Candidate Pack for Director of Quality Improvement and Compliance 10117

Affinity Trust

Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Quality Improvement and Compliance at Affinity Trust. This is a vital position within our Executive Leadership Team, with membership on both our Board and Quality Committee.

I joined Affinity Trust recently as Chief Executive, following the retirement of my predecessor after 18 years of dedicated leadership. It's a real privilege to lead an organisation with such a strong legacy—and an exciting future.

Since its inception over 30 years ago, Affinity Trust has continued to grow. We currently provide high-quality, person-centred support to nearly 1,000 children, young people, and adults with learning disabilities, autism or other assessed needs across England and Scotland. Our support is delivered in people's homes and communities, as well as a small number of care homes, across a wide geographical spread. With just under 2,500 dedicated employees, we are a large, values-driven, not-for-profit organisation committed to helping people live great lives.

We are a growing organisation in a strong financial position, and despite the wellknown challenges facing our sector, we are navigating these headwinds well. We have a clear and ambitious strategy for sustainable growth, and in 2025 we will be investing further in leadership development across the organisation—supporting our people to thrive as we grow.

We're entering a new chapter at Affinity Trust, with several changes across our Executive Team following planned transitions and new opportunities for some of our colleagues. These changes reflect the strength of leadership we've built and bring fresh thinking and renewed energy to the organisation. This presents a rare opportunity to join a refreshed, ambitious and energised Executive Team, ready to shape the future of Affinity Trust together.

As Director of Quality Improvement & Compliance, you will hold executive responsibility for ensuring consistent and sustainable improvements in the quality of support we provide. This includes leading our approach to quality, coproduction, and continuous improvement in alignment with Affinity Trust's strategic priorities. You will also be responsible for developing strong functional foundations for quality and compliance embedding digital tools such as Nourish and Radar to support improvement and insight. While the Director of Operations holds ultimate accountability for compliance within operational delivery, your role is central to shaping and strengthening our overall compliance model—highlighting issues, identifying patterns, and ensuring that systems, data, and support are in place to drive high standards across the organisation. Working in close partnership with the Director of Operations and their team, you will help foster a culture of accountability, innovation, and learning that supports continuous improvement in how we deliver support.

We are looking for a collaborative and visible leader—ideally from within social care or a closely related sector—who has significant experience leading a Quality or Operations function across a large and diverse set of services. Through your engagement with regulators, networks, and professional bodies, you will bring external insight into the organisation and help us stay at the forefront of best practice in quality and compliance.

You will bring strong people skills and a passion for enabling others to achieve excellence demonstrating patience, resilience, and the ability to inspire and support colleagues at all levels. While you won't directly manage most of the workforce, you will be a significant influence, and your role is crucial in guiding, challenging, and equipping operational teams to embed a culture of continuous improvement and high-quality support.

You'll also bring a deep understanding of the needs and aspirations of the people we support—and place those at the heart of your decision-making and leadership.

Your team has grown significantly since its inception just a few years ago, and we're looking for someone who enjoys building and leading a high-performing team—ready to shape the next chapter of our quality improvement and compliance journey.

If you share our ambition, our values, and our belief in what's possible—we'd be delighted to hear from you.



Kerry Dearden

Kerry Dearden Chief Executive

About us

Be Part of Something Extraordinary: Affinity Trust is one of the social care sector's best-kept secrets — but not for long. With a new Chief Executive, Kerry Dearden, at the helm and a forward thinking, visionary Board committed to growing our reach and deepening our impact, we are entering a transformational new chapter.

As a national charity supporting children, young people and adults with learning disabilities and autism to live their lives, their way, Affinity Trust has over 30 years of experience delivering high-quality, person-centred support across England and Scotland.

We empower almost 1,000 people in 296 locations, working in close collaboration with 72 Local Authorities and nearly 70 housing associations. We provide support in settings that include supported living and residential care to bespoke, complex needs support — always grounded in compassion, flexibility, and respect.

Now, we are looking for an exceptional Director of Quality Improvement and Compliance to join our Executive Team — someone who shares our values and vision, and who thrives on meaningful challenge, collaborative leadership, and the opportunity to drive real change.

Why This Role Matters

This is a pivotal, high-impact role. As Director of Quality Improvement & Compliance, you will play a central part in shaping how we continuously raise the standard of support across Affinity Trust. You will lead our approach to quality, improvement and co-production — ensuring we have the systems, insights, and culture needed to deliver consistently excellent, person-centred support.

You will influence practice across our services by working in close partnership with operational leaders, providing the challenge, guidance, and support needed to embed sustainable improvements. You'll also champion innovation—harnessing the potential of digital tools and outcomes measurement to improve how we understand, assess, and enhance the lives of the people we support.

