**Expression of Interest.**

**Provision of Medical Advisers for Adoption and Fostering Panels.**

Instructions - Brent Council is seeking expressions of interest for the provision of Medical Advisers for Adoption and Fostering panels. Please can you respond by emailing [procurement@brent.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@brent.gov.uk) with your response or any queries.

Further details can be located:

British Association for Community Child Health (BACCH) Model Job Descriptions and Competencies for Medical Advisors in Adoption and Fostering (October 2008, British Association for Adoption & Fostering (BAAF)) [[link](https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/bacch/redactor2_assets/files/16/MedicalAdvisersinAdoptionandFostering.pdf)]

We are seeking Medical Advisor who is fully registered with the General Medical Council and has an enhanced disclosure check under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for England and Wales, Disclosure Scotland (for Scotland) and Access Northern Ireland in Northern Ireland. A senior paediatrician - a consultant (not a staff grade doctor or a GP) with a lot of community experience.

**A brief overview and background to the opportunity are provided below**.

It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to provide medical advisers to provide health advice and guidance to Fostering and Adoption Panels.

**The legislative and regulatory framework includes:**

* The Adoption Agency Regulations (2005, No. 389) for Children and Young Persons in England and Social Care in England [[link](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/389/contents/made)]
* Statutory Guidance on Adoption: For local authorities, voluntary adoption agencies and adoption support agencies (July 2013, Department for Education) ​[[link](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270100/adoption_statutory_guidance_2013.pdf)]
* Somerset County Council v NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (“the Somerset Ruling”) (March 2022, Royal Courts of Justice) [[link](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Somerset-Council-v-NHS-judgment-130422.pdf)]
* Looked after Children: roles and competencies of healthcare staff (Intercollegiate Document) (December 2020, Royal College of Nursing and Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health) [[link](https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/rcn-looked-after-children-roles-and-competencies-of-healthcare-staff-uk-pub-009486)]
* British Association for Community Child Health (BACCH) Model Job Descriptions and Competencies for Medical Advisors in Adoption and Fostering (October 2008, British Association for Adoption & Fostering (BAAF)) [[link](https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/bacch/redactor2_assets/files/16/MedicalAdvisersinAdoptionandFostering.pdf)]
* Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (March 2011, Department of Education) [[link](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192705/NMS_Fostering_Services.pdf)]

Of crucial importance also are the following:

* Children Act (1989, 2000)
* The Children and Families Act (2014)
* The Care Act (2014)
* The Mental Health Act (2007)
* Children and Families Act (2014)
* The Children Act 1989 Guidance Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011 (as amended)
* Health and Social Care Act 2022
* The Children Act 1989 Guidance Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011 (as amended)

National Minimum Standards for Private Fostering 2005

Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005

* Fostering Services Regulations 2011
* Care Planning , Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 and statutory guidance

Adoption and Children Act 2002

Statutory guidance in Adoption 2013

Adoption: National Minimum Standards 2014

Medical Advisers are registered qualified doctors and consultant paediatricians.

In all cases where adoption, long-term fostering or Special Guardianship is being considered as the plan for a looked after child, the Adoption Agencies Regulations stipulates that a child should have an adoption or permanency medical. These medicals are undertaken by a registered medical practitioner, who has a particular role in assessing the wellbeing of Looked After Children and providing medical advice to the local authority and Agency Decision Maker (ADM).

Reg 15 of the AAR 2005: make arrangements for the child to be examined by a registered medical practitioner; and (b) obtain from that practitioner a written report (“the child’s health report”) on the state of the child’s health which shall include any treatment which the child is receiving, any need for health care and the matters specified in Part 2 of Schedule 1, unless the agency has received advice from the medical adviser that such an examination and report is unnecessary.

The Medical Adviser for adoption is responsible for:

* commenting on the health assessments of all children with a care plan of adoption and providing medical advice to the Agency Decision Maker when they are considering a Care Plan of Adoption,
* reviewing this information and providing a consultation and counsel adopters on the medical information available and any likely implications prior to panel making recommendations to prospective adopters prior to an adoption match with any Brent child in relation to any possible risk to the adopters or the child’s current or future health, and how this could be supported.

