

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Complaint Handler/ Safety & Quality Coordinator (Hybrid Governance Role)
Reports to	Assistant Safety and Quality Improvement Manager
Band	5
Department/Care Group	Clinical Care Group

JOB PURPOSE
<p>This post holder supports the Care Group Safety and Quality Improvement Team to implement effective governance processes within the Care Group. These processes will involve patient safety, patient experience feedback, learning from patient safety events and risk management.</p> <p>The postholder will be the designated case handler for complaints assigned to them within the Care Group. They will be responsible for managing each complaint in line with the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) NHS Complaints Standards and the Health and Social Care Regulations (2009).</p> <p>They will support preparation for the Safety and Quality Improvement Manager / assistant manager at Trust wide meetings, governance & oversight groups and improvement forums.</p> <p>The postholder will provide appropriate assistance to patients, relatives, carers and members of the public ensuring that any enquiries are handled in a caring, compassionate and professional manner.</p>

KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<p>The postholder will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the support and facilitation required to ensure that the Care Group instigates appropriate investigation of complaints in order that the necessary information is gathered to enable a high-quality response to be written which addresses all of the issues raised and identifies appropriate action where a failure or problem has been identified. • Support improvement in complaints handling within the Care Group by ensuring adherence to the relevant complaint's regulations and standards. • Offer expert knowledge and guidance to complainants, clinicians, managers and other staff within the Care Group on all aspects of the complaints process ensuring signposting where additional support is required such as bereavement services. • Provide support and guidance to Care Group staff in responding to patient safety events in line with the patient safety incident response plan. • To produce, with guidance, Patient Safety Event Escalation Reports for consideration by the Panel in line with the Patient Safety Incident Response Policy. • To effectively model the core principles of the patient safety incident response framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compassionate engagement ○ Proportionate responses ○ Systems based learning ○ Supportive oversight • Support delivery the initial response to a patient safety event, prioritising the compassionate engagement of those affected. • Monitor that appropriate learning responses have been identified, and are being completed in a timely manner including Swarm / huddles and After-Action Reviews;

- Supporting the Care Group to meet the requirements of Duty of Candour Regulations, monitoring that evidence of compliance is logged on the Trust Risk Management system.
- Retain personal responsibility for managing a mixed caseload of complaints and complainant correspondence autonomously, seeking guidance and support from the Corporate complaints and patient support service where appropriate.
- Be responsible for the efficient and effective triaging and coordination of complaints within the Care Group ensuring that strict deadlines are met when responding.
- Act as a point of contact for people wishing to complain or raise concerns about NHS services in line with the NHS Complaints Handling Procedure. This will involve speaking with complainants/service users/carers either personally or by telephone on a daily basis.
- Ensure that the complaints process is accessible and fair.
- Be responsible for managing Loss and Compensation Claims for the Care Group.
- Facilitate local resolution meetings with complainants and appropriate staff e.g. Senior clinical, Care Group or Executive Team, which involves detailed note taking and keeping a direct focus on the key issues.
- Actively promote the use of the Trust Risk Management System (Datix) throughout the Care Group to record safety, risk and patient experience data ensuring safety events and complaints are investigated and responded to within statutory timescales, escalating delays appropriately and communicating delays to the complainant / affected person in line with Trust Policy.
- Draft high quality, accurate and compassionate responses/cover letters to complainants on behalf of the Care Group or senior leadership team.
- Provide regular complaints quality assurance reports to relevant Care Group performance and governance meetings.
- Work closely with other complaint handlers across other Care Groups and the corporate complaints and PALS teams to ensure that communication and data is appropriately recorded.
- Implement appropriate information governance to ensure that data and information related to complaints is stored, managed and shared appropriately.
- Maintain confidential records securely and ensure the complaints recording system is managed and updated effectively.
- Ensure that working practices comply with all aspects of legislation including the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.
- Support the implementation of the Royal Devon revised complaints investigation process ensuring compliance with organisational requirements.
- Co-ordinate a wide range of clerical and administrative duties associated with complaint handling.