Above all, your work will be vital in helping us live out our core belief: that with the right support, anything is possible. This role is key to *Achieving More Together*.

What Sets Us Apart

A dynamic, values-led culture built on trust, learning and continuous improvement

A passionate, skilled workforce making a real difference every day

A highly engaged, progressive board and executive leadership team. The opportunity to influence nationally, while remaining deeply connected to individual lives and communities

Our Purpose

Supporting people to live their life, their way.

Our Values

- People are at the heart of everything we do We listen, we learn, we build on strengths.
- We work together We are one team. We value people's strengths and differences.
- We give our best We do what matters. Good days and bad, we take responsibility.
- We have courage We try new things. We are creative, adaptable, and always moving forward.

This isn't just another leadership role - it's a chance to be part of something truly meaningful, at a time of growth and momentum. If you're a compassionate, courageous leader ready to shape the future of social care, we'd love to hear from you.



Making Independence Possible

At Affinity Trust we create opportunities for people to lead their best lives. Everything we do is rooted in the belief that with the right support, people with learning disabilities and autism can live full, rich, and meaningful lives — lives where they are in control and wherever possible we empower them to make their own choices, pursue their goals, and participate fully in their communities.

As our new Director of Quality Improvement and Compliance, you will play a central role in shaping and growing the support, we provide to help bring this vision to life. Here's how we're already making a difference: To learn more about the support we provide — and how you could be part of it — please **click here.**

Supported Living: Empowering Choice, Building Lives

Supported living gives people the freedom to live in their own homes and stay connected to their communities — with flexible support designed entirely around them.

We work in close partnership with each person to create a personalised support plan, which is regularly reviewed together with the individual and the key people in their life, ensuring the support evolves as their goals and circumstances change.

We go far beyond support and care. We empower people to make decisions, pursue ambitions, and build real, lasting independence. Our teams work closely with individuals and those who matter most to them, co-creating personalised plans that adapt as goals evolve. It's about giving people control, confidence, and connection.

Community-Based Support: Living Fully Together

We support people to develop the skills and confidence to live life to the fullest. Whether it's managing daily routines, discovering new interests, making friends, or joining in with local life — our community-based support helps people explore what independence means to them.

This isn't just support — it's partnership, encouragement, and belief in each person's potential.

Residential Care: Quality, Not Quantity

We operate a small number of high-quality residential care homes, each supporting no more than six people. These homes provide warm, inclusive environments where people with complex needs can feel safe, respected, and supported to live their lives, their way.

Children and Young People: Creating Brighter Futures

Established in 2018, the Children and Young People's Division is growing fast and making a powerful impact. We offer two specialist support arrangements:

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

Working with children and young people with complex needs, PBS helps reduce behaviours that challenge and enhance quality of life — all while aiming to prevent hospital or residential placements. Each practitioner works intensively with 1–2 young people over 24 months, creating personalised strategies that truly make a difference. These support pathways are currently available in Bradford, Wakefield, Greater Manchester/Lancashire, Gloucestershire, and Bristol.

Keyworking

Our Keyworkers coordinate holistic, person-centred support for up to 10 children and young people at a time — ensuring that no young person falls through the gaps. From preventing hospital admissions to amplifying young voices, this support is all about building strong networks of care. Currently delivered in Derbyshire, it's already changing lives — and we're just getting started.

Looking ahead, the division has ambitious plans to expand its PBS and Keyworking footprint and to develop new initiatives.

This is a unique opportunity to lead this growth and help shape the future of our support for children and families.

This is the moment to join Affinity Trust and help us build on a proud legacy — while boldly shaping the future of support and inclusion. With innovation, heart, and strong operational leadership, we know we can do even more.

And with you on board, we will.



Finance; a strong foundation, an exciting future

Affinity Trust is in a position of real strength — and we're building from solid ground following a few years of significant investment in digital transformation. As we close 2024/25, we're on track to finish the year with a small profit along with a healthy cash balance.

Looking ahead to 2025/26 despite sector headwinds we anticipate a strong operating financial performance — one that will enable strategic investments in what matters most:

- Enhancing pay and recognition for our incredible Support Workers ensuring our standard pay offer is above the National Living Wage
- Launching a comprehensive leadership development programme to grow the next generation of inclusive, values-driven leaders
- Continued investment in quality assurance

We're proud to be entering the third year of our 2023–2028 organisational strategy, and even prouder of what we've achieved so far. Highlights include:

- Establishing a national co-production group with the people we support
- Completed the roll out of new Digital IT systems that empower our teams and streamline how we work
- Maintaining strong CQC and Care Inspectorate ratings across our registered provision
- Expanding our reach by securing new contracts and welcoming more people into our support
- Unveiling our new organisational values and visual identity, reflecting who we are and what we stand for

This is an exciting moment in Affinity Trust's journey — with strong leadership, financial stability, and a clear strategic direction, we are poised for meaningful, sustainable growth.





