

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Complaints, Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) and Patient Experience Officer
BAND:	Band 4
LOCATION:	Trust Headquarters
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	Director of Nursing and Quality
REPORTS TO:	Patient Experience and Complaints Manager
KEY RELATIONSHIPS:	Chief Executive Directors PALS and Complaints Coordinator Nursing and Quality Team Locality Directors and Senior Managers and staff across the Trust Service Users, Carers and Members of the Public External organisations e.g. Independent sector / forums / Advocacy services
HOURS OF WORK:	This is a full time or job share post of 37.5 hours per week. The post holder may be required to work flexibly to meet the needs of the service.
JOB PURPOSE:	To be the first point of contact for individuals, patients, clients, carers, relatives to improve access to health, including signposting to Trust and other services, providing non-clinical advice as appropriate. To provide a high standard of comprehensive administrative support to the PALS and Complaints Team including maintaining the customer services database (Ulysses) and acting as a point of contact for patient feedback, complainants and the Trust's Patient Advice and Liaison Service

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 To provide a professional, caring, compassionate and supportive, first point of contact service to service users, carers and members of the public wishing to provide feedback or make a complaint. Ensuring that they feel listened to and their concerns taken seriously by guiding and supporting them appropriately.
- 1.2 To act as a point of contact for the Trust Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for service users, carers and members of the public. Liaising with the enquirer to clarify their request and determine the appropriate action required e.g. providing complex and sensitive advice and solutions for their queries / concerns, drafting responses or identifying the most suitable respondent / individual to resolve the query using contacts and networks within and outside the organisation to facilitate a timely response.

- 1.3 To provide accurate and impartial information about services provided by the Trust and the wider health community such as specialist advocacy to staff, patients, their carers and relatives, where appropriate. This may include discussing issues that may be contentious and sensitive and where there may be communication difficulties and barriers to understanding.
- 1.4 To monitor PALS enquiries dealt with by local site PALS Representatives ensuring that responses are scrutinised, supported and inputted into the Customer Services database electronically.,
- 1.5 To provide advice and support to Trust staff in relation to complaints, PALS and patient experience.
- 1.6 To provide support to the PALS and Complaints Coordinator in the day to day management of complaints, including drafting acknowledgement letters, assisting with the investigation of certain complaints as required and, where appropriate, assist with drafting responses for review and agreement by the relevant Locality Director / Chief Executive.
- 1.7 Support the PALS and Complaints Coordinator to ensure that national targets with respect to complaint handling are met (acknowledged within 3 working days of receipt and within agreed timescales) wherever possible whilst ensuring that investigations and responses to service users, carers and members of the public remain of a high quality.
- 1.8 Assist the PALS and Complaints Coordinator with the collation and supply of information (e.g. copies of files, chronology of events) as and when requested by the Health Parliamentary Ombudsmen if local resolution has not been reached.
- 1.9 To act up in the role of PALS and Complaints Coordinator when he/ she is out of the office, ensuring all enquiries and complaints are actioned accordingly.
- 1.10 To provide advice, support and assist managers investigating complaints including clarifying concerns and the outcome the complainant wishes to achieve. In relation to responses, ensuring responses are sent on time and that complainants are kept up to date on the progress of their complaint.
- 1.11 Ensure that concerns raised by service users, carers and members of the public are fully understood and are answered fairly, openly and honestly.
- 1.12 To build and maintain effective working relationships at all levels, internal and external to Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust, including NHS and non NHS organisations across the local health community in order to provide excellent customer service.
- 1.13 To work with teams to encourage and promote a culture of openness, honesty and learning from feedback from patients, carers, relatives, service users, and the public.

- 1.14 To support the Complaints and PALS Coordinator to ensure that learning from complaints and PALS concerns is shared with staff across the Trust and, where appropriate, with other NHS and non NHS Organisations across the local health community.
- 1.15 To ensure that feedback from service users, carers and members of the public is used to support and develop plans to meet the Trust's strategic objectives.
- 1.16 Identify and report any individual practice concerns arising from complaints so that these can be appropriately addressed. Identify and report the potential risk factors (i.e. safeguarding issues) arising from complaints and work with the Trust Safeguarding Leads, Complaints/ PALS Coordinator and Patient Experience and Complaints Manager to manage identified risks.

Additional Duties

- 1.17 To work closely and collaboratively with the Patient Experience Team to promote patient experience strategies, projects and initiatives, such as Friends and Family, QUIS and Patient Stories.
- 1.18 To assist the Patient Experience Team as and when required with regular ward visits and liaising with internal and external partners to support and encourage service development in light of patient feedback.
- 1.19 To assist the Patient Experience Team as and when required facilitate meetings and discussions between Trust staff and patients / carers for the purpose of sharing experiences / feedback (i.e. Focus Groups). Provide notes and records of outcomes where appropriate.
- 1.20 To seek and assist in taking patient stories from patients and carers across the Trust and to then prepare them for Board and other features.
- 1.21 To assist the Patient Experience Team as and when required with QUIS within various services across the Trust and to report back accordingly.

