

Dear

**Re: Consultant Psychiatrist Post - Neuropsychiatry of Brain Injury (0.5 wte)  
Care and Rehabilitation of Older People (1 wte)**

Thank you for enquiring about these jobs. Here is the information pack which describes the posts, and The Retreat. There is more information on the website ([www.thereteatyork.org.uk](http://www.thereteatyork.org.uk)).

We are advertising these jobs at a difficult time: there is a great deal of uncertainty about the future shape of services nationally, and equal uncertainty about whether it will be possible to fund good services even if we agree what they should be. As almost all of our work is for the NHS, we at The Retreat are as vulnerable as anyone else. However, as an Independent Charity, we are more in control of our own destiny, able to make our own decisions and plans and move quickly to implement these. The increase in our Consultant group these posts represent makes clear our commitment to expanding our services, and to meet the challenges by offering really good treatment by well-staffed teams.

Although it looks as if there is one 'elderly' job and half a 'neuropsychiatry' job, we are happy to be imaginative about how the posts are filled. There is a significant rehabilitation element to all the elements, and someone with a background in rehabilitation psychiatry may feel any part of the work would suit them. At the same time, two of our units focus on a clearly elderly group of people with significant dementia, and we have plans to develop this into a true model dementia service – which clearly would suit someone with experience in elderly care. You might want to take on both of these, or work half time in one area. This could be combined with the Neuropsychiatry post, which might suit someone from general psychiatry, learning disabilities or elderly care. Two people might want to share all three elements between them, doing  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a job each. As you can see, it is more important that we get the right people than precisely how we divide up the work.

To come through the next few years well, The Retreat needs to be offering not just good services, but the very best services. This should mean that they are imaginative and forward-looking, not just the same as everyone else is offering. The trick is to see what people will be wanting in two or three years' time, and be ready with the services when they see it themselves. These appointments are crucial to the development of the Retreat over the next few years, as they will dictate whether we are ready or not.

As you know, The Retreat is famous for its historic description of Moral Treatment at a time when psychiatry generally was dominated by the idea that people who were disturbed needed to be mastered and subject to a regime of terror. While we are a long way from that beginning, we still need to try to see what are the blind spots in contemporary psychiatric practice, and to find ways to design services which avoid reproducing them. What we want from the people who are appointed to these posts is a

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clear vision of what is needed, and the commitment to putting together the very best services – model services that others will want to learn from. Our history and our Quaker heritage give us contacts and influence beyond our size: we need to use that to show what can be done for our patients.

I recall from my own experience that leaving the National Health Service, as almost all of us who come to The Retreat have done, is a strange transition. Whatever is difficult in the NHS, it is large and protective, and there is a good deal of support. The Retreat is small and very visible – I have often felt quite exposed in my work, as I am doing what I have chosen to do, not what I have been told to do. I hope that anyone joining us here would feel that same opportunity to do things the way they think they should be done – and we will support you in being ready to have your work looked at and scrutinised. This means continuing to develop good Governance and compliance procedures across The Retreat, and ensuring you and the rest of our staff get the right appraisal, training and other support to continue to develop your clinical and managerial skills. This isn't easy for a small organisation, and we hope the people appointed to these posts will be able to help us with it.

I have an eye to our future. I will not be here for ever, and we need new people coming into the organisation to ensure we have a future Medical Director, and to help carry the vision of this great organisation forward. We are approaching the bicentenary of the publication of *The Description of The Retreat* which revolutionised the psychiatric world: we need to be able to offer a contemporary challenge to psychiatry through our work which does justice to that history.

I hope you will want to join us at The Retreat. We will arrange a two-day appointment process which will allow you to meet as many of our staff and as many of the people using our services as possible. I want you to be able to make an informed choice about whether you want to work here. Meanwhile, do make contact for an informal visit or telephone conversation if you want to. I'm away until 16 August, but Helen Wood (on [hwood@theretreatyork.org.uk](mailto:hwood@theretreatyork.org.uk) or 01904 412551) will arrange for one of the other Consultants to speak to you or meet you if I'm not available.

The closing date is 3 September 2010 and application is via the form on the website. We need a CV and the names of two referees. Please contact Helen Wood if there are any problems with the application process.

Yours sincerely



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