The other half of our staff work at home remotely delivering services online, or supporting us all in back office roles. What's most interesting about us is that about 75% of our staff are deaf people. Unlike many other organisations, we do not face the challenge of high staff turnover and we do not use any agency staff in our work.

Whether deaf or hearing, we are looking for someone who shares our passion for social change, who will understand deaf culture or be open to learning and adapting. Whatever your background, it is important that you bring direct experience of marginalisation and how it is to feel separate to the mainstream.

To hear more about what we are looking for in our new Director of Operations, please [click here](#).

Having seen this, if you have the drive, ambition and experience to deliver and you are motivated by our vision for a world without barriers for deaf people, please read on.

James Watson-O'Neill
Chief Executive

ABOUT US

[Click here](#) to view our Who We Are video.

We are a team of 200 staff working to deliver our purpose to eliminate deaf health inequality.

We provide a range of services, including social care, psychological therapy, domestic abuse support, advocacy and children and young people's services.

We deliver this work by deaf people to deaf people right across England, directly in British Sign Language (BSL). We believe we are one of the largest disabled people's organisations in the UK and more than 75% of our staff are deaf people.

OUR VISION

A world where there are no barriers to good health and wellbeing for Deaf people.

PURPOSE

To improve the health and wellbeing of Deaf people.

OUR VALUES

We Can Do It!

We are ambitious for impact yet are realistic about the journey ahead.

Everyone Belongs

We create a safe supportive space that respects and supports our differences.

We Grow Together

We help everyone flourish in their own way by starting from where they are.

Make the Small Moments Count

We pay attention to the small ways that contribute to our wellbeing and health.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We are on a journey towards becoming an anti-racist organisation and have recently piloted a new e-learning anti-racism programme in BSL in partnership with New Ways.

We have an EDI Steering Group of staff from across SignHealth supporting the development of our emerging EDI Strategy.

You can find out more about our journey and efforts via our blog [here](#).

WHAT WE DO

[Click here](#) to view our What We Do video.

Every hour of the day, someone from SignHealth is working to improve the health and wellbeing of deaf people.

Our work is varied and aims to promote easier access to healthcare and information. We partner with the NHS and other services and take on projects, carry out research, and raise awareness.

We also deliver our own services to reach deaf people in our shared language in their moment of need.

SOCIAL CARE

At SignHealth, we are working towards a future without barriers to good health and wellbeing for all deaf people.

Some deaf people need additional support in order to live safely or carry out ordinary tasks. This support is much more effective when delivered by staff who know BSL and understand deaf culture.

SignHealth Homes

We manage seven residential services for deaf people with long-term mental health challenges and complex needs. Residents are given opportunities to learn the skills they need to become independent again.

Outreach Services

We offer support with difficult tasks and activities at home and elsewhere so that deaf people can lead a more full and independent life. We are flexible in our approach. We provide person-centred support for each client either face-to-face or remotely, or a combination of both, based on the preference of the client.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPY

Research suggests that the best treatment for people with mental health challenges, such as depression and anxiety, is 'talking therapy'. This therapy method relies on 1-1 communication, but for deaf people this can be problematic. The moment an interpreter is involved, the conversation becomes less intimate and has been shown to be less effective for the patient.

All our therapists are either deaf or hearing and fluent in BSL and some can also support deaf people who do not sign.

DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT

We provide the only national domestic abuse service that specialises in supporting deaf people.

Everybody we support has their own dedicated worker. We can offer support and advice linked to housing, children, therapy and the legal system. Additionally, these dedicated workers can provide support when dealing with other agencies, such as the police.

We also provide prevention workshops in schools, colleges, and within the deaf community. Our staff are working to raise awareness amongst young deaf people using BSL, as we believe this information should be shared in their first language.

ADVOCACY

We specialise in working in mental health hospitals (for children and adults) and prisons, as well as with general issues related to care assessments, employment disputes, housing, and benefits tribunals.

In difficult situations, there are often barriers that make it difficult to get the information and support deaf people need to make their case. Our advocates enable deaf people to defend our rights and have our views and wishes genuinely considered when decisions are being made about our lives. In BSL, our advocates help explain complicated situations and rights, and make sure we are properly heard.

Our advocates won't take control, tell people what to do, or advise what is best. We can do that for ourselves with the right support.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Deaf young people are more likely to feel sad and find things more difficult than hearing people of the same age and the support we receive in schools and colleges can sometimes vary depending on location and type of school.

Some deaf young people have something called "language deprivation" which can make it even harder because they might not know how to explain what they are feeling.

We don't think that the support available to deaf young people at the moment is good enough. We are working hard to talk to people in Government, the NHS and other organisations to help them understand what deaf children and young people need and we are looking at lots of different ways to improve the support available.