2.0 POLICY AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 Adhering to and promoting the PALS and Complaints Policy as well as the Responding to Complaints Guidance throughout the Trust and the sharing of good practice between departments and other NHS organisations.
- 2.2 Follow departmental policies and propose changes to policy, changes to service developments and changes where appropriate to help improve patient experience.

3.0 ADMINISTRATIVE

- 3.2 To process patient information ensuring clear and up to date records of all complaints and PALS enquiries are maintained and dealt with in accordance with the PALS and Complaints Team process and policy.
- 3.3 To take responsibility for managing own workload, ensuring deadlines are met and to assist the PALS and Complaints Coordinator in the day to day smooth running of the PALS and Complaints Team.
- 3.4 To assist the Patient Experience and Complaints Manager and the PALS and Complaints Coordinator in collating and analysing complex complaints data, producing regular and ad hoc reports from the Customer Service Database as required.
- 3.5 To provide administrative support to the Patient Experience and Complaints Manager as and when necessary. Dealing with first point of contact queries, arranging meetings and other administrative support activities.

4.0 FINANCE AND RESOURCES

- 4.1 To process all stores/stationary orders as required by the PALS and Complaints Team and maintain stock levels.

5.0 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 To assist the PALS and Complaints Coordinator and Patient Experience and Complaints Manager in suggesting and obtaining information for inclusion within customer services training packages and take part in training sessions where appropriate.

6.0 INFORMATION / DATA RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Assist the Patient Experience and Complaints Manager and PALS and Complaints Coordinator in producing monthly and ad –hoc reports on volume, themes and trends. This will include the interpretation, and monitoring of all complaints, compliments, PALS and NHS Choices comments data extracted from the Customer Services Database to comply with contracts and regular requirements.
- 6.2 Use judgement and experience to promote and encourage data quality within the Customer Services database ensuring all complaints and required information is complete and accurately logged in a timely and consistent manner and advise on data capture/collection issues.
- 6.3 To support the Patient Experience and Complaints Manager and PALS and Complaints Coordinator in undertaking analytical projects such as audits and satisfaction questionnaires to monitor patient experience and to comply with contractual obligations.
- 6.4 To assist the PALS and Complaints Coordinator in managing complex and sensitive information.

- 6.5 To ensure all personal identifiable data (PID) handled during the course of normal duties is treated confidentially and in accordance with Trust policy and procedures.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL

- 7.1 The post holder will be required to concentrate for sustained periods, e.g. when using the Customer Services database and deal with unpredictable working patterns due to changing patient requirements.
- 7.2 There is a frequent requirement to use VDU equipment.
- 7.3 To manage frequent exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances through PALS / complaint contact with patients, carers and relatives who have healthcare concerns, and ensure that necessary supervision is available through line management.
- 7.4 Regularly manage distressed / angry complainants, with exposure to some verbal aggression.

SECTION B: TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

1. Dorset HealthCare has a range of clinical, operational, financial, health & safety, risk management, human resource, equality & diversity and other policies, procedures and guidance, copies of which can be found on the Trust Intranet or obtained from the line manager or Human Resources Department. The post holder is expected to be aware of all policies, procedures and guidance which applies to them and to observe their provisions at all times.
2. Employment in this post is subject to a Disclosure & Barring Service criminal records Disclosure. The post holder may be required to undertake a Disclosure application at any time during employment.
3. Staff are not permitted to smoke on Dorset HealthCare premises, either inside or outside, or inside Trust vehicles.
4. Staff are expected to undertake all mandatory training and refresher training appropriate to their role. This may include preventative management of violence and aggression (PMVA) and/or breakaway techniques, and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). If in doubt as to which mandatory training applies to this post, advice should be sought from the line manager.
5. All staff who are required to handle food and drink other than for their own consumption must comply with the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013.
6. Dorset HealthCare is committed to promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Staff are expected to be aware of, and comply, with their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable groups.
7. Staff are expected to observe the highest standards of care and conduct and to engage constructively with managers, colleagues, patients/service users/carers and others in the course of their duties.

SECTION C: CORE ATTRIBUTES AND BEHAVIOURS

Staff are expected to adhere to and demonstrate Dorset HealthCare's Core values and behaviours at all times.

Values

Our values underpin all that we do and provide a sense of direction to people, teams and the Trust overall.

1. **Respect and dignity**
We value each person as an individual, respect their aspirations and commitments in life, and seek to understand their priorities, needs, abilities and limits. We take what others have to say seriously. We are honest about our point of view and what we can and cannot do.
2. **Commitment to quality of care**
We earn the trust placed in us by insisting on quality and striving to get the basics right every time: safety, confidentiality, professional and managerial integrity, accountability, dependable service and good communication. We welcome feedback, learn from our mistakes and build on our successes.
3. **Compassion and kindness**
We respond with humanity and kindness to each person's pain, distress, anxiety or need. We search for the things we can do, however small, to give comfort and relieve suffering. We find time for those we serve and work alongside. We do not wait to be asked, because we care.
4. **Improving lives**
We strive to improve health and wellbeing and people's experiences of the NHS. We value excellence and professionalism wherever we find it – in the everyday things that make people's lives better as much as in clinical practice, service improvements and innovation.
5. **Working together for patients**
We put patients first in everything we do, by reaching out to staff, patients, carers, families, communities, and professionals outside the NHS. We put the needs of patients and communities before organisational boundaries.
6. **Everyone counts**
We use our resources for the benefit of the whole community and make sure nobody is excluded or left behind. We accept that some people need more help, that difficult decisions have to be taken – and that when we waste resources we waste others' opportunities. We recognise that we all have a part to play in making ourselves and our communities healthier.

