

Job Description

Job Title: Complaints Manager
Grade: AFC band 7
Hours of Work: 37.5 hours over 5 days
Directorate: Corporate
Base: Trust-wide (TBC)
Accountable to: Executive Director of Nursing & Safety
Reports to: *Patient, Public & Community Involvement Manager (TBC)*

1. Job summary: The postholder will deliver on the following:

To direct and support the complaints and PALS, providing day to day management, advice and support along with longer term strategic vision and direction.

The role will motivate a team working in a challenging area, ensuring continuous improvement and development of the service.

Along with a focus on team management and continual improvement of processes and outcomes, the role will also support day to day work including responsibility for the oversight or direct management of some highly complex or highly sensitive complaints.

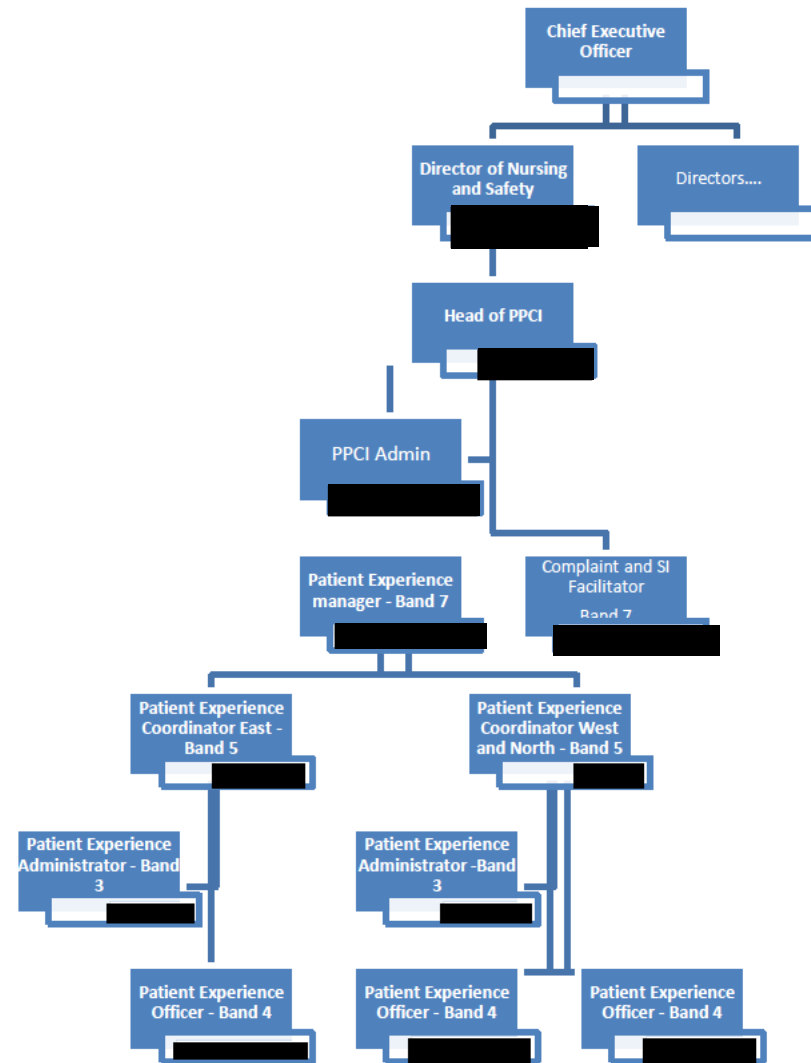
The role is part of a wider team and will look to improve integration between complaints, incidents and claims/inquests.

Key, high-level responsibilities include:

2. Role of the directorate:

The Nursing & Quality Directorate oversees the co-ordination of the Trust's safety and systems of internal control, ensuring that robust systems are in place within the organisation for the management of patient and occupational safety, complaints, legal services, clinical effectiveness and patient surveys/feedback. It provides information and assurance to the Board of Directors and its sub-committees in order to meet the necessary standards of accountability, probity and openness. It also directs improvement projects to enhance the quality of care provided to patients.

Current Structure (New structure TBC)



3. Main duties and responsibilities

Complaints management

- Ensure the complaints process runs smoothly from beginning to end, including reviewing workload on a day to day basis, identifying and dealing with any delays in the system and reviewing/improving any quality issues for example the quality of final responses.
- Positively work to resolve any problems which arise in relation to the management of complaints, which may involve careful consideration of complex issues, or discussion with appropriate senior staff.
- Manage or oversee the most complex, sensitive or difficult (for whatever reason) complaints confidently and sensitively, knowing when to escalate or to seek advice from more senior staff.
- Maintain oversight of all complaints which are investigated by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO). Provide input and advice as appropriate and, where necessary, directly manage these complaints.
- Facilitate meetings between complainants and staff which are particularly sensitive or difficult, ensuring good preparation to ensure the meetings run as smoothly as possible.
- Write letters of response which are of an exceptional standard using good English, correct grammar, appropriate wording and which flow logically and smoothly. Make sound judgements in relation to the wording and content of letters of response.
- Ensure appropriate distribution of staffing and workload to deal with staff absences or fluctuations in the complaints workload across the complaints teams/specialties.
- Establish and maintain on-site cover for the Patient Services Team across Kent & Medway.
- Maintain the complainant satisfaction survey and the process for auditing the complaints process, including letters of response. Involve members of the Trustwide Patient and Carer Experience Group (TWPCEG), including Healthwatch and Trust governors, in this process.