Our Strategic Aims 2023-28

We are in the third year of our five year Strategic Plan, which sets out how we will continue to develop as an innovative provider of high quality person centred support.

While working through the enormous challenges faced by the social care sector over the past few years, we have also undertaken a comprehensive review of all our systems and processes.

This Transformation Programme has included the digitalisation of major systems for Operations, Rostering, HR and Finance resulting in an operating platform which will drive improvements to the delivery of support while creating a better working environment for our staff.

The challenges presented by the economy, the labour market and the underfunding of social care will continue to have an impact, as we look to deliver our strategy, but we are in a strong position to overcome these challenges and take Affinity Trust forward with the people we support at the heart of all that we do. Our five core aims below are the pillars of our strategy and will shape everything we do over the next five years:

Enable people to live great lives



- ✓ We will provide person-centred support driven by choice and opportunity for everyone, with regulator ratings of GOOD or better in both England and Scotland.
- Our technology will enable evidence of great outcomes for people we support.

Support more people to live at home



- We will help people to transition from hospital back into the community.
- We will increase the number of people living in their own home in communities of their choice.

Be a workplace where our people will grow and develop



- ✓ As part of our core values we will continute to be an inclusive and diverse workplace, and recruit more managers with protected characteristics.
- ✔ Through our investments in technology we will improve our employee experience.
- ✔ We will focus on the health and wellbeing of our people and provide continued development opportunities.

Actively partner, collaborate and influence



We will be a collaborative and useful part for evolving health systems, local authorities and other providers to improve outcomes for people we support.

We will advocate alongside the people we support and their families to transform social care policy and practice.

Be financially fit to meet our ambitions



- We will ensure financial sustainability and healthy reserves enabling us to continue to grow, innovate and invest to improve the lives of people we support.
- ✓ We will continue to find more efficient ways of working, making every pound count.

Our Executive Team

To learn more about our executive team, please click here.



Job Description

Job title:

Director of Quality Improvement and Compliance

Reports to:

Chief Executive

Responsible for:

Responsible for: Health and Safety Manager, Quality Assurance and Improvement Manager, Quality Improvement Lead, Positive Behaviour Support Manager, Business Systems Manager, Co-Production Lead and Executive Assistant.

Job Purpose

To lead and drive continuous, organisation-wide improvement in the quality of support provided by Affinity Trust—ensuring that all people we support receive safe, person-centred, and outcome-focused services. This includes developing and embedding a robust, data-informed quality assurance framework, and leading on Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Positive Behaviour Support, co-production, and operational system enhancements.

The role holds strategic responsibility for ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks including those of the CQC (England) and Care Inspectorate (Scotland), by shaping effective systems and fostering a culture of accountability and learning. It also provides leadership for co-production across the organisation, ensuring people we support are meaningfully involved in shaping how support is designed, delivered, and improved.

The Director will serve as the organisation's Nominated Individual under CQC and as Caldicott Guardian, upholding high standards of data protection and ethical information sharing.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Quality Leadership

- Develop and lead the implementation of a quality improvement strategy aligned with Affinity Trust's organisational goals. Maintain and evolve a robust quality assurance framework that enables sustainable improvement in service delivery and outcomes. Support the development and integration of digital systems to monitor, evidence, and enhance the quality of support.
- Lead the development and promotion of best practice and innovation across the organisation in partnership with operational leaders.
- Hold responsibility for organisational policies related to quality improvement, safeguarding, PBS, and health & safety.
- Lead on the implementation and standardisation of specialist approaches such as PROACT-SCIPr-UK® and Positive Behaviour Support.
- Champion a culture of accountability, innovation, and learning that empowers teams to deliver high-quality, person-centred support.
- Provide strategic leadership for co-production across Affinity Trust, ensuring people we support, families, and front-line colleagues are meaningfully involved in shaping how support is designed, delivered, and improved.

Quality Assurance & Systems Development

- Develop and analyse data and insights from quality assurance tools, digital systems (e.g., Nourish, Radar), and reporting to identify improvement priorities.
- Provide strategic insight and recommendations based on compliance trends, internal audit outcomes, and regulatory feedback.
- Collaborate with the Director of Operations to equip operational leaders to implement quality improvement initiatives.
- Oversee the schedule and review of operational policies, ensuring timely updates and alignment with evolving standards and best practice.