Behaviours

Our behaviours provide a guide to how we can bring our values to life and constantly remind us that how we do things is as important as what we do and achieve.

7. **Positive**
Embracing change and feedback, utilising constructive feedback to make improvements and promoting achievements of the Trust and others.

8. **Proactive**
Challenging unacceptable behaviour, showcasing learning and innovation, actively encouraging ideas and involvement from others.
9. **Supportive**
Being attentive, encouraging and helping others, giving and receiving feedback to enable people, teams and services to develop.
10. **Respectful**
Empowering people to voice their opinion, introducing yourself and ensuring language is professional and inclusive.
11. **Reliable and trustworthy**
Being open and transparent, acknowledging errors, being honest about limitations and not over-promising.

SECTION D: CHANGES

This document represents a description of the job, and the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes required, at the date of issue.

Dorset HealthCare will periodically review this job description and person specification to ensure that it continues to meet service needs and will involve the post holder/s in the review process with the aim of reaching agreement on any reasonable changes which may be required. In the event that agreement is not achieved, Dorset HealthCare reserves the right to insist on reasonable changes following consultation with the post holder.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Complaints, Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) and Patient Experience Officer – Band 4 Patient Experience and Complaints Team - Quality Directorate

1. Knowledge, skills and training	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
1.1 RSA III, City & Guilds, NVQ 3 level working towards level 4 and equivalent level of knowledge or competency	Yes		Previous experience / Application
1.2 Knowledge of the NHS system for compliments, complaints and PALS	Yes		Previous experience / Application
2. Job specific experience	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
2.1 Experience of working in the NHS	Yes		Previous experience / references
2.2 Experience of providing customer services	Yes		Previous experience / references
2.3 Ability to collate information for reports and assist in the production of written communications to a high standard that are appropriate to the matter in hand, clear and readily understood, summarising activities and outcomes	Yes		Previous experience / Application
2.4 Ability to articulate clearly, fluently and authoritatively where necessary to both individuals and groups	Yes		Interview / Application
2.5 Understanding of monitoring and evaluating systems and their implications	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application
2.6 Ability to analyse and report on information	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application
3. Information Technology	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
3.1 Demonstrable experience of using word processing, spreadsheet, database and presentation software	Yes		Application form / experience / certification

3.2 Experience of developing and managing administrative and data systems	Yes		Application form / previous experience / certification
3.3 Ability to quickly adapt to new software and computer programmes, in order to use on a day to day basis	Yes		Previous experience / application
4. Personal qualities/attributes	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
4.1 Good organisation and time management skills with the ability to prioritise workload, use own initiative and achieve targets within tight deadlines	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application
4.2 Excellent attention to detail and ability to analyse data	Yes		Previous experience / application
4.3 Good negotiation skills	Yes		Previous experience / application
4.4 Ability to work with minimal supervision and accept frequently changing priorities	Yes		Previous experience / Interview / Application
4.5 Motivated to work proactively on own initiative and contribute within a team environment	Yes		Previous experience / application
4.6 Ability to communicate on a range of levels where there may be barriers to understanding	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application
4.7 Ability to concentrate on sources of information and deal with unpredictable working patterns	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application
4.8 Able to demonstrate confidentiality, diplomacy and discretion	Yes		Previous experience / application / references
4.9 Sensitive to the needs of patients and their carers when discussing issues which maybe multi-faceted and delicate	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application

4.10 Ability to work within organisation procedures with some autonomy in providing advice	Yes		Previous experience / interview / application
5. Business travel	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
Subject to the provisions of the Equality Act, able to travel using own vehicle on Trust business	Level 2*		
6. Additional requirements	Essential	Desirable	
Demonstrable skills in written and spoken English, adequate to enable the post holder to carry out the role effectively	Yes		

***Essential / desirable car user definitions**

Level 1 – (Essential) post holder is required to:

- travel an average of more than 3,500 miles a year;
- or travel an average of at least 1,250 miles a year; and necessarily use their car an average of 3 days a week; or spend an average of at least 50% of their time on such travel; including duties performed during the visits;
- or travel an average of at least 1,000 miles a year and spend an average of 4 days a week on such travel, including the duties performed during the visits.

Level 2 – (Essential) users who use their own vehicles for official journeys other than in the circumstances described under Level 1 above.

Level 3 (Desirable) non- car users who may exceptionally be required to travel on Trust business where such journeys could also be reasonably be made.