

JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Senior PALS Officer</b>
Division:	Nursing – Patient experience
Responsible to:	Chief nurse
Responsible for:	Patient advice and information
Reports to:	Patient experience lead
Salary:	
Band:	5
Location:	PALS office
Hours of Work:	37.5
Disclosure Required:	

**JOB PURPOSE:**

Working as the senior member of the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team to ensure the service provides an impartial, personal, effective and efficient PALS function to patients, relatives and carers.

This includes liaising with frontline staff to manage and respond to concerns in line with Trust policy and procedures. Working closely with Trust staff to resolve concerns in a timely and efficient way in order to achieve the best possible outcome. Provide a visible and effective PALS by ensuring patients, service users, carers and the public have access to and receive timely and high quality information, advice and signposting about the Trust’s activities.

To support the Trust in ensuring it learns from PALS feedback in order to continually improve the quality of its services.

To be responsible for collating PALS activity figures, recruiting PALS volunteers and designing and delivering relevant training to Trust staff.

To provide leadership to the PALS team on a day to day basis.

**OUR VALUES:**

As an employee of Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, you have an individual responsibility to treat everybody with:

<b>Dignity and Respect:</b> we value each person as an individual and will challenge disrespectful and inappropriate behaviour.	<b>One Team:</b> we work together and have a ‘can do’ approach to all that we do recognising that we all add value with equal worth.
<b>Compassion:</b> we respond with humanity and kindness and search for things we can do, however small; we do not wait to be asked because we care.	<b>Safety &amp; Quality:</b> we take responsibility for our actions, decisions and behaviours in delivering safe, high quality care.

**OUR OBJECTIVES:**

1. Deliver safe, high quality, co-ordinated care.
2. Ensure patients are cared for and cared about.
3. Work in partnership with our Community.
4. Become a sustainable, effective organisation.

**KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS:**

- External: Patients, families, carers and visitors to the Trust.
- Internal: Patient Experience Lead, PALS Officer, customer care team, PALS volunteers, divisional nurses/midwives and departmental managers, medical staff, patient experience team members and other Trust staff involved in PALS contacts.

**MAIN DUTIES AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

To work as a the senior member of the PALS team and assist the Patient Experience Lead to further develop and promote the PALS service.

Focus on patients, relatives, carers and visitors to the Trust:

The post holder will use initiative and discretion in their day to day working as they will be handling sensitive and sometimes contentious issues with people that may be angry or upset. They will:

- Be responsible for listening, understanding and analysing problems being presented by patients, relatives and carers and assessing individual situations to identify the most appropriate way of resolving the problem
- Assess the most appropriate approach to resolving the issue through negotiation with the patient and staff involved using knowledge of the Trust's structures and operational procedures whilst aiming to achieve timely local resolution.
- Take a lead on PALS cases that are especially complex or require long term management
- Directly problem-solve minor concerns on behalf of the enquirer and feed more complex or formal issues to divisional patient experience staff or into the complaints process.
- Manage an individual caseload of concerns, from initial contact to liaising with clinical staff and senior managers who are responsible for assisting in resolving concerns
- Provide non-clinical advice to patients/clients and be responsible for escalating a concern or complaint where patient safety appears to be at risk.
- Manage the day to day PALS activity.
- Direct people to information and advice about the Trust, including how to make a complaint about the services the Trust provides.

- Ensure that concerns brought to PALS are dealt with effectively and that people using the PALS have access to external or specialist advocacy services when appropriate
- Be an escalation point to more junior members of the PALS team
- Continually analyse and improve processes within PALS with the support of the patient experience lead
- Contribute to the training and support of new/junior members of the team and volunteers
- Attend clinical governance and other relevant meetings to share learning and raise the profile of the PALS

## Communication

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with clinical and non-clinical staff across directorates and departments.
- Demonstrate a helpful and proactive approach to cross cover and team work so that patients and visitors are provided with a helpful, compassionate and sensitive service across all aspects of the PALS team.
- Build and maintain constructive working relationships with other PALS services, statutory organisations, advocacy services, voluntary services and other stakeholders in the local health economy

## Administration

- Accurately record all PALS contacts, interventions and outcomes in a timely way and in accordance with protocols, using Datix web and excel.
- Contribute to reviews of how the PALS service operates and whether opportunities exist for streamlining or improving the service.
- Coordinate data entry and be responsible for accurate and timely monthly reporting of PALS activity, issues and themes
- Design and deliver training programmes for staff if required.
- Be responsible for recruiting and training volunteers to support the PALS service and supervising their work.

## Service Development

- To be a catalyst for change and improvement by providing feedback on issues raised to influence the development of more patient centred services

This job description should be regarded only as a guide to the duties required and is not definitive or restrictive in any way. It may be reviewed in the light of changing circumstances following consultation with the post holder. This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

## **KEY ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS:**

To be accessible and visible to patients, visitors, carers and staff and to act as a resource to facilitate the resolution of patients', carers' and families' concerns quickly and efficiently.

This is an outline job description designed to give an overview of the responsibilities of the post. The post holder will be expected to be flexible to respond to change and organisational need. The post holder will also be expected to contribute to the wider corporate and organisational needs of the Trust as appropriate.

# JOB DESCRIPTION

**GENERAL:****Information Governance**

Whilst employed by the Trust you may have access to patient or staff information, this information must be kept confidential and must not be disclosed to anybody other than when acting in an official capacity. The unauthorised use or disclosure of patient or other personal information is a dismissible offence and in the case of disclosure of computerised information, could result in prosecution for an offence or action for civil damages under the Data Protection Act 1998.