The Medical Adviser for fostering is responsible for:

* commenting on the adult health forms of all foster carers, kinship foster carers, connected person(s) carers, Special Guardians, and private foster carers – some of these health assessments are conducted annually, others every 2 years.
* advising and attending the fostering panel.

**Role of the Medical Adviser for Adoption:**

* To see a child with a plan for adoption prior to writing medical advice to the ADM
* To provide written medical advice to the ADM when they are considering a plan of Adoption, and again when they are considering the match of a child and to the prospective adopters as described.
* To provide information to prospective adoptive parents on Brent children’s potential future health needs in a pre-counselling session prior to any adoption match, including provision of written report
* ADM - Summary of advice which is understood by Agency Decision Maker following Somerset ruling.
* Medical adviser to collate information from GP, social workers, health visitors, statutory medical assessments (IHA, RHA), forms M&B, CPR and provide an ADM report for this process highlighting medical concerns and future risks.
* Counselling clinic - medical adviser needs to counsel all adopters prior to panel on children being adopted and provide a report to panel following collation of information, reading etc.,
* To add additional comments on future impact and health development of the child to the regular Health assessments and reviews conducted on each looked after child by their GP, including contacting Consultants allocated to the child for points of clarification or for further information where necessary. This role will continue for the duration of the child being looked after. Carrying out comprehensive paediatric health assessments and development assessments e.g. completing part B of the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) form Initial Health Assessment (IHA)
* To prepare and submit written summaries to the adoption panel in relation to the above.
* Preparing a report for an adoption review health assessment e.g. completing Part C of BAAF Form RHA-C or YP
* All work in relation to Brent children with an adoption plan as outlined above will be the sole responsibility of the Brent Medical Adviser.
* To add additional comments on the possible impact of the prospective adopters’ ability to care for an adopted child to the health assessments they undertake with their GP as part of the assessment. Summaries and reports are submitted to adoption panel.  Scrutiny/review of prospective adopter’s health assessments (including research needed, providing advice as required, liaising with health colleagues/Consultants and completion of report) –
* Panel attendance: Brent’s Medical Adviser would be expected to attend 4-5 panels per year.

**Role of Medical Adviser Fostering (Mainly deals with adult’s health):**

* The health assessments (AH forms) of all prospective and current foster carers, connected person(s) carers, kinship carers and special guardians are completed by the GP on an annual or bi-annual basis depending on age and then reviewed by the Medical Adviser for Fostering. This includes liaising with any Consultants for further information where necessary, and providing additional comments on the possible impact this may have upon the applicants’ ability to care. These summaries submitted to fostering panel. Scrutiny/review of prospective and current foster carers health assessments (including research needed, providing advice as required, liaising with health colleagues and completion of report).
* Medical adviser attends fostering panel once a month to share the above summaries and provide medical comment on anything that arises during the meeting. Written commentary to be provided for the panels not attended. Preparation time ahead of panel attendance is required.

**Activity levels**

* Medical Advisers for Fostering (Adult health) supported 130 cases from January 2022 to December 2022
* Medical Advisers for Adoption supported 12 cases from January 2022 to December 2022

**For 2023:**

MA for adoption:

* AMD cases = 19
* Adoptions = 7
* Cases gone to panel = 26 (AMD + Adoption)

MA for fostering

* Adult health reviews: 136

**Questions for the Potential Provider**

* The LA would prefer a provider to have current access to EMIS (formerly known as Egton Medical information system – supplies electronic patient record systems and software in primary care, acute care and community pharmacy in the UK) for the collation of comprehensive and up to date required information – please let us know if you have access to this system for the purposes of this service. If not, how would collate the information required to deliver the required services.

* What experience do you have of delivering either or both of the above services and please give examples of which other LAs you have delivered these services for/in?
* Can you deliver both Medical Advisers for adoption and Medical Adviser for fostering?
* Please briefly explain how would you deliver the services? i.e. dedicated qualified Medical Advisers one for provision of Medical Adviser to adoption and one for qualified Medical Adviser for fostering or use a bank of Medical advisers as and when required?
* What is your Pricing structure i.e., per activity, time, menu of services, package/lot please can you provide details of your proposed costs?

* Please outline if you could provide 1 consistent Medical Adviser for Adoption and 1 consistent Medical Adviser for Fostering and how would sickness/leave cover work
* Is the Medical adviser/s appointed to the adoption panel Adopt London West (ALW)