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Areas of Responsibility: Patient Safety, Quality, Complaints and Patient Experience.

No. of Staff reporting to this role: Nil

The purpose of this post is to provide effective governance support with a focus on complaints handling. Supporting effective delivery of Care Group Clinical Governance based upon the Trust's patient safety, experience and quality improvement agendas.

The post holder is required to deal effectively with staff of all levels throughout the Trust as and when they encounter on a day to day basis. In addition, the post holder will deal with 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Group Triumvirates (Deputy Medical Director, Care Group Director, Director of Patient Care) • Deputy Director of Nursing, Patient Experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Advocacy Consortium • Integrated Care Board • Primary Care Services • Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsmen

- Care Group Quality and Safety Lead
- Associate Directors of Patient Care
- Care Group Safety and Quality Improvement Manager
- Care Group Assistant Safety and Quality Improvement Manager
- Patient Safety Specialists
- Other Care Group Complaint Handlers
- Matron for Complaints and Patient Support
- Deputy Complaints and PALS manager
- Patient Advice and Liaison Service team
- Central Patient Experience and Patient Safety Teams
- All relevant Royal Devon Staff
- Trust Legal Department

- Care Quality Commission
- Patients, families, carers and/or others affected by patient safety or experience events

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



There will be some variation in this structure between Care Groups due to differences in the size and complexity each Care Group

FREEDOM TO ACT

The post holder will manage specific standalone processes autonomously, taking responsibility for planning, co-ordinating and managing complaints for the Care Group within the guidelines of the relevant policies and frameworks relating to complaints.

The postholder may be required to support other Care Groups in the support and delivery of their complaints and clinical governance processes.

COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

- The postholder will use their specialist knowledge of complaint handling, the NHS Complaints Regulations, organisational policies and procedures relevant to complaints handling to liaise with patients, carers, local health and social care agencies, other agencies and the general public; dealing with enquiries and providing communications, advice and information to service users, staff and members of the public regularly, of a highly complex, highly sensitive or contentious nature.
- Demonstrate a high level of communication skill and the ability to present complex and sensitive information to members of the public who have been affected by safety events and or are dissatisfied with the service they have received. This will require responding with tact, empathy and compassion to people who may be using aggressive communication styles.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to deal with situations where there may be barriers to understanding or communication difficulties.
- Ability to manage sometimes difficult and highly sensitive situations to include very upset and sometimes aggressive members of the public; giving accurate advice on a range of issues in order to achieve objectives within agreed timescales.
- Communicating and building effective relationships with senior managers at all levels, including the Executive Team, all Care Group complaint handlers, clinical staff, independent contractors, Datix/IT reporting to ensure a proactive, open and constructive approach to manage and resolve the issues raised.
- Ability to use their own initiative and work autonomously, taking the lead when necessary in resolving difficult situations and being an effective team worker.
- Effective facilitation skills and working with patients, carers and focus groups, e.g. supporting local events and co-coordinating support for a range of multi-agency services.

ANALYTICAL/JUDGEMENTAL SKILLS

- Analysing and identifying complaints which may require escalation within the Care Group. #
- To seek and act on feedback from patients, families and staff which has been escalated through Safety and Quality activity within the Care Group
- To create monthly and quarterly reports for the Care Group and corporate meetings as required which facilitate and enable identification of trends, potential service improvements and drivers for change.

PLANNING/ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

- Excellent organisational, administrative skills and letter writing skills; with the ability to achieve objectives within agreed timescales.
- Manage own Care Group case work to ensure that issues are being dealt with in a timely manner.
- Co-ordinate the management of complaint issues on a daily basis, identifying any problems and liaising with the line manager and corporate complaints team accordingly.
- Adhere to administrative duties within the process of managing complaints, ensuring that all issues are recorded appropriately and accurately in Datix within appropriate timescales and managed in a timely manner.
- The ability to manage multiple tasks at one time, including frequent interruptions, e.g. enquiries, complaints from patients/members of the public.

