

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Hepatology Nurse Specialist
Reports to	Service Manager for Gastroenterology
Band	Band 6
Department/Directorate	Medicine

JOB PURPOSE
The postholder will work as a member of the Hepatology team based at North Devon District Hospital contributing to the delivery and development of the specialist service. They will deliver a consistent high-quality nurse-led service for patients with viral hepatitis and other liver conditions in line with the service standards and scope of professional practice, within the Royal Devon University NHS Foundation Trust and community services. - To work with the Senior Hepatology Nurse Specialist to develop the viral hepatitis C nursing service at NDDH which includes outreach work with training and continued support from the Exeter Hepatology Nursing Team at RD and E Hospital. - Act as a specialist resource and offer support and guidance to other staff within the Trust and community as appropriate within scope of professional practice. - Assess patients' (in-patients as well as outpatients/ outreach), plans and implements care, provide specialist and advanced clinical management, education, information and support to patients and their families/ carers with Hepatology problems; maintains associated records. - Carries out specialist nursing procedures: undertakes nurse-led (unsupervised) outpatient clinics for patients with viral hepatitis and other liver conditions, including those in need of anti-viral treatment therapy. - Assist the Lead and Senior Hepatology Nurse Specialists in providing clinical supervision and training to colleagues/ other healthcare professionals and students as appropriate. - Leads clinical audits in specialist area and actively participates in research within Hepatology. - Maintain accurate databases (both local and regional) for patients with Viral Hepatitis which supports review of clinical practice.

KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Provide specialist liver disease advice, to patients and their families/ carers, other healthcare professionals and students. Act as a clinical resource for the management of liver disease within the trust, providing expertise that reflects research and current best practice. Take responsibility for his/her own patient caseload/workload within the designated clinical area and for the assessment and treatment of patients on a day to day basis, without direct guidance from line manager. Escalates concerns to senior Hepatology nurse / Consultant Hepatologist in a timely manner. The post holder will undertake Viral Hepatitis and other Hepatology nurse led clinics (for patients in routine follow-up; newly diagnosed and those undergoing anti-viral therapy) within the Trust setting and in the community. Independent Prescribers: To prescribe and review medication for therapeutic effectiveness, appropriate to patient needs and in accordance with evidence-based practice and national and practice protocols; within scope of practice. (Not an independent prescriber: willing to undertake independent prescriber course).

To work within the guidelines and protocols in place, to provide expert assessment, management, education, information and support for both in and outpatients with liver conditions, and their families.

Develops the skills to assess and interpret specialist information and conditions and takes appropriate action, acting as patients advocate when necessary.

Develops viral hepatitis C outreach services.

To assist senior colleagues in the development and updating of the Hepatology service policies and protocols to ensure clinical practice is based on best available evidence.

Understands and recognises own limitations and refers to a more experienced specialist when required and ensures that feedback mechanisms are in place to facilitate the review of patients when necessary.

Provide a counselling/ advice service for patients and relatives and support for patient groups, including British Liver Trust local support group.

Communicates with the multi-professional team (MPT), acting as a specialist resource, demonstrates advanced verbal and non-verbal communication skills with patients, carers and medical and non-medical staff, ensuring communication is at a level appropriate to individual understanding.

Undertake clinical procedures that require dexterity and accuracy, in line with guidelines and protocols in place.

(Hepatology: Venepuncture & cannulation; advanced history taking; clinical assessment and monitoring of liver patients on treatments such as anti-viral treatment; performing Fibroscans; ordering relevant investigations – training will be provided)

Attend and participate in the Hepatology multidisciplinary team meetings.

To work closely with other Hepatology CNS's in the region and nationally to provide a uniformly high standard of care.

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The post holder will work closely with other Nurse Specialist's, Clinical Matron, clinical medical and nursing teams and secretaries, ward and outpatient Staff, other agencies such as Hospice staff, GP's and community Nurses.

The post holder is required to deal effectively with staff of all levels throughout the Trust, the wider Healthcare community, external organisations and the public. This will include verbal, written and electronic media.