This post involves the collection, entry, change or deletion of data items either electronic or manual (e.g. the Trust Patient Administration System), as such it is your responsibility to ensure that as far as is reasonably possible, you have ensured that those details are accurate and up-to-date.

The post holder is also responsible for making sure that PALS volunteers are made aware of Trust policies and procedures relating to their role and that these are followed at all times.

All employees must familiarise themselves with and adhere to all Trust policies and procedures including the following:

- Risk Management Policy and Strategy
- Equal Opportunities in Employment, including the Disability Discrimination Act
- The Caldicott Principles

**Safeguarding vulnerable adults, children and young people**

All Trust employees have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults, children and young people. As such, you have a duty to familiarise yourself with the Trust Adult and Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines which are accessible on the intranet.

**No Smoking Policy**

Surrey & Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust is a smoke free Trust covering trust premises, grounds and any trust owned vehicle. Staff should not smoke during their working hours and will be protected from passive smoking both in the Trust and whilst making home visits.

**Research**

The Trust manages all research in accordance with the Research Governance Framework, a copy of which is available in the Medical Director's Office. As an employee of the Trust, you are required to comply with all reporting requirements, systems and duties of action put in place by the Trust to deliver research governance standards

**Intellectual Property**

From time to time during the normal course of your employment you may generate Intellectual Property (IP) which may have value in the delivery of better patient care. Where such Intellectual Property (IP) is created in the course of your employment or normal duties then under UK law it will generally belong to the Trust, unless agreed otherwise in writing between you

and the Trust.

The Trust management procedures for Intellectual Property (IP) have been approved by the Trust Board and can be found on the Trust Intranet Site. Trust Procedures are consistent with the Management Framework for Intellectual Property (IP) of the Department of Health. You are required to comply with these procedures.

# Person Specification

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	EVIDENCED BY
<b>Qualifications</b>		
<p>Educated to degree level or equivalent experience</p> <p>Evidence of continuing development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare qualification</li> <li>• Advocacy/mediation</li> <li>• qualification or experience</li> <li>• Training qualification</li> <li>• ECDL qualification or equivalent</li> </ul>	<p>Application and interview</p>
<b>Experience</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one year's experience of providing information and advice to patients and/or the public in a PALS environment or in a customer service setting, a health, social care or voluntary environment for a period of 2 years or more</li> <li>• Experience of analysing problems, identifying key issues and providing solutions</li> <li>• Experience of using a data base and making judgements about the data entered</li> <li>• Experience of involvement in <b>developing a service or process</b></li> <li>• Experience of dealing with distressed angry and unhappy service users</li> <li>• Experience of working with senior clinicians/service providers and challenging them on behalf of the patient/client where appropriate</li> <li>• Experience of advocacy, conciliation, mediation and use of analytical skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of Datixweb</li> </ul>	<p>Application and interview</p>
<b>Knowledge, Skills and Competencies</b>		
<b>Knowledge</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the issues surrounding equality of access for all, data protection and confidentiality</li> <li>• Good knowledge of health related terminology and concepts</li> <li>• Knowledge of change management principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of patient record systems</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of local health services and voluntary organisations</li> </ul>	<p>Application and interview</p>
<b>Skills</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent interpersonal, listening and communication skills (written and verbal). Able to communicate information in a sensitive and sympathetic way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of supervising volunteers</li> </ul>	

- **Empathy**, ability to deal appropriately with distressed or frustrated patients/relatives which may occasionally be manifested as verbal aggression
- Ability to **sift information** and identify salient points and form an appropriate response
- Good **negotiation and conflict resolution** skills to mediate, manage and deescalate potentially difficult or contentious situations
- Able to be **assertive and influencing** whilst being tactful and diplomatic
- Able to remain **calm, professional** and maintain high standards of **diplomacy and confidentiality** in response to challenging behaviour and maintain objectivity and independence
- **Resilience** in the face of frequent exposure to distraught or angry patients/ enquirers.
- Able to **work across organisational boundaries** and to secure co-operation of colleagues at all levels
- Good **presentation** skills
- Well organised and able to **prioritise** and manage a number of **competing demands**, deal with a number of complex issues at the same time and achieve goals within deadlines
- Good IT skills including the use of Word, Excel, Outlook and the internet
- Confident and effective in **representing the PALS service** in meetings- both internal or external to the organisation
- Confident **designing and delivering training** when required
- Ability to work **accurately and calmly** under pressure
- Able to work **within a small team and independently**
- Able to **concentrate for prolonged periods** of time and remain focused despite frequent interruptions

## **Competencies**

- Data management
- Able to meet deadlines such as monthly data reporting
- Confidence in own judgment and able to respond constructively to alternative solutions
- Attention to detail
- Highly motivated and resourceful
- Strive for continuous service improvement - to propose and implement changes to PALS

<p>working practices or procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for implementing the PALS policy</li> <li>• Able to work autonomously and take independent decisions where appropriate</li> <li>• Ability to diffuse difficult situations</li> <li>• Understanding of equality and diversity issues</li> <li>• Understanding of NHS structures and services and insight into how the NHS and other organisations work together</li> <li>• Co-ordinate, supervise and manage the workload of volunteers who work in the PALS office</li> <li>• Responsible for maintaining stock (such as stationary) for the PALS office</li> </ul>		
<b>Behaviours and Values</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility in shift/working patterns to meet the needs of the service</li> <li>• Is able to participate as a team member</li> <li>• Is of good health and good character as per NMC requirements</li> <li>• Willing to accept additional responsibilities as delegated by senior staff</li> <li>• Displays the Trust's Values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dignity and Respect</li> <li>- One Team</li> <li>- Compassion</li> <li>- Safety and Quality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p>Application and Interview</p>