JOB DESCRIPTION

[Click here](#) to view Job Description video.

MAIN PURPOSE

To ensure effective and strategic leadership of Operations at SignHealth, in line with SignHealth's culture as a deaf-led charity that exists to eliminate the health inequalities we experience as deaf people.

As a senior leader and member of the Executive Leadership Team for the organisation, the Director of Operations is a key player in the strategic development of the organisation and the delivery of key objectives within its Three Year Plan and acts as Objective Lead for the Healthy Deaf Community Objective.

The post holder will play a pivotal role in overseeing the organisation's day-to-day Operations which includes the leadership of Social Care, Domestic Abuse, Therapies and Children and Young People, ensuring efficiency, scalability, and alignment with the charity's purpose and strategic goals.

The post holder, reporting to the Chief Executive, will have line management responsibility for the Head of Social Care, Head of Therapies and Advocacy, Head of Domestic Abuse and the Head of Children and Young People.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Deliver the growth agenda within SignHealth's new Three Year Plan, including opening three new residential social care services by 2027
- Lead the Operational Senior Management Team to develop and deliver the Three Year Plan, ensuring the outcomes are deaf led and culturally appropriate for our beneficiaries
- Ensure there are excellent and well understood safeguarding procedures and reporting in place, as well as comprehensive systems for incident reporting. This information should be regularly reviewed and analysed for trends and reports proactively shared with ELT and Audit and Risk Committee
- A clear understanding of SignHealth's EDI focus in relation to each service, both in delivering to deaf people and also in the employment and support of our staff. These specific ambitions on EDI should be embedded in our approach to delivering each service and widely understood by the whole team in each service
- Leading the development and delivery of detailed budgets across all service areas with clear assumptions for every individual service delivering an agreed financial overhead contribution.
- Lead ongoing performance reporting that monitors the outcomes for clients in all services, confirms all staff are working at capacity and that quickly identifies and remedies any HR issues
- Develop and maintain a detailed and approved business model for each service type which supports the needs of deaf people, linked to evidence and sector trends, clearly articulating the impact for how colleagues in our People, Finance, Fundraising and Communications teams should work
- Maintain strong market intelligence on each of sectors we are operating in, feedback on how it is changing and how we need other ELT colleagues to support SignHealth's position (e.g. on trans inclusion, social care funding, changes to Talking Therapy/NHS funding, CYP mental health or other sector specific issues). Some of this intelligence will come from regular attendance at sector events such as VODG or NHS networks
- Lead happy and fully staffed teams, across all services, which are well managed, properly rewarded and well supported and which sees the Director of Operations often, other members of ELT regularly, and has occasional contact with trustees too
- Manage a clear understanding of the risks in each operational service, lead their mitigation and their escalation into the SignHealth risk register as necessary
- Ensure there is clarity on how our overall Quality Assurance Framework confirms that we are maintaining and improving the quality of each service – in addition to evidencing compliance with external accreditation, e.g. CQC or Leading Light, SignHealth should have a QA position that goes above and beyond these and explicitly delivers on our "deaf needs"
- Lead a comprehensive plan for the development and review of all operations-specific policy and procedure (e.g. medication, moving and handling, fire safety etc) managed in collaboration with the Governance team

- Ensure SignHealth has a safe and effective approach to the monitoring of health and safety across all service types, linking to the Governance team's management of our insurance and oversight of incidents and reporting
- Lead an approach to gathering and sharing stories about the people who use our services, delivered in collaboration with the Communications and Fundraising teams, recognising the regular need for stories to inform fundraising appeals, the production of the trustees' annual report, SignHealth's impact report etc.
- Cultivate strong relationships with external stakeholders, including NHS England, Integrated Care Boards, Statutory bodies and voluntary sector organisations, to raise the profile of the organisation and to pursue new business opportunities for Social Care, Domestic Abuse, Therapies and Children and Young People
- Promote and model a working culture of excellent quality assurance and continuous improvement, enhancing team capability, collaboration, and sharing of good practice that values and empowers staff
- Lead on a comprehensive approach to our fees, costing and pricing with an annual cycle of activity leading to the renegotiation of fee income, as agreed and in line with the budget process
- As Designated Safeguarding Lead for the organisation, providing leadership on Safeguarding practice and ensuring safeguarding systems are effective, liaising closely with the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Board's Safeguarding Trustee
- As Nominated Individual for the organisation's CQC registered care services, oversee all regulated activities, ensuring services are run well and safely, compliant with service regulations and standards and have the right resources
- Ensure that all Operational services meet and comply with SignHealth's policies and procedures
- Ensure that all Operational services meet their contractual and funding obligations and are effective in their business models and delivery
- Work collaboratively with other directors, sharing responsibility for the achievement of jointly agreed objectives and ensuring all parts of the organisation are fully integrated
- Undertake key reporting and accountability roles to the Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team, the Board and its committees, ensuring they are fully sighted of the work of Operations, including the timely reporting of risk
- Working in partnership with another ELT Director, act as executive lead for the relevant Board sub-committee to ensure accountability for delivery of our growth agenda
- Undertake other duties as required by the Chief Executive from time to time, including deputising for them when required



