

The British Dietetic Association volunteer role descriptor

Research Officer; Mental Health Specialist Group

Aims and Objectives of the Group

- To promote the role of the dietitian in the care and treatment of children, adolescents, adults and older people with mental illness and learning disabilities.
 - To promote communication between dietitians working in the field of mental illness and learning disabilities
 - To provide specialist evidence-based advice and information
 - To promote the development of evidence-based practice in the field of mental illness and learning disabilities
 - To promote the role of the dietitian in mental illness and learning disabilities at a national level
 - To address and contribute emerging national policy related to mental illness and learning disabilities
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What the post has to offer

As the specialist group Research Officer, you will work closely with the committee to develop research and audit opportunities for group members. You'll use your expertise to guide and shape the groups research strategy, working with the BDA's Education, Practice and Policy Team to contribute to the BDA's education work.

You'll work with the committee to encourage members to participate in research and to embed it in their day-to-day practice. This includes encouraging participation in the BDA's research symposium and developing best practice and templates for clinical audits and service evaluations.

Through this role you'll develop an overview of the strategic developments affecting the specialist group from both within the BDA and externally to the profession. Using your knowledge and skills to represent specialist group members interests, advocate for the mental health specialism and the dietetic profession as a whole.

We don't expect you to do it alone, as the Research Officer you'll work closely with the specialist group committee and with the support of the BDA staff team to deliver your specialist group aims and objectives.

Through this position you will gain organisation, communication and project management skills, which can translate directly into career development. It will also give you an opportunity to work with colleagues across your speciality, building networks, sharing knowledge and skills

Main duties and responsibilities

- Overall responsibility for the group's research strategy.
- Encourage members to participate in research embedding this into their day-to-day practice.
- Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to create and share templates for service clinical audits and service evaluations.
- Facilitate the peer review process for group resources and for members wishing to submit an abstract/paper/funding bid.
- Work with the committee to identify members willing and suitably qualified to review key publications where appropriate.

- Keep the committee up to date with relevant conferences, abstract submission deadlines or funding relating to the specialism.
 - Represent the group at BDA research events including BDA LIVE and the annual Research Symposium.
 - Co-ordinate the committee responses to NICE consultations.
 - Co-ordinate the committee and members contributions to PEN.
 - Collaborate with the Website Editor and Social Media Officer to promote research opportunities through BDA communication channels.
 - Work closely with the BDA's Volunteer Manager and Education, Practice and Policy Team, seeking advice and guidance where needed.
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Training Support and Resources

As the Research Officer you'll work closely with the Volunteer Manager and the Education, Practice and Policy Team who offer support, guidance and advice to the postholder. Support for this role is offered by key committee members including the Chair.

We have a variety of resources, tools and training available to support this role including:

- Induction with BDA staff and a full handover from the previous postholder.
 - Training and development opportunities to help build personal and professional skills including workshops, webinars and the BDA's annual volunteer conference.
 - Access to our volunteer hub with a wide range of website editing tools and resources.
 - Access to our volunteer handbook and volunteer hub providing a range of resources and guidance.
 - Regular communications including a monthly volunteer ezine with BDA updates and opportunities.
 - Networking with other volunteers through events, webinars and access to our volunteer forums.
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Length of service and commitment

You will be elected for a two-year term of office and have the option to extend for an additional two-year term. Reasonable notice can be given if you are no longer able to fulfil this role.

There are a number of training and development opportunities available, including a detailed induction with BDA staff and governance training to be undertaken upon commencement of each term.

Committee meetings are held 4 times a year, one of which will be in person. There is a varying and flexible amount of work in between meetings which is dependent on the strategy, workplans and projects agreed to by the committee.

The specialist group holds a minimum of one event for members a year which includes the Annual General Meeting, it is typical for the committee to attend these events.

Appointment method

Nominees must be a member of the group and provide the names and signatories of two BDA members to support their nomination. Nominations will remain open until 15 April 2024.

If you would like an informal, confidential discussion about the role and the nomination process, please contact Steph Sloan at S.Sloan@tees.ac.uk