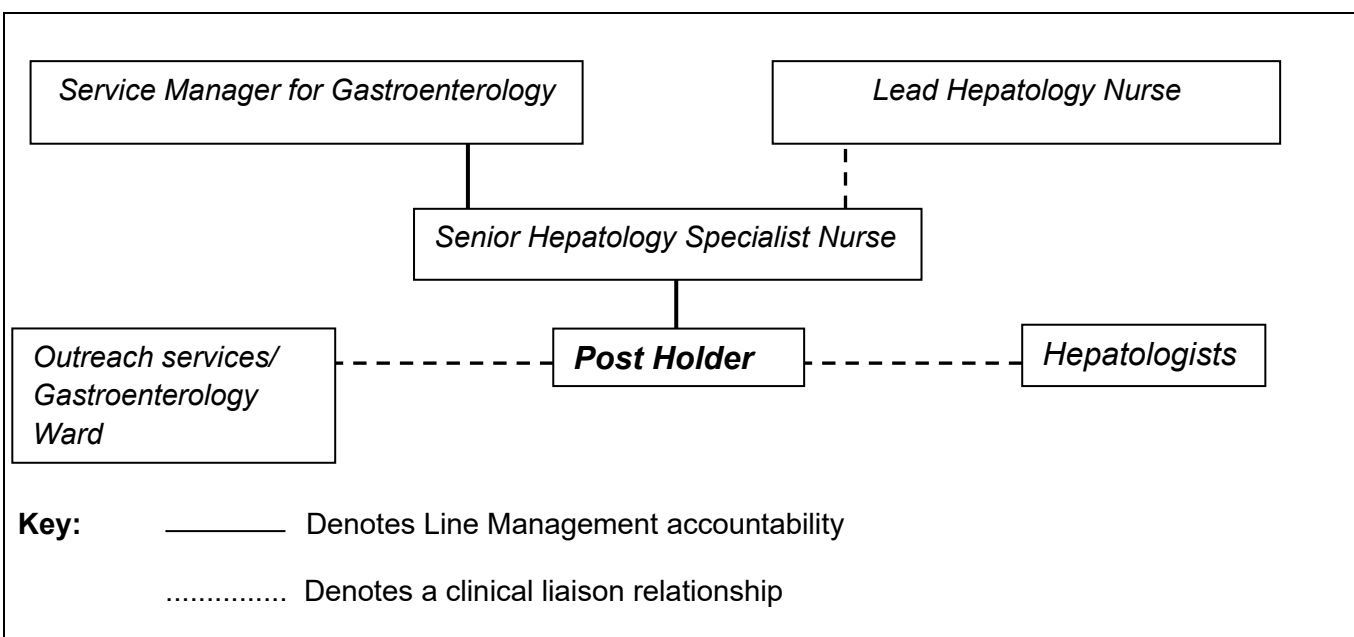
Of particular importance are working relationships with:

Internal to the Trust	External to the Trust
• Clinical nurse specialists • Clinical matron • Consultants • Administration teams • Inpatient and Outpatient teams	• GPs • Community nurses • Hospice teams

ORGANISATIONAL CHART

Based on generic – Nurse Specialist JE ref: 768 June 2019

Updated July 2023, checked by JE team 11/06/2026



FREEDOM TO ACT

Responsible for organising own workload within the requirements of the specialist team activities and work plan.

Maintain responsibility for own professional and specialist development.

Use reflection to identify and prioritise education/development needs.

Be professionally accountable for all aspects of own work, including the management of patients in your care.

To work autonomously and be able to provide expert advice to patient and families in relation to patient condition and specialist treatments and services in line with the Trust and service policy.

COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

To develop and maintain appropriate working relationships/effective networks with internal and external healthcare agencies and other viral hepatitis C providers e.g. Together drug and alcohol services, HMP services, Hep C Trust and ODN (Operational Delivery Network).