- Plans and organises any relevant patient involvement activity such as local resolution meetings.

PATIENT/CLIENT CARE

- The postholder will not be involved in direct patient care.
- To provide information and advice to complainants and service users with regards to the complaints service including referring to the NHS Complaints procedure or to independent advocacy services as required.
- To be the core point of contact within the Care Group for complainants from triage to finalisation of the complaint.

POLICY/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

- The post holder will be required to comply and adhere to all Trust policies which are relevant to the role. They will contribute to continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the Care Group.
- Knowledge of the Trust's complaints policy and procedures, Patient Communication Policy and Principles for Communicating with Patients and associated processes to enhance patient care and experience; proposing changes to practice and procedures, where relevant
- To work in accordance with equal opportunity policies and procedures.
- To contribute to the ongoing development and implementation of the Trust complaints procedure.

FINANCIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- The postholder will contribute to the efficient use of financial and physical resources within the Care Group i.e. ordering of stationary/supplies/invoicing as required and directed by their line manager and wider Care Group Governance structure.
- In addition to complaints handling, the postholder will manage Loss and Compensation Claims for the Care Group.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- The postholder will act responsibly in respect of colleague's health, safety and welfare following safety at work practices, whilst working in compliance with local health and safety policy and guidance.
- Recognises and respects equality and diversity, demonstrating an inclusive approach in all environments.
- Understands the importance of role modelling and participates in providing education to Care Group staff in relation to the Trust's complaints policy and associated procedures
- Participate in supervision and annual appraisal with line manager to support professional development.
- Identifies opportunities for personal development and participates in the personal performance / development planning processes.
- Individual responsibility to complete mandatory training in line with electronic staff record.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Generate activity and performance reports highlighting potential areas for development and improvement.
- Advanced knowledge of IT systems, e.g. Word, Excel, Outlook, Internet, etc and proficient use of Datix. Day to day use of Datix web risk management software will be used to record all complaints that are received and any related information is kept up to date.
- Ability to prepare written reports for issues raised, ensuring they are clear, concise, ensuring that any clinical or technical details are explained in full.

It is the responsibility of all staff to respect the confidentiality of patients and staff, as specified in the Caldicott Principles, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act. It is the duty of every employee to:

- Only access person identifiable information as required in the execution of their duties.

- Disclose information appropriately, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- To ensure good quality data by recording, promptly and accurately, clinical and non-clinical information within agreed timescales to the appropriate clinical or non-clinical information system
- Maintain the confidentiality of their passwords / usernames and if in possession of a 'Smartcard' abiding by the terms and conditions of its use.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Develop and undertake any surveys or audits as necessary to review Care Group complainant satisfaction within the complaints service.

PHYSICAL SKILLS

- This is an administrative role, with a requirement for excellent keyboard skills and a frequent requirement to use a computer and IT packages; therefore working in office conditions.

PHYSICAL EFFORT

- Combination of sitting, standing and walking throughout the day with little requirement of physical effort.
- The post will require travelling, meetings in various venues and office-based work. Manual dexterity to perform tasks using IT systems.

MENTAL EFFORT

- Ability to concentrate for long periods when writing reports or dealing with complex information, analysing patient/client data, managing changing patient/client requirements.
- Ability to work under pressure and able to multi-task, with frequent interruptions from patients, service users and staff, often requiring immediate attention.

EMOTIONAL EFFORT

- The postholder will be exposed to distressing situations whilst investigating complaints.
- They will have the ability to communicate verbally and empathise with upset, distressed or angry staff or members of the public; whilst dealing with complex highly sensitive or contentious complaints which can be vexatious.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- The ability to use a VDU for long periods at a time.
- Able to work across all service areas of the Trust.
- Able to deal with verbal aggression from distressed or angry individuals.
- Ability to work under pressure and manage sometimes difficult and highly sensitive situations; including very upset, bereaved and sometimes angry members of the public.

