#### JOB DESCRIPTION

**1. JOB DETAILS**

**Job Title: Genetic Counsellor**

**Band: AfC Band 7**

**Reports to: Principal / Lead Genetic Counsellor**

**Department / Directorate: Peninsula Clinical Genetics, Specialist Services Division**

**2. JOB PURPOSE**

To provide a high-quality genetic counselling service at specialist level within the Peninsula Clinical Genetics (PCG) team.

To help individuals and families to manage a genetic disorder. This is to be achieved by helping the patient and their families to:

* Comprehend the medical facts, including the diagnosis, probable course of the disorder, and the available management.
* Appreciate the way in which heredity contributes to the disorder, and the risk of recurrence in specified relatives
* Understand the options for dealing with the risk of recurrence
* Help patients choose the course of action which seems to them most appropriate
* Make the best possible adjustment to the disorder in an affected family member and/or the risk of recurrence of that disorder.

To act as a significant educational resource to trainees in genetics and genetic counselling, medical students, and to the wider health care system.

In line with our regional genomic transformation strategy, the post-holder may be asked to focus on supporting Lynch mainstreaming. Our mainstreaming approach includes provision of a quick access clinic following diagnosis as part of cancer care, as well as the support and training of nursing colleagues who are delivering mainstream testing.

**3. DIMENSIONS / KEY WORKING RELATIONS**

Peninsula Clinical Genetics (PCG) is hosted by Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (RDUH). The main office is currently based at the hospital’s Heavitree site, Exeter. There are two satellite offices, in Plymouth and Truro, staffed by GC/GNCs and admin/secretarial staff. RD&E have electronic patient records (Epic) and PCG also uses a computerised patient management system, TrakGene. These systems can also be accessed and updated from the Plymouth and Truro offices, clinic locations and secure remote working sites, e.g. home. Videoconferencing via MSTeams is standard practice for case discussions and meetings at this time.

There are currently ten GC/GNCs (9 WTE), a genomic associate (0.6 WTE) and eight consultants (6 WTE). The department hosts two STP trainees (2 WTE) and three Specialty Registrars. The clinical team is fully supported by family history, admin and clerical teams. There is a Cluster Manager who is responsible for the Genetics Cluster (which includes Clinical Genetics, Exeter Genomic Laboratory and the SW Genomic Medicine Service Alliance), which sits within the Specialised Services Division of the Trust.

Clinics are held at all the main hospitals in the region (Exeter, Derriford Hospital in Plymouth, Treliske Hospital in Truro, North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple and Torbay Hospital) and several community hospitals across the region. A significant proportion of consultations are now offered as virtual appointments (telephone and video). It is the goal of PCG, so far as is possible, to provide an equitable and accessible service throughout the Peninsula.

There are very strong links with specialists in related disciplines in all hospitals in the Peninsula. PCG is an integral part of the Peninsula Cancer, Inherited Cardiac Conditions and Fetal Medicine networks. PCG has a satellite pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) service with Guy’s and St Thomas’ Hospital, the country’s leading PGD provider. PCG is a research-active department, with Consultants and GC/GNCs recruiting patients to a large number of national research studies and collaborating with international researchers on specific conditions.

Exeter Genomic Laboratory is held in very high national and international regard and has particular expertise in the use of exome technology. There is close liaison between the clinical and scientific teams. A recent focus has been effective multidisciplinary working in the context of variant interpretation; seeing genetic counsellors, clinicians and scientists collaborating to implement the new ACGS guidelines. The Exeter Genomic Laboratory is a partner in the South West Genomic Laboratory Hub.

**Key working relationships:**

* Principal Genetic Counsellors
* Genetic Counsellor/Genetic Nurse Counsellor team
* Genomic Associate
* Cluster Manager
* Lead Clinician
* Admin Service/Line Manager
* Consultant Clinical Geneticists
* Admin/Clerical/Secretarial team
* Family History team
* Clinical Scientists and Laboratory team
* Clinical Nurse Specialists & Allied health Professionals
* Research Teams
1. **ORGANISATIONAL CHART:**

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**5. KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The post holder will work within the agreed job plan as below:

**Communication with patients and families:**

* Elicit patient’s concerns and expectations
* Elicit and accurately document patient’s detailed family history
* Interpret medical, family and psychological history
* Confirm diagnostic information
* Communicate genetic information to patients and their relatives
* Receive and provide highly complex and possibly conflicting information
* Identify and respond to emerging issues for the patient or family
* Identify changes of risk within the family
* Interpret and communicate normal and abnormal genetic test results to patients and health care professionals
* Take responsibility for their own work managing and prioritising an individual caseload autonomously
* Take a role in the provision of predictive genetic counselling
* Organise and participate in co-counselling with colleagues (e.g. as part of predictive testing)
* Expertly communicate highly sensitive and potentially psychologically damaging information, which may cause high levels of stress, following discussion with a Consultant Clinical Geneticist

**Communication with Colleagues**

* Liaise regionally and nationally with laboratory scientists and other staff to order and communicate about genetic tests and to discuss complex test results that are difficult to interpret.
* Liaise regionally and nationally with other health care professionals including departments of histology, surgery, screening, midwifery, psychiatry, cardiology, social work and others as needed to obtain and provide information.
* Act as patient advocate in appropriate situations.
* Support shadowing, training and assessment for mainstream nurse colleagues.

**Educational Activities**

* Present findings of research, audit and clinical practice to large groups of staff or members of the public, within the trust, regionally, nationally or internationally.
* Participate in the teaching of genetics to medical personnel, including students, other health care professionals and members of the public.
* Support education of colleagues as part of mainstream initiatives, including consent, communication and genetics training.