Be a member of a professional specialist forum/association (e.g. BLNA) and attend regional/national meetings and conferences when possible (seeking opportunities to make oral or poster presentations).

Provides sensitive/highly sensitive, distressing, complex or contentious information to patients, their relatives and members of the public with empathy and reassurance. (Including: Screening for blood borne viruses and giving patients the results especially Viral Hepatitis and HIV, sexual health discussions and dealing with patients who are homeless; patients with severe mental health; have challenging behaviour; drug and alcohol problems.)

ANALYTICAL/JUDGEMENTAL SKILLS

Complex facts or situations requiring analysis, interpretation, comparison of a range of options. Requires skills for assessing and interpreting specialist acute and other patient conditions and taking appropriate actions, this may include non-medical prescribing.

To monitor and review the effectiveness of interventions with the patient and colleagues and modify this to meet changing needs and established goals of care.

PLANNING/ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

Plan, organise complex activities, programmes requiring formulation and adjustment

Plan patients care, managing an individual caseload of complex patients effectively and efficiently. To co-ordinate the management of outpatients presenting with symptoms of their disease or family history.

To receive direct referrals within the speciality and to provide assessment of patient's needs

To work with the CNS to develop and provide a co-ordinated specialist service to patients with the relevant specialist diagnosis and their carers and to have direct clinical involvement in complex care in both the outpatient and inpatient setting

Plan & organise day-to-day service provision

PATIENT/CLIENT CARE

To support patients in meeting their own health and wellbeing through providing expert information, advice and support

Teaches patients and their families/carers about managing own condition.

To assess patients and their complex needs and those of their families and plan, implement and evaluate appropriate programmes of care – this will include communicating highly sensitive information about diagnosis, treatment options and issues surrounding terminal illness and bereavement.

To provide emotional, psychological and practical support to the patient and their family/carer throughout their pathway and to facilitate communication between patients, families and professionals

To recognise ethical dilemmas relating to care and act as the patient/relative's advocate when required

To support the development of care pathways for patients with relevant specialist conditions

POLICY/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

To support the development of specialist nurse led care where appropriate, in line with National guidance.

To supervise/instruct unqualified members of the nursing team as appropriate.

To act as an expert resource to others in developing and improving specialist knowledge and skills in clinical practice, through acting as an assessor, facilitator and teaching groups of staff as required.

To develop evidence-based standards, policies and guidelines at a local network and national level to improve the practice of own and other professions.

To evaluate clinical effectiveness within the speciality, identifying poor quality and a plan for quality improvement and produce an annual report.

Act as facilitator in developing clinical practice and promoting changes in service that meet National Standards.

To participate in developing a shared vision of the service and work with the multi-disciplinary team, organisation and external agencies to achieve this.

To employ effective decision-making skills to address complex issues and use effective change management skills to implement these.

To use effective prioritisation, problem solving and delegation skills to manage time effectively.

To establish networks with other specialists at a local, national and international level, to exchange and enhance knowledge and expertise.

To maintain a peer network of support, information and learning with other nurse specialists within the organisation.

FINANCIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES

The post holder has a personal duty of care in relation to equipment and resources.

The post holder will work within a defined day to day operational budget. Ensuring that any projects undertaken are established and managed in a financially responsible manner.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Provides teaching in practice to other healthcare professionals and students through clinical supervision/ facilitation.

Act as a positive role model and clinical resource for other healthcare professionals and students.

To promote a learning environment through identifying opportunities and seeking resources required for own and others learning.

To reflect on own practice through clinical supervision/mentorship and to act as a clinical supervisor/mentor to others.

Contribute to the development of patient/ healthcare information, specific to Hepatology.

To act as a specialist resource to advice and support healthcare professionals and others involved in the delivery of care to patients, their families and carers.

Participate in the planning, delivery and evaluation of in-house education and training programmes, for all relevant disciplines of healthcare professionals, including medical students.

Together with the Senior Hepatology Nurse Specialist provide relevant updates, education and training within the Trust and externally, to nurses, patient groups and other disciplines, including Peninsula Medical School / undergraduate placements.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

To document all patient contacts and maintain patients records as per Trust Documentation Policy.