Staff management

- Manage the team of complaints staff including Patient Experience Coordinators and Patient Experience Officers. Provide leadership, direction, clarity of roles and purpose, encouragement and motivation.
- Provide support and sound, informed advice on a day to day basis to the staff within the complaints team, along with staff, patients and families across the Trust, in relation to the management of complaints.
- Hold regular team meetings, ensuring staff are updated on relevant issues internally and externally and that they have the opportunity to raise and discuss relevant topics as a team.
- Develop and introduce multi-disciplinary reflective practice sessions, based on best practice nationally, to provide an opportunity for staff to reflect openly and to learn from the management of individual complaints. Ensure appropriate facilitation of these sessions and encourage a positive learning environment.
- Provide appropriate support to staff in specific circumstances which can arise as a result of working in this sensitive, complex and busy environment.
- Ensure staff are managed appropriately and consistently in line with Trust policies and procedures including annual appraisals, mandatory training, sickness absence and disciplinary procedures.

- Provide relevant learning and development opportunities for individual staff wherever possible.
- Ensure a professional and tidy working environment which is welcoming to patients and staff who visit the department.
- Proactively resolve any operational staff-related problems or issues which arise, some of which may involve relationship management.
- To manage the team budget through the SBS system.

Relationship management

- Establish and maintain excellent working relationships across all levels of the organisation, including front-line staff, consultants and senior managers. Show a genuine desire to work with and support staff, understanding any problems they may be facing whilst also ensuring that complaints-related issues, such as delayed responses, are resolved.
- Display political and strategic astuteness in developing and managing relationships, both internally and externally, ensuring key stakeholders are positively engaged.
- Develop on-going and closer working relationships with relevant staff within directorates, maintaining regular communications in relation to the management of complaints.
- Work closely with the Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Medical Director ensuring regular communications regarding the quality of complaint responses.
- Build appropriate relationships with complainants, ensuring an approachable, understanding and professional manner, maintaining openness and gaining trust.
- Maintain and further develop links and meetings, including sharing of information and best practice, including attendance at the Kentwide Complaints Network.
- Attend relevant meetings both locally and nationally, representing the department and the Trust positively and professionally.
- Maintain a flexible approach to work, contributing to the overall development of the directorate and supporting colleagues and workload as required.

Development

- Continually develop and improve the complaints process, in small ways as well as larger scale change.
- Maintain and improve response times to complaints, working to ensure consistency across the different care groups.
- With the Executive Director of Nursing and CEO, establish a routine process for feedback and learning in relation to letters of response.
- Establish a process for identifying and escalating to the Executive Director of Nursing any complaints in relation to medical staff which may benefit from their input or oversight, on receipt of the complaint.
- Work in partnership with the Head of Legal Services and the Head of Patient Safety to integrate complaints, incidents and claims/inquests, providing a joined-up approach, identifying opportunities for joint learning and for information sharing.
- Work in partnership with the Clinical Effectiveness Group (CEOG) to identify areas where themes from complaints can feed into the Trust Clinical Audit Programme.
- Consider and review, in conjunction with relevant senior staff, options and a process for providing more independent investigation of complaints where

appropriate. This includes criteria for deciding when a complaint should be independently reviewed.

- Review and embed the programme for complaints training, ensuring sustainability and alignment with other training across the Trust including the Investigation Skills and Root Cause Analysis training provided by the Patient Safety team.

Reporting

- In consultation with relevant staff and with the Trustwide Patient and Carer Experience Group, undertake a review of complaints reporting to ensure it remains relevant and useful and is in line with best practice nationally.
- Maintain on-going reporting requirements including the monthly dashboard and the quarterly more in-depth reports.
- In conjunction with the Head of Legal Services and the Head of Patient Safety, support the Service Line Directors in reviewing the reporting of complaints, incidents and claims/inquests to explore ways to highlight common themes and learning and draw out the different perspectives gained when an issue crosses more than one process.
- Maintain the on-going weekly and monthly complaints workload monitoring report, reviewing this carefully and taking any appropriate follow up actions in response.
- Present complaints reports at relevant meetings and events including the bi-monthly Trustwide Patient and Carer Experience Group.
- Follow up any emerging complaints themes or trends, for example through undertaking a review or a deeper dive and providing an in-depth report with detailed analysis which draws logical conclusions and makes recommendations.

4. Financial management responsibilities

TBC

5. Human Resources Management Responsibilities

TBC

6. Health And Safety

The post holder must not wilfully put him/herself or others at risk whilst at work. Safe working practices and safety precautions must be adhered to. Protective clothing and equipment must be used where provided.

All accidents must be reported to an appropriate manager and you are asked to participate in accident prevention by reporting all potential hazards.

7. Security

The post holder has a responsibility to ensure the preservation of Trust property and resources.

8. Smoking Policy

The Trust has adopted a no smoking policy. The policy applies to all staff, patients and visitors, and extends to the hospital grounds as well as internal areas.

9. Purpose Of Job Description

This job description is provided as an outline of the key tasks and responsibilities and is not intended to be an exhaustive list. The job may change over time to reflect the changing needs of the Trust and its services, as well as the personal development needs of the post holder. This Job Description may be amended in the light of these changing needs; however, changes would not be implemented without prior discussion with the post holder. Similarly, the post holder may be requested to undertake such other duties not mentioned in the job description which are commensurate with the grade. A flexible approach to work and an ability to prioritise workload is required.

10. Key working relationships:

Internal:

- Executive Director of Nursing and Quality
- Head of Legal Services
- Head of Patient Safety
- Clinical Audit and Effectiveness Manger
- Complaints (Patient Experience) team
- All Directors
- Department Heads
- Lead Nurses
- Deputy Medical Director/Medical Director
- Chief Executive
- Directorate governance leads
- Head of Safeguarding

External:

- Kent & Medway CCG's
- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
- Kent-wide Complaints Network
- NHS England
- NHS Digital
- Complainants, patients and families
- Kent & Medway HealthWatch'
- Local health and social care organisations