Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DETAILS	
Job Title	Principal Clinical Scientist (Operational/Research & Development)
Reports to	Principal Clinical Scientist (Team/Section Lead)
Band	Band 8a
Department/Directorate	Genomics Laboratory/Specialist Services

JOB PURPOSE

Responsible for the accurate and timely provision of highly specialist genomic tests.

Responsible for the day-to-day management of either the operational activities or research and development activities in their section, providing cover during periods of absence to ensure that there is management of both roles. They will work closely with the Team/Section Lead and Operational and Development Principal Clinical Scientists in other teams to develop and deliver the laboratory's repertoire of services and strategic objectives.

Provide expert scientific and managerial leadership with a very high level of scientific knowledge, skill and expertise in the clinical application of genomic testing, and the interpretation of findings in the clinical context.

Use analytical data to monitor services for their area of responsibility, actively seeking opportunities for process and cost improvements to ensure timely and efficient reporting of results.

Undertake and design research and development activities to improve the efficiency of existing diagnostic tests, identifying and implementing new technologies and processes to ensure the appropriate use of resources for the accurate and timely provision of highly complex genomic tests.

Responsible for supporting the development and delivery of specialist teaching, training and development of staff, students and healthcare professionals in the use of genomic testing.

Take a proactive role in maintaining high quality standards to ensure maintenance of the laboratory UKAS accreditation status, including service improvements for their area of responsibility, in line with local, regional, and national genomics strategies.

Responsible for the appropriate, efficient and safe use of resources within their area of responsibility.

The post holder will exercise considerable autonomy for their work and that of the service.

KEY RESULT AREAS/PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Working with the Section Lead, oversee the day-to-day operation of the section, including resource allocation and workflow management, to ensure timely and accurate diagnostic and scientific services.

Manage staff within area of responsibility to ensure efficient service delivery.

Support the design and implement innovative research and development activities to improve efficiency of existing diagnostic tests.

Provide expert scientific and clinical advice to multidisciplinary teams/service users.

Interpret highly complex data and ensure high-quality reporting of results in line with local, regional, and national genomics strategies.

Participate in workforce planning and recruitment, mentoring and developing staff by supporting CPD (Continuing Professional Development).

Manage staff within area of responsibility, working with other Principal Clinical Scientists in other teams to manage workload distribution and ensure efficient service delivery.

Ensure compliance with local, national, and professional regulations and standards.

Identify opportunities for technological advancements and service improvements, develop and validate new diagnostic tests, methodologies, and protocols and lead on the implementation of innovative scientific techniques into routine practice.

KEY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

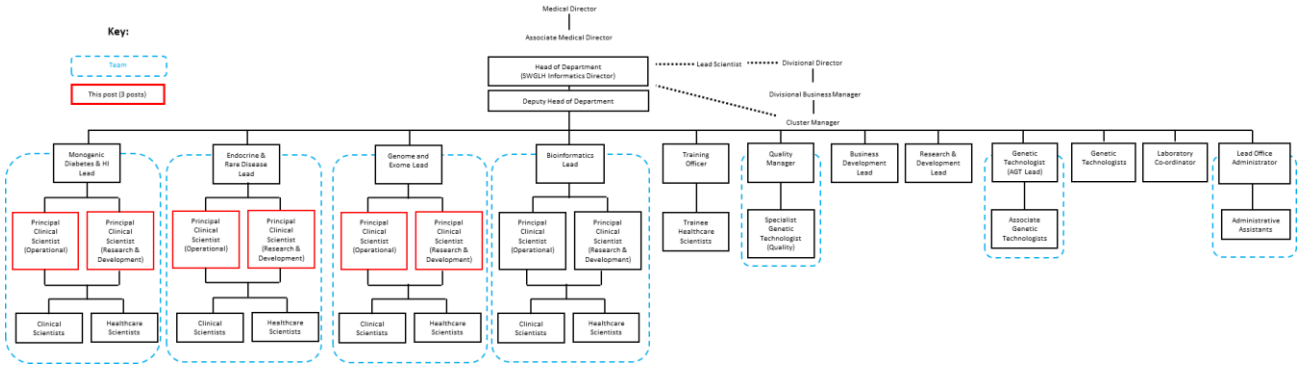
Areas of Responsibility: Responsible for overseeing the operational or development of services within their section of the laboratory, including their own work and the organisation of the work of others, working with a high degree of autonomy. The post holder is required to deal effectively with staff of all levels throughout the Trust and externally as and when they encounter on a day to day basis. This will include verbal, written and electronic media.

No. of Staff reporting to this role: >5

Of particular importance are working relationships with:

Internal to the Trust	External to the Trust
• Clinical Scientists • Healthcare Scientists • Bioinformaticians • Trainee Healthcare Scientists • Genetic Technologists • Associate Genetic Technologists • Administrative Assistants • Medical Staff • Other Healthcare professionals • Clinical research team members, Fellows and nurses	• Medical staff • Healthcare organisations • Company representatives • Clinical Scientists • Healthcare Scientists • Trainee Healthcare Scientists • Postdoctoral research fellows, PhD students and other trainees or students • Clinical research team members, Fellows and nurses • Other Healthcare professionals

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



FREEDOM TO ACT

Work autonomously and within professional and regulatory guidelines, to support the Section Lead with laboratory operations, service development, and research initiatives.

Exercise considerable autonomy for their work and that of the service, including freedom to act on their own initiative.

Provide expert guidance and advice to clinical teams, researchers, and external stakeholders, influencing decisions on genomics service delivery and patient care.

Always work within clearly defined accountability framework.

COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Maintain the highest level of patient confidentiality and comply with section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act.

Recognise and promote the importance of harmonious, collaborative, relationships and maintain an atmosphere conducive to this.