Job Description

Safeguarding & Risk Governance

- Provide strategic leadership for safeguarding and health & safety across the organisation.
- Ensure safeguarding systems, reporting processes, and learning loops are robust and effective. Lead on the reporting, investigation, and learning from serious incidents—ensuring effective implementation of lessons learned.
- Provide regular thematic safeguarding and health & safety reports to senior leaders, using data to drive proactive improvements.
- Support operational colleagues to deliver on regulatory and contractual compliance, while ensuring risk is effectively monitored and mitigated.

Team Development & Specialist Practice

- Lead, grow, and develop a high-performing Quality Improvement and Compliance team with specialist expertise.
- Embed a culture of collaboration and cross-functional working with operations, IT, training, and other internal stakeholders.
- Foster a values-driven, person-centred team culture that supports the aspirations and rights of the people we support.

Performance Monitoring & Regulatory Compliance

- Maintain oversight of compliance across services and provide strategic insight into areas of risk and opportunity.
- Ensure internal systems support the organisation to exceed regulatory requirements and contractual obligations.
- Prepare and present regular reports for the Executive Team, Board of Trustees, and Quality Committee.
- Serve as Nominated Individual with the CQC and maintain regulatory relationships in England and Scotland.

Stakeholder Engagement & Insight Sharing

- Work closely with the Chair of the Quality Committee to prepare agendas, reports, and minutes.
- Build strong working relationships with the Director of Operations and other senior leaders to foster alignment and shared accountability.
- Represent the organisation in networks, partnerships, and sector events to bring in external insights and promote best practice.



Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Values	 Demonstrates organisational values: People at the heart of everything we do We listen, we learn, we build on strengths. We give our best. What we do matters. Good days and bad, we take responsibility. We work together. We are one team and value people's strengths and differences. We are open and trusting with each other. We have courage. We try new things. We are creative and adaptive. 	
Skills and abilities	 Excellent oral and written communication skills across a range of settings. Strong strategic relationship-building and influencing skills with internal and external stakeholders. Demonstrated ability to lead and motivate teams, enabling high performance. Able to balance strategic priorities with operational realities. Skilled in analysing complex data and narratives to inform decisions. Strong risk awareness and decision-making skills in complex situations. High levels of resilience and adaptability. Proficient in using IT systems and digital tools to support quality, compliance, and improvement. 	Strong understanding of co- production principles and ability to embed co-production across organisational systems and culture.



Person Specification **Person specification**

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	 Degree-level education or relevant professional qualification in social care, or significant experience in a comparable leadership role. Full UK driving licence. 	Postgraduate or further leadership/ management qualification.
Knowledge	 In-depth knowledge of Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Scottish Care Inspectorate (SCI) regulatory frameworks. Strong understanding of relevant health and social care legislation. Ability to identify and evaluate good-quality support and service delivery. Awareness of developments in commissioning, integrated care systems, and provider landscape. 	
Experience	 Senior leadership experience, ideally at Director level or equivalent, within the social care or a closely related sector. Proven experience in operational leadership, including team and service performance oversight. Experience of working in partnership with local authority commissioners and strategic stakeholders. Budget and resource management experience, aligned to quality and improvement objectives. Experience of building and sustaining strategic partnerships 	Experience in learning disabilities and/or autism support, particularly in supported living or community- based settings Experience of embedding co- production in service design, delivery, or quality improvement within health or social care.
Other	 Professional and values-led role model, able to act as a credible ambassador for the organisation. Willingness to travel nationally and stay overnight when required. Committed to ongoing professional development and reflective practice. 	



Terms of Appointment

Salary

The salary for this role is £100,000 plus £6,200 car allowance per annum on a full-time permanent basis.

Location

Home based with regular nationwide travel, including to Thame (Head Office) or other location that the Executive meeting is held every other week.

Pension

6% if employee contributes 3% through salary sacrifice and 8% if the employee contributes 4% or more.

Annual leave

30 days annual leave, plus bank holidays.

Additional benefits

Private healthcare, life insurance, Blue Light discounts, more rewards and benefits can be viewed **here**



How to Apply

We're delighted that you're considering this opportunity to join Affinity Trust at such an inspiring and forward-looking moment in our journey. If you're passionate about making a real difference, driven by purpose, and ready to help shape the future of support for people with learning disabilities and autism, we would love to hear from you.

If you have any questions or would welcome a confidential, informal conversation about the role, please contact **joinourleadership@affinitytrust.org** — we will be happy to arrange a call.

To apply, <u>**Click here</u>** and click the 'Apply Now' button.</u>

You will be asked to submit the following:

- Your CV (maximum three sides)
- A supporting statement (maximum two sides) outlining why this role is the right next step for you, and how your experience aligns with the knowledge and criteria set out in the person specification.

We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about what you can bring to this important leadership role at Affinity Trust.

Closing date:	27th July 2025	
Interviews:	28th August	