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

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.

At the Royal Devon, we are committed to reducing our carbon emissions and minimising the impact of healthcare on the environment, as outlined in our Green Plan available on our website. We actively promote sustainable practices and encourage colleagues to explore and implement greener ways of working within their roles.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Requirements	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATION/ SPECIAL TRAINING		
Degree level qualification or equivalent experience	E	
GCSE (or equivalent) English and Maths grades A-C	E	
Experience/evidence of proficient knowledge and use of Microsoft systems including Word, Excel and Outlook.	E	
KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS		
Excellent planning and organisational skills.	E	
Excellent verbal and written skills, including ability to deal with situations where there may be communication difficulties.	E	
Effective interpersonal skills	E	
Ability to provide insight as required for complaint investigations when dealing with complex complaints.	E	
Able to work effectively as part of a team and on an individual basis using own initiative and working autonomously as appropriate.	E	
Good working knowledge of Datix Cloud for accurately recording activity in regards to complaints.	E	
In depth knowledge of the NHS Complaints Procedure and new Complaints Standard Framework 2023.	E	
Knowledge of PALS Core National Standards.	E	
Ability to act as a positive role model with regard to valuing complaints and the rights of people to raise concerns without the fear of retribution.	E	
Ability to manage more than one area of work and deliver to tight timescales with competing priorities. Skilled at prioritising workloads and time management.	E	
Ability to manage sensitive issues and logical approach to problem solving.	E	
Ability to write letters dealing with complex and sensitive issues in a style which is clear, balanced, thorough and sympathetic.	E	
Good understanding of hospital systems and record keeping.	E	
Ability to inspire and engage workforce at all levels.	E	
EXPERIENCE	E	
Ability to work with staff at every level of the organisation.		

Ability to communicate sensitive and complex information both verbally and in written format.	E	
Experience in dealing with enquiries and providing advice and information to service users and members of the public, sometimes of a complex, highly sensitive or contentious nature.	E	
Demonstrate experience of working with people from diverse backgrounds and to be able to respond to them in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner.	E	
Previous experience of working within an NHS Trust.		D
Experience of using NHS database systems such as Datix Cloud and EPIC.		D
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	E	
Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.		
Ability to prioritise and plan own workload, work independently, and to strict deadlines.	E	
Ability to have frequent conversations with patients / relatives / carers / members of the public requiring careful listening, accurate note taking and often prolonged concentration whilst remaining focused.	E	
Able to deal with verbal aggression from distressed or angry individuals.	E	
Ability to critically analyse and construct draft written responses, or provide verbal feedback, ensuring letters/conversations reflect accurately the results of investigations and in line with Trust policies and procedures.	E	
Calm and tactful with the ability to challenge others effectively.	E	
Ability to negotiate, influence and persuade.	E	
Flexible in relation to the working hours required to deliver the service and to changing/competing demands.	E	
OTHER REQUIREMENTS		
The post holder must demonstrate a positive commitment to uphold diversity and equality policies approved by the Trust.	E	
Ability to travel to other locations as required.	E	

WORKING CONDITIONS/HAZARDS		FREQUENCY (Rare/ Occasional/ Moderate/ Frequent)			
		R	O	M	F
Hazards/ Risks requiring Immunisation Screening					
Laboratory specimens	N				
Contact with patients	N				
Exposure Prone Procedures	N				
Blood/body fluids	N				
Laboratory specimens	N				
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-if license held	Y		X		
Food handling	N				
Night working	N				
Electrical work	N				
Physical Effort	N				
Mental Effort	Y			X	
Emotional Effort	Y			X	
Working in isolation	N				
Challenging behaviour	Y		X		