**Job Description**

**Personal Assistant DJB/NCL**

**Job title**: Personal Assistant (PA)

**Location**: Newcastle upon Tyne (NE5)

**Hours of work**: 1 or 2, 13 hour shifts per week, including some weekend working. Typical working hours are 7.30am-8.30pm.

**Rate of pay:** £13.00 per hour.

**Purpose of Job**

I am 34 years old and as I have spinal muscular atrophy, I need 24 hour assistance with most aspects of daily living.  I live independently with my wife, son, and daughter.

As my Personal Assistant, it is important that you respect my role as your employer and be able and willing to work under my direction.  Your job will be to provide the physical assistance I need to enable me to be as fully independent as possible.  As my assistant, you must be extremely reliable and be able to work flexible hours (sometimes at short notice).

You must be willing to learn about your role as my assistant, be able to respect my privacy and dignity and have an understanding of my independence.  I will require support to access social and leisure activities, assistance with personal care tasks, mobility and transfers.  You must be able to maintain confidentiality at all times, in all areas of your work.  You do not have to be physically strong to do the job well, but good general health is important.

**Independence and Discreet Assistance**

Part of enabling my independence is to at times provide Discreet Assistance.

Discreet Assistance is an independent living technique whereby PAs remain in the background of a disabled person’s life and only interact when their assistance is required.

Some of your time will be spent waiting for me to request your assistance.  During that time, you will need to be able to fade into the background and occupy yourself.  The job is best suited to those that are comfortable with spending time alone as well as being confident enough to interact with myself and others when required.

I am happy for you to pursue any quiet activity during your ‘waiting’ time with current staff using the time to study, read or write, amongst other things.  This will be of particular importance whilst in the family home, allowing myself along with my wife and son to enjoy quality time together as any would do.

It is also going to be important to give Discreet Assistance at my future workplace and when I am socialising with friends.  This could include sitting in another room at work during breaks or another table at the same café until your assistance is requested.

I request Discreet Assistance as your role is to assist me with what non-disabled people would do alone when PAs fade into the background this simulates the same independence a non-disabled person has, allows me personal space and to develop relationships as an individual.

Practising Discreet Assistance can be challenging and is something that will take time to grasp exactly how I wish for it to be utilised.  This will be discussed in the early stages of employment to ensure this can be successfully achieved.

It is important to remember that providing Discreet Assistance allows me to live the most autonomous life possible, and I truly value that my PAs enable me to live my life as I wish.

At all times you must be able to quickly respond when I request assistance.

**Supervision**

As my Personal Assistant you will be directed by and be accountable to me in all aspects of your work.  You should also ask what my needs are and listen to my directions and requests.  All personnel issues will be negotiated through me.

**Main Duties**

As my needs will vary it is important that the Personal Assistant is flexible about what the task involves and agrees to undertake other reasonable personal assistance that I require.

**Assistance with Parenting tasks**

In early 2016 my wife and I welcomed our first child into the world, as a result, some of your role will be to assist me with childcare tasks.  While your job will be to assist me in my parental role, you will be expected to respect my decisions and follow my direction when supporting me with my child. More recently, we have added to our family with the birth of our second child in late 2019.

**Personal Assistance**

·      Assist me to get in and out of bed.

·      You will check my ventilator, which I have been using overnight and switch it off.

·      You will then assist me with washing, toileting and dressing.

·      Assistance with all transfers using a hoist.

·      You will assist me into my wheelchair.

**Domestic Tasks**

·      You will help me to prepare my meals and drinks and support me with feeding if required.

·      Making and changing my bed.

·      Domestic duties including, washing, ironing and general housework.

·      Assistance with shopping.

·      Assistance with household management such as paying bills, making phone calls etc.

**Work**

I work full time with a mix of days in the office alongside working from home. I require PAs to attend my place of work alongside me. This is particularly where discreet assistance is necessary as I require only occasional support, but this is needed with minimal notice meaning PAs must be ready at all times.

**Social Activities and additional needs**

As like any family, we go out to spend quality time together, and PAs would be expected to accompany us in these situations, to allow us to enjoy time as a family.  PAs again are expected to provide support in a non-invasive way.

In addition to this, I enjoy attending sporting events such as football, basketball and cricket and require PAs to support me at these events.

**Driving**

I have a large wheelchair accessible vehicle which confident and experienced drivers may be required to drive.

**Training**

There are no formal qualifications needed to do this job.  For the most part of the tasks and assistance involved can be learned through the Personal Assistant and me working together.  I am the person best qualified to know what my needs are and how they are best met.

Where it is required, such as in Health and Safety matters, practical training and guidance will be arranged, and the Personal Assistant will be expected to attend.

There will be a probationary period of 12 weeks.  At the end of this period, I will meet with you to review the position.  If your performance is satisfactory and we are both are happy with the situation, your continued employment will be confirmed.

The Probationary Period can be extended at my discretion.  During the first 12 weeks of the Probationary Period, I may terminate your employment by giving one week’s notice.  During the remainder of the Probationary Period, either party can terminate employment by giving one week’s notice.  These posts are subject to satisfactory Enhanced DBS checks and references, which will be taken up only if you are offered a post.

**Additional Criteria**

·      To be able to work as part of a team of Personal Assistants who work from morning to evening, either in my home or accompanying me out in the community.

·      Be mindful of your dress.  The job entails a variety of roles however your appearance is ultimately a reflection on me as well as yourself.  At times a smarter dress code may be required with prior notice given.

·      Be reliable, as it is vital that you are able to arrive for your shift promptly and inform me if you are unable to work for any reason so that I can arrange cover.

·      Be patient and provide a calm and consistent approach.

·      Be open-minded and be able to see things from other peoples’ perspectives and to work in a variety of situations and environments.

·      Take great pride in your own work, which will include good timekeeping and perseverance.

·      Be self-motivated and have the ability to take a proactive role when required.

·      Have a sense of humour and a mature attitude to your work; with the ability to maintain individuality whilst following appropriate care routines.

·      I spend a lot of my time in the company of my assistants; therefore it is vital you are able to maintain a cheerful demeanour, even when tired or fed up!

·      You must be comfortable around my two cats.

·      Be able to commit yourself to at least one month’s notice before leaving the job, except in extreme circumstances.

·      It is vital that you do not make assumptions about how to care for my children and ensure that you are following mine and my wife’s childcare decisions at all times.