To be involved in the Audit Programme relevant to the service.

The post holder will use a wide range of computer systems e.g. word, excel and PowerPoint to create reports, documents and presentations.

Review and disseminate new information to relevant staff (e.g. Drug and alcohol services).

Maintain accurate records and databases (both local and regional) for patients with viral hepatitis and other liver conditions.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

To maintain own and others' awareness of relevant research evidence related to the speciality and work with others in applying this to practice.

Ensure clinical practice in relation to its evidence base and clinical effectiveness.

To participate in local and national research and audit projects and service evaluation as requested in order to improve standards of patient care.

To identify areas of potential research relating to the speciality and to participate in national and local relevant research activities on a regular basis and to provide feedback to relevant groups.

Use core audit skills to enable the specialist team and other health professionals to improve quality of care.

Evaluate clinical practice in relation to its evidence base and clinical effectiveness.

Collect and collate epidemiological data to enable the team to inform independent or collaborative review of clinical practice.

Maintain Hepatology patient diagnostic databases, collect and collate epidemiological data to enable the team to inform independent or collaborative review of clinical practice.

PHYSICAL SKILLS

High degree of competence and dexterity in practical nursing skills, providing a supporting role with Assessments, administering intravenous and oral medication, cannulation, and taking blood.

PHYSICAL EFFORT

High degree of competence and dexterity in practical nursing skills, providing a supporting role.

The role will have a combination of sitting, standing and walking with occasional moderate effort for several short periods along with sitting at a VDU for long periods of time.

MENTAL EFFORT

The work pattern is unpredictable and subject to frequent interruption.

Ability to carry a caseload of clients and formulate effective treatment programmes to cure or alleviate symptoms

Actively participate in strategic service planning & development

The post holder will require resilience to deliver specialist nursing care in at times, stressful and emotional demanding environments. Requirement to regularly concentrate to deliver and manage varied priorities and demands of liaising with a wide range of people.

EMOTIONAL EFFORT

Work with patients/service users and carers who have a poor/life limiting prognosis, including the communication of distressing news on a day to day basis.

Work with patients in the aftermath of bad news.

Work with patients with mental health problems or occasional challenging behaviour.

The post holder will respond to concerns and questions from a wide range of people who may be anxious and distressed relating to their condition and treatment.

Ability to adapt to an unpredictable workload.

Frequent exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Occasional working with hazardous substances (cytotoxic drugs, bodily waste and fluids) when in clinical setting

Occasional aggressive behaviour when dealing with face to face complaints

Regular use of VDU

Willingness to support community activities of testing and treating of viral hepatitis C. Must have good communication skills especially for managing vulnerable patients whose circumstances and communication can be challenging.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Take part in regular performance appraisal.

Undertake any training required in order to maintain competency including mandatory training, e.g. Manual Handling.

Contribute to and work within a safe working environment.

You are expected to comply with Trust Infection Control Policies and conduct him/herself at all times in such a manner as to minimise the risk of healthcare associated infection

As an employee of the Trust, it is a contractual duty that you abide by any relevant code of professional conduct and/or practice applicable to you. A breach of this requirement may result in action being taken against you (in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary policy) up to and including dismissal.

You must also take responsibility for your workplace health and wellbeing:

- When required, gain support from Occupational Health, Human Resources or other sources.
- Familiarise yourself with the health and wellbeing support available from policies and/or Occupational Health.
- Follow the Trust's health and wellbeing vision of healthy body, healthy mind, healthy you.
- Undertake a Display Screen Equipment assessment (DES) if appropriate to role.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS

This post has been identified as involving access to vulnerable adults and/or children and in line with Trust policy successful applicants will be required to undertake a Disclosure & Barring Service Disclosure Check.