**Patient/Patient Care**

* Use non-directive and other counselling skills to counsel patients about available options and facilitate decision making
* Help to arrange relevant prenatal diagnostic tests for genetic patients who inform the department of a pregnancy, ensuring continuity of care through to outcome in conjunction with the named consultant
* Employ the methods, procedures and approach established within the department
* Undertake an equitable and appropriate proportion of the total genetic counsellors’ workload whilst maintaining the necessary quality of work.
* Maintain a full and accurate record of work undertaken (including pedigrees, clinic, telephone and (rarely) home visit reports, correspondence and other notes) in both manual and computerised records and preserve their confidentiality.
* Ensure that best possible standards of work are maintained.
* Facilitate communication between medical, clerical and laboratory staff within the department to ensure the best possible service to families.
* Maintain effective communication with professionals (e.g. medical, nursing, social work) outside the department, both for the benefit of individual families as well as to promote general awareness of the genetic counselling service.
* Undertake any other duties, within the context of this job description and appropriate to the grade of the post, necessary for the changing needs of an effective and efficient patient service.

**Professional Development and Education:**

* Attend and contribute to departmental seminars/teaching sessions, and national meetings equitably within the team after discussion with supervisor and Senior Genetic Counsellor.
* Participate in reflective practice in all areas of patient care and have an understanding of current research with the speciality. Attend supervision.
* Collate clinical and educational development opportunities towards the portfolio of evidence required for Genetic Counsellor registration.
* Undertake any other duties, within the context of this job description and appropriate to the grade of the post, necessary for the changing needs of an effective and efficient patient service.

**Registered Nurse only**

* To be accountable for their own professional practice and work within the NMCs Code of Professional Conduct
* To be an active member of the NMC’s professional register

**Other Responsibilities:**

Take part in regular performance and development review.

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

Contribute to and work within a safe working environment.

You are expected to comply with Trust Infection Control Policies and conduct yourself 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.

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.

**Diversity at the RD&E**

The RD&E is committed to working to become a national exemplar for diversity and inclusion. We aim to create a positive sense of belonging for everyone, regardless of their background or identity, to value visible and invisible differences and to create a sense of belonging.

For us, inclusion is about positively striving to meet the needs of different people and creating environments where everyone feels respected and able to achieve their full potential. However, we know that there is a lot to learn and do, and we are committed to doing so because it’s the right thing to do for both staff and the people we care for. No person (staff, patient or public) will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics as governed by the Equality Act 2010 regardless of race, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnerships. We have set up staff B.A.M.E., Disability and LGBTQIA+ networks to help guide our ongoing work.

### 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.

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust and the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust continue to develop our long standing partnership with a view to becoming a single integrated organisation across Eastern and Northern Devon. Working together gives us the opportunity to offer unique and varied careers across our services combining the RD&E’s track record of excellence in research, teaching and links to the university with NDHT’s innovation and adaptability.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

**POST: Genetic Counsellor**

**BAND: Band 7 AfC**

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| **REQUIREMENTS**  | **Essential**  | **Desirable** |
| **QUALIFICATIONS / TRAINING**  |
| GCRB\*\* registration as a Genetic Counsellor (must be maintained) **OR**  | **E**  |  |
| Successful completion of STP Programme in Genomic Counselling **OR** Genetic Counsellor registration with a Board that has reciprocal arrangements with GCRB (see GCRB website for details).  | **E** **E** |  |
| **KNOWLEDGE / SKILLS**  |
| Ability to work within a multidisciplinary environment  | **E**  |  |
| Ability to work as a member of a team  | **E**  |  |
| Ability to manage own workload  | **E**  |  |
| Ability to work within supervision  | **E**  |  |
| Extensive verbal and written communication skills  | **E**  |  |
| Counselling skills  | **E**  |  |
| Good knowledge of genetics  | **E**  |  |
| Good report and writing skills  | **E**  |  |
| **EXPERIENCE**  |
| Teaching experience  |  | **D** |
| Knowledge of clinical governance  | **E**  |  |
| Experience of research governance  |  | **D** |
| Experience of literature searching and critical analysis  | **E**  |  |
| Experience of clinical audit  | **E**  |  |
| Experience of working in a Regional Genetics Unit  | **E**  |  |
| **PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES**  |
| Excellent attention to detail and standards of care and thorough record keeping.  | **E**  |  |
| Highly motivated, flexible and enthusiastic  | **E**  |  |
| Excellent ability to work within and contribute to the development and maintenance of a highly skilled and motivated team  | **E**  |  |
| Ability to self-motivate and work autonomously  | **E**  |  |
| Awareness and respect for the needs and values of patients and professional colleagues  | **E**  |  |
| Commitment to further professional training  | **E**  |  |
| **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**  |
| Phlebotomy  |  | **D**  |
| Current driving licence (or ability to travel independently to peripheral clinics)  | **E**  |  |
| Knowledge and previous experience of using PC software, particularly word processing and databases.  | **E**  |  |

**E**ssential/**D**esirable \*\* **G**enetic **C**ounsellor **R**egistration **B**oard

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| HAZARDS:- Updated July 2021 |
| Laboratory Specimens  |  | Clinical contact with Patients |  | Dealing with violence & aggression of patients/relatives |  |
| Blood / Body Fluids |  | Dusty Environment |  | VDU Use |  |
| Radiation / Lasers |  | Challenging Behaviour |  | Manual Handling |  |
| Solvents |  | Driving |  | Noise / Vibration |  |
| Respiratory Sensitisers |  | Food Handling |  | Working in isolation (occasional) |  |
| Cytotoxic Drugs |  | Electrical work |  | Night Working |  |