

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Trust

PALS & Complaints Officer - Job Description

Reports to: PALS & Complaints Manager

Purpose:

- To support the delivery of PALS and Complaints within the Trust
- To liaise with other staff to ensure timely response to concerns and suggestions raised , to enable learning and development within the organisation
- To support people through the complaints process and help them to access advocacy and other services as appropriate

Dimensions:

- Finance - to work within agreed budget
- Staff - to be an active member of the team
- To deputise for senior as appropriate.
- To maintain strong links with teams, Locality Managers and Heads of Service
- Other: to liaise appropriately with service users, carers and outside agencies to support consultation and engagement activity within and outside the Trust

Organisational Chart:



Knowledge, Skills and Experience:

- A broad working knowledge of Mental Health and or Learning Disability Services.
- A good understanding of working within a complex, high profile and politically sensitive environment.
- Ability to work in an environment with frequent exposure to distressing and emotional communication.
- Excellent communication skills, including presentational, research and report writing skills.
- Awareness of NHS complaints processes and current developments.

- Good mediating and listening skills and experience of representing the needs of others.
- Diplomacy and sensitivity.
- IT skills including managing a database.
- Ability to meet deadlines and prioritise work.
- Ability to analyse and interpret information.
- An understanding of equal opportunities issues and how they translate into practice.
- An understanding of the Data Protection Act (Caldicott Principles).

Key result areas:

- To be accessible to patients, their relatives or carers who express concerns relating to treatment or care and use a problem solving approach to resolve their concerns where possible and signpost to relevant information.
- To log, acknowledge and action concerns and complaints that come direct by email and telephone agreeing way forward with the complainant and service line(s) concerned including contacts coming through the PALS & Complaints inbox
- Follow up with those involved in the investigations and update the complainants whilst being mindful of timeframes.
- Draft responses once investigations have been completed and gain approval for these from care groups and senior team before sending level 3 and 4 complaints to the Chief Executive Officer's for signature.
- To support staff in responding to concerns.
- To work effectively with staff to encourage change in practice in response to concerns identified.
- To raise awareness of the PALS & Complaints agenda with new and existing staff, to support with training to improve knowledge and understanding of PALS & Complaints process and policy.
- To act in accordance with the Standards and Policies set by the Trust and ensure patient safety.
- To participate in the implementation of Government Legislation in respect of the NHS/Local Authority Complaints Procedure.
- To contribute to the updating of Trust Complaints and PALS & complaints policies and procedures.
- Ensure that the administration of complaints, referred to the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO), are managed in accordance with the appropriate procedures.
- To identify any complaints that may have potential for legal action, media interest, need for Safeguarding or are as a result of a Serious Incident (SI) and refer to the relevant managers.
- To ensure that data quality is maintained as required for internal and external processes.
- To ensure that any themes and trends that may indicate poor practice of staff or teams are identified and reported as appropriate.
- Maintain accurate record of PALS & Complaints activity
- To support with reporting of data relating to PALS & Complaints activity and attend meetings as deputy to present as required.
- To cover for absent colleagues in equivalent post (East/West).



Communication and Working relationships:

Internal

- PALS & Complaints Team
- Board members
- Care Group/Locality Leads
- Heads of Service
- Relevant Trust Departments
- Managers
- Clinicians
- Other KMPT Staff

External

- Service Users, relatives and carers
- Members of the public
- Other PALS & complaint/ patient experience teams
- Other statutory bodies
- Voluntary Sector
- Independent sector
- Independent complaints Advocacy Service (SeAP)
- Healthwatch/Links
- MPs
- PHSO
- Local Authorities
- Prisons
- Other Trusts

Meetings

- Office meeting - weekly
- PALS & Complaints meeting – bi monthly
- Meeting with clients when they want to discuss a new complaint
- Joint meetings with clients and service lines for more involved complaints
- Professional or non-clinical meetings as appropriate.



Person Specification and Attributes

		<i>Essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>
<i>Education and Qualifications</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level or equivalent. • Evidence of continuing professional development. • Communication skills training. • An understanding of the NHS. • Knowledge/understanding of mental health issues. • Awareness of mental health services. 	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	
<i>Experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in a pressurised service delivery environment. • Experience of producing written material (including response letters, reports and presentations) to a high standard. • Experience of responding to complaints. • Working experience of clinical risk management or governance. • Experience of chairing meetings and taking minutes. • Ability to use complex data bases. 	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>
<i>Skills/Abilities/ Knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of complaints investigation, confidentiality and consent procedures in the context of clinical governance in the NHS. • Ability to communicate complex and/or contentious information clearly, accurately and accessibly, both orally and in writing. • Excellent communication skills including letter drafting, report writing and presentation skills. • Team work, flexibility and group communication skills. • Excellent interpersonal skills with an ability to work with people in stressful situations. 	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	



		Essential	Desirable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The ability to deal tactfully and discreetly with matters of a confidential or sensitive nature.• Computer literacy, including collation of data using Excel or related tools.• Familiarity with DATIX data management system.• Ability to plan and manage meetings between clinical staff and service users/carers in highly sensitive and contentious situations.• Excellent skills in analysing data using computer software, identifying trends and compiling reports to a high standard.	√	√ √ √ √
Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smart appearance, good health and attendance record.• Car owner/driver	√	√