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Caring for epilepsy in Chalfont



MORE than 400 people work at the NSE in Chalfont, around 300 of whom are involved in care and support roles.

Personnel manager of the NSE, Peter Jackson described these roles.

"We have a number of different residential 'houses' and we have residents of all different ages, none of them younger than late teens. We also offer resettlement and rehabilitation programmes. Most opportunities are within these areas."

Testimony to the intellectual rewards of working at the NSE lies in the words of Lorna Croft, assistant manager at one of the residential houses.

Job opportunities within the charity sector are often overlooked, yet they can be the most rewarding of all career choices. Richard Hill visits the National Society for Epilepsy, whose headquarters are in Chalfont St Peter.

"Being a careworker is a demanding, complex but incredibly rewarding job," she said. "The basic, but probably most essential, criterion is that you need to love working with people."

Teresa Franze, support co-ordinator of the Supported Living Project agreed.

"Watching these people grow and develop as they learn to find their own way in the world until they no longer need my support is the best reward," she said.

The NSE is very supportive to its

employees, offering many opportunities for career advancement.

"The whole ethos of our staff training encourages development," Peter explained.

"There are opportunities for people to work towards NVQs, including an NVQ in care. We are an accredited NVQ centre and can monitor and support people through the whole process.

"There are plenty of opportunities for people to work their way up the ladder. There's a lot of loyalty amongst our staff which is quite a

benefit. Many have been here for many years."

Any difficulty in transportation to and from the NSE was recently resolved, as Peter explained. "We've introduced a subsidised bus service from Slough out to the centre," he said. "The bus service is flexible in terms of where it picks up from, and the timetable is aimed at slotting in with shift breaks and so on.

"Obviously we have people working here 24 hours a day. It's important that we enable people to get here at all times."

The misconceptions behind epilepsy are many and varied. Although it is the most common serious neurological condition, with correct diagnosis and appropriate medication, up to 80 per cent of people with epilepsy can be seizure free and lead lives undisturbed by the condition.

Further information:

Recruitment Information: 01494 601 306

Recruitment E-mail: peterj@epilepsynse.co.uk

Website: www.epilepsynse.org.uk

Confidential Epilepsy Helpline: 01494 601 400

For details of current vacancies please see the NSE advertisement on page 39.

Career opportunities with leading charity

THE National Society for Epilepsy (NSE) is the UK's leading epilepsy research, treatment and care charity.

It has a long and distinguished world renowned record in medical research, resettlement, residential care, information and education.

Doctors and scientists are making major contributions to research into the causes, diagnosis and treatment of epilepsy. The

world's first MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) unit to be dedicated solely to the causes and treatment of epilepsy is located at the Chalfont St Peter centre, and the assessment unit sees approximately 300 people each year while the residential care element provides homes for 270 people.

Working closely with the London-based National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, the centre also offers the country's

largest NHS outpatient clinic.

Career opportunities at the NSE are therefore wide-ranging, rewarding and varied.

Care and support are where the majority of job opportunities are. From time to time the NSE has vacancies and career opportunities in most of the administration and support roles that any large charity needs. Examples include fundraisers, drivers, domestic assistants and maintenance staff.