GENERAL

Based on generic – Nurse Specialist JE ref: 768 June 2019
Updated July 2023, checked by JE team 11/06/2026

This is a description of the job as it is now. We periodically examine employees' job descriptions and update them to ensure that they reflect the job as it is then being performed, or to incorporate any changes being proposed. This procedure is conducted by the manager in consultation with the jobholder. You will, therefore, be expected to participate fully in such discussions. We aim to reach agreement on reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible, we reserve the right to insist on changes to your job description after consultation with you.

Everyone within the Trust has a responsibility for, and is committed to, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults, children and young people and for ensuring that they are protected from harm, ensuring that the Trusts Child Protection and Safeguarding Adult policies and procedures are promoted and adhered to by all members of staff.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Hepatology Nurse Specialist
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Requirements	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATION/ SPECIAL TRAINING		
Registered Nurse	X	
Post-registration qualification in relevant specialist nursing or equivalent experience	X	
Formal qualification in teaching of adults	X	
Advanced Communication course, or willing to participate in training	X	
Degree in relevant discipline or working toward		X
Competent in patient assessment and history taking with willingness to undertake course to develop skills in physical examination.	X	
Formal qualification in non-medical prescribing or willing to work towards	X	
Willingness to undertake qualification in physical examination to support extended practice and nurse led paracentesis		X
KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS		
Demonstrable nursing experience in the acute setting.	X	
Demonstrable experience in care of patients with relevant Diagnosis.	X	
Experience of managing service provision and the supervision and managing of staff		X
Ability to represent the department at meetings of internal, local, regional and national bodies and institutions	X	
Competent in the delivery of medications both orally and IV	X	
Knowledge of anti-viral therapies		X
Excellent verbal and written communication skills	X	
Venepuncture and cannulation	X	
EXPERIENCE		
Able to manage and conduct nurse-led clinics	X	
Counselling skills		X
IT competence in the usual applications – database, spread sheet and presentation software etc	X	

Confident in delivering presentations and experience of public speaking		X
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES		
Able to work as a multi-disciplinary team member	X	
Ability to be empathetic with wide ranging, complex and sensitive needs	X	
Able to be assertive when necessary (e.g. challenging behaviour) and remain calm in stressful/ emergency situations	X	
Highly motivated and enthusiastic	X	
Flexible and able to prioritise dynamic workload	X	
Takes responsibility for own professional development	X	
Smart professional appearance	X	
Up to date personal profile	X	
OTHER REQUIREMENTS		
Willing to travel to community sites for outreach clinics and the RD&E for training, professional development	X	
Willingness to work on the Gastroenterology Ward to provide support if clinical need.	X	
The post holder must demonstrate a positive commitment to uphold diversity and equality policies approved by the Trust.	X	

WORKING CONDITIONS/HAZARDS		FREQUENCY (Rare/ Occasional/ Moderate/ Frequent)			
		R	O	M	F
Hazards/ Risks requiring Immunisation Screening					
Laboratory specimens	Y			X	
Contact with patients	Y				
Exposure Prone Procedures	N				
Blood/body fluids	Y		X		
Hazard/Risks requiring Respiratory Health Surveillance					
Solvents (e.g. toluene, xylene, white spirit, acetone, formaldehyde and ethyl acetate)	N				
Respiratory sensitisers (e.g isocyanates)	N				
Chlorine based cleaning solutions (e.g. Chlorclean, Actichlor, Tristel)	N				
Animals	N				
Cytotoxic drugs	N				
Risks requiring Other Health Surveillance					
Radiation (>6mSv)	N				
Laser (Class 3R, 3B, 4)	N				
Dusty environment (>4mg/m3)	N				
Noise (over 80dBA)	N				
Hand held vibration tools (=>2.5 m/s2)	N				
Other General Hazards/ Risks					
VDU use (> 1 hour daily)	Y				X
Heavy manual handling (>10kg)	N				
Driving	Y		X		
Food handling	N				
Night working	N				
Electrical work	N				
Physical Effort	Y		X		
Mental Effort	Y		X		
Emotional Effort	Y		X		
Working in isolation	Y		X		
Challenging behaviour	Y		X		