

About us

Mainstay was formed in 1990 when a group of parents and carers of adults with learning disabilities and autism came together to create a local service to provide high quality care and support for their loved ones. We started as Down Residential Project, a small residential home for 9 service users in one location, and we've expanded and developed over the years, continuously adapting what we do to meet the changing needs of our service users.

Today, we are a dynamic, multi-service organisation, supporting over 300 service users and clients across Residential, Supported Living, Short Breaks, and Day Opportunities services in multiple locations in Downpatrick. Our passionate and highly trained 120 staff teamwork alongside our service users as one big Mainstay Family.

Our Mission has always been to provide a range of high-quality services which are safe, effective and compassionate for people of different abilities, and their families. The current aim is to become more outcome focused and support our clients to look at their possibilities and not their disability. To co-produce a standard of care, lead by the individuals we support in an inclusive, meaningful manner, no matter the complexity of their needs, within a community of opportunity.

What is a Personal Assistant (PA)

Personal Assistants (PA) perform a variety of tasks, including domestic and personal care, support to access community, or leisure and social activities. It's an important role and can be an extremely rewarding career, as you will be supporting someone to live an independent, active personal and social life to the best of their abilities.

Why are Mainstay moving to Personal Assistants?

Mainstay are moving from Support Workers and Residential Works to PA's, we are choosing to use the term personal assistance because it is less emotive than care and support worker and shows the person/client is in control of the assistance they receive.

JOB DESCRIPTION – Personal Assistant (PA)

Job Title:	Personal Assistant (PA)
Location:	Mainstay - Downpatrick Location will be determined on appointment. Please note that all team members may be subject to transfer between locations according to client's needs
Accountable to:	Registered Manager of the service
Reports to:	Senior of the service/Team Leader
Hours of work:	Up to 40 hours per week (Work includes irregular hours e.g. daytime, evenings, weekends, split shifts. And will require regular waking night duty to meet the needs of our clients)
Salary:	£11.74 - £12.75 per hour
	As well as working every day in a fulfilling career, we also offer –
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive training aligned to NISCC Free meals while on shift (all frontline staff) Support to gain market-leading qualifications Mentoring and on the job training from our experienced team members Auto enrolment pension Free parking on all of our sites Refer-a-friend bonuses Employer funded Healthcare scheme (which includes savings on high street retail outlets and gym membership)
Annual Leave	20 days per annum (plus an additional 3 days following 5 years' service) 8 Bank Holidays per year

Job Purpose:

To support Mainstay in delivering their vision for any individual with a profound and multiple learning disability to lead a happy, healthy, fulfilled life of independence within their local community. All whilst being given choice and support, enabling them to live their best life possible.

As a PA you will ensure everyone is provided with choices and support to lead a happy, healthy independent life to the best of their abilities within their community.

Main tasks and responsibilities are:

Support **ALL** clients to live **THEIR** best lives!

Your overall responsibility will be to support the client not do for them, all clients will need different levels of support but your role is not to step in to do but to see how much they can do with support.

Your role will involve being a client's key worker, supporting them to set outcomes and goals for themselves and supporting them to achieve them.

Below are some examples of tasks you may be asked to complete each day, however each and every one of our clients are individual and have a different level of support required so all their care and support plans will let you know what they need.

- Help with personal care, such as washing and dressing (although not all PA roles involve personal care)
- Support clients to manage their money and take responsibility for ensuring all finance related policies and procedures are adhered to.
- Support with the administration of medication
- Support clients to access community, social and leisure activities
- Help with household tasks, such as cleaning and laundry
- Helping/supporting preparing shopping list and preparing meals
- Support clients with their communication to help them overcome social exclusion
- Helping individuals to get to work, college or day care
- Assist clients to maintain relationships with family and friends
- Support clients to meet new people and develop new friendships
- To get about in the community, by providing transport, driving their car or using public transport
- To maintain hobbies and interests, like going to the cinema, gigs, swimming or going on holiday
- To support clients communicate their wants and needs
- To support clients become healthier after a physical illness, for example, through a better diet or more exercise

Skills you will need

You will need to be able to develop a strong and trusting relationship with the person you are supporting and enjoy helping them to live life the way they choose. Your role is not to make decisions for them, but to help them live an independent life. A PA needs to be –

- Highly motivated, and committed to delivering service excellence

- Commitment to personal and professional development
- Can develop an approach to practice based on critical thinking, reflection and feedback
- Have the capacity and self-confidence to innovate
- Non-judgemental, with ability to empathise with clients
- Honest, trustworthy and respectful
- Possess cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Flexible, energetic, positive and calming disposition
- Resilient and self-caring

What we need from you

- Remember you are a professional Social Care worker and have signed up to the NISCC code of Standards and Practice
- To be punctual and demonstrate a strong teamwork ethic
- That you act in a professional way at all times
- Dedicate your time at work to supporting our clients
- Support your shift leader, team leader, senior and Managers to deliver a first class service for our clients and service users
- Partake in training to ensure personal and professional development and maintain the required level of training compliance
- Follow all Health and Safety guidelines
- Take responsibility for your work
- Share your skills and knowledge to support the organisations ongoing development

Essential Criteria

- Ability to work under pressure
- Excellent IT and report writing skills
- Ability to maintain accurate documentation
- Knowledge of social care and NISCC standards

Desirable Criteria

- Experience working with or offering support to a vulnerable client group
- Experience of providing personal care for vulnerable adults
- NVQ Level 2 in Care or Equivalent qualifications (or willingness to work towards), or suitable experience
- NVQ level 3 in Care or Equivalent qualifications
- Experience of working in a supported living/residential/care organisation
- Experience of working with people who have a learning disability and/or autism
- Experience of administration of medication
- Full and Valid UK Driving License (or access to suitable transport to allow you to for fill the duties of the role)

NOTE This position is subject to an Enhanced Access NI check. Copies of the relevant policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders as well as the Access NI Code of Practice are available on request. Please note that having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position with Mainstay.