PERSON SPECIFICATION

EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- Significant experience of managing operational services at senior level in the field of NHS, disability, social care, domestic abuse, therapies and/or children and young people
- Strong background in delivery of strategic plans with the ability to establish aligned goals, objectives and priorities
- Proven experience of leading change including successful service redesign and service improvement
- Experience of quality assurance and regulatory compliance
- Experience of leading on and successfully delivering change projects
- Experience of contract management and negotiation
- Substantial and proven experience and commitment to improving the lives/outcomes of deaf/disabled people
- Substantial knowledge of the social model of disability and the issues that deaf/disabled people face

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Ability to work effectively within a “political” environment and establish a positive relationship with external stakeholders
- Awareness of and responsiveness to organisational politics and ability to establish a positive relationship with all SignHealth staff
- Able to be thorough, detailed, resilient, flexible, show high level of integrity, excellent time management, strong interpersonal and organisational skills
- Very strong communication, negotiation and problem-solving skills and an ability to influence outcomes through effective reasoning, persuasion and diplomacy
- Strong leadership skills in developing team members and empowering staff across different disciplines
- Ability to influence and negotiate, using a range of tools and methods that may work differently for each service
- Exceptional organisational skills with the ability to prioritise a varied workload
- Evidence of having a passion for working with people and working beyond the confines of the job description
- Shows strong business acumen that delivers contract and funding targets and is able to demonstrate value for money to funders
- Ability to think strategically and incorporate different priorities into operational plans; strong background in delivery of strategic plans with the ability to establish aligned goals, objectives and priorities
- Ability to lead and manage organisational change and continuous improvement across a range of services
- Demonstrates SignHealth’s values; inspires people and provides direction and clarity so that staff are highly engaged and motivated to deliver to the best of their abilities even through challenging times
- Lived experience of being deaf (candidates may identify in other ways – perhaps hard of hearing or hearing impaired) and BSL skills are also desirable

COMMITMENT

- A commitment to promoting and role modelling SignHealth’s values
- A commitment to promote and role model SignHealth’s approach to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

SALARY

The salary for this role is £93,600 per annum on a full-time permanent basis

LOCATION

Home-based anywhere

PENSION

- After 3 months auto enrolled in the NOW pension scheme at prevailing rates
- After successful completion of the probation period (normally 6 months) eligible to join the Scottish widows pension employee contributes 5%, employer 6%

ANNUAL LEAVE

25 days holiday per holiday year plus bank holidays (pro-rata) and 2 wellbeing days

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Eye care vouchers
- 5 days paid study leave per year (CPD) (pro-rata)
- Expenses policy which allows payments for items when working away from home
- 2x salary life assurance scheme (death in service)
- Fully funded BSL training and management development programmes
- Generous sick pay policy
- Equipment and furniture desk/chair to work from home
- Flexible working including compressed hours (subject to meeting needs of the job role and business)
- Perkbox (including 25 flexible points every month)
- Refer a friend £200 voucher for both the referee and referrer



HOW TO APPLY

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact Katy Giddens, katy.giddens@starfishsearch.com or Hannah Chapman, hannah.chapman@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/signhealth-dir-operations/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Please note, SignHealth are a Disability Confident Employer so candidates who wish to be considered under the scheme, and meet the essential criteria, will automatically be invited to interview.

We are working with a deaf associate, Joanna Wootten, who is available to have an informal chat in BSL or spoken English with anyone who would like to understand more about SignHealth, including the culture of working in a deaf organisation.

We are also working with BSL interpreters throughout this process but if you have any other access needs, please do let us know.

Information webinar delivered by SignHealth:

Monday 13 May 2024, 6pm-7pm

English/BSL interpreters: Liana Llyod and Rebekah Spencer

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMldeGtqjwiH9L07MASyXApbpMvZtcQ1ur>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Joining instructions:

1. Your video will be off when you join the meeting, please feel free to turn it on
2. Amend your Zoom name if you wish to remain anonymous
3. We will provide Joanna Wootten's WhatsApp number if you wish to ask a question in BSL video anonymously

Closing date:

Friday 24th May 2024

Preliminary interviews:

End of w/c 3rd and w/c 10th June 2024

Final Panel interviews:

Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th July 2024