The post holder will frequently:

- Provide advice to clinicians and other healthcare professionals regarding availability and appropriate use of genomic testing to ensure suitable testing and efficient use of resources.
- Communicate specialist, highly complex data and information clearly and concisely to staff from multiple disciplines, ensuring any barriers to understanding are appropriately addressed.
- Communicate with colleagues to improve understanding of genomic variation in the human genome.
- Represent the Genomics department at regional and national meetings.
- Present highly specialist clinical, diagnostic and research findings at appropriate national and international conferences, meetings and seminars (both internal and external) and through publication in high quality journals.
- Present highly complex and sensitive information at the appropriate level of understanding for audiences with varying levels of genetic and genomic bioinformatics, clinical, scientific and technical knowledge including healthcare professionals, under- and postgraduate students, patients, visitors and the public.
- Participate at a high level in internal and external meetings and other learning activities (e.g. lab meetings, Molecular Genetics weekly seminar series, departmental training sessions, interdepartmental meetings and conferences).
- Communicate with users and other laboratories (as appropriate) to request and receive sensitive and complex information necessary for accurate and timely reporting of results.
- Use tact and persuasive skills to motivate staff to support the delivery of the strategic objectives of the laboratory.
- Communicate with clinical, scientific and commercial stakeholders to support the development and delivery of the strategic objectives of the laboratory.
- Communicate with relevant teams within the Trust (e.g. Human Resources, Recruitment, Occupational Health) on staff-related matters.

Deputise for the Section Lead in his/her absence and represent the laboratory as required.

Take responsibility for other sections as required (within areas of competence).

ANALYTICAL/JUDGEMENTAL SKILLS

Review highly complex information to determine appropriateness and urgency of patient samples for testing based on specimen and information provided. This may require communication with the referring clinician, contact with specialist service providers and/or referral to guidelines for clinical criteria for testing.

Interpret highly complex specialist genomic test results.

Responsible for reporting of highly complex specialist genomic test results for patients and their families with rare diseases, using a high level of knowledge to analyse and interpret results in the context of the clinical referral.

Take responsibility for checking, interpreting and authorising patient reports for a designated set of tests, ensuring that the reports are appropriate, accurate and timely for the clinical referrals, and meet national professional guidelines.

Apply advanced specialist scientific, theoretical, practical knowledge and research skills for the development and delivery of genomic testing services.

Apply extensive proven expertise and knowledge of all aspects of a clinical genomic testing service across a number of subject areas (clinical, scientific, technical, managerial, problem solving, people skills and training).

Provide expert scientific and clinical advice, with a very high level of scientific knowledge, skill and expertise in the clinical application and appropriateness of genomic testing, and the interpretation of findings in the clinical context.

Communicate the results of analyses to clinical colleagues, ensuring that the testing performed is clearly explained, and any barriers to understanding are appropriately addressed.

Exercise significant discretion and professional judgment in troubleshooting complex technical, bioinformatics, and quality control issues, escalating only when necessary.

Audit and monitor referrals and reporting times in area of responsibility.

Abide by relevant codes of professional conduct (HCPC Standards of Proficiency).

PLANNING/ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

Work in partnership with the Section Lead and other relevant stakeholders in delivering the overall strategic direction of their area of responsibility, encouraging their team to buy into the laboratory's vision.

Responsible for the planning and management of innovation and change in area of responsibility, working with key stakeholders, to ensure continued improvement of services.

Use audit data to formulate and plan education for users of the service.

Ensure compliance with all requirements of the Data Protection Act and any other relevant regulations for data protection.

Participate in the national genomics working groups, where relevant, to inform and steer policy, practice, and training.

Responsible for planning own workload, working on own initiative and acting independently to support delivery of the strategic and operational objectives of the laboratory.

PATIENT/CLIENT CARE

Responsible for ensuring that the services offered within their area of responsibility are of the highest standard by keeping up-to-take with the latest advances and developments in genomics within and outside of the NHS.

Responsible for providing highly specialist advice and communicating highly complex data and results of analyses to relevant staff from multiple disciplines, including non-experts with very limited or no knowledge of genomics.

Keep up to date with current knowledge in clinical genomics.

Provide specialist competence developed through continual professional development, reflective practice and maintain a skills portfolio relevant to the service specification.

Report any untoward incidents or complaints to the appropriate Technical or Scientific Lead within the appropriate timescales.

Prevent adverse effects on health and wellbeing.

POLICY/SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Responsible for the development, critical review, interpretation and implementation of operational policies and practices within their area of responsibility, to ensure they are aligned to the needs of the organisation, remain fit for purpose and are sustainable.

Participate in the national/international genomics working groups, where relevant, to develop national polices and best practice guidelines to support high quality genomics services for patients in the NHS.

Propose and implement changes that impact on own and wider specialist area by actively participating in cross-departmental, Trust-wide and national training to support development and continuous improvement of best practice in all clinical aspects of genetic and genomic testing.

Working with the Section Lead, lead agreed projects to deliver organisational strategy, such as new technology implementation and transformation programmes, ensuring compliance with all relevant policies.

Develop and implement policies and service improvements for their area of responsibility in line with local, regional, and national genomics strategies.

Participate in the organisation and monitoring of internal and external quality control procedures, including clinical audit, incident investigation and reporting, participation in relevant external quality assessment schemes, and taking responsibility for the implementation of any learning actions.

Take a proactive role in maintaining high quality standards to ensure maintenance of the laboratory UKAS accreditation status, ensuring that staff based in the section abide by all statutory requirements, codes of practice, health and safety regulations and operational policies of the department and to be aware of these measures as applied to other sections.

Actively promote a culture of innovation and change to ensure continued improvement of services.

Participate in department-wide internal audit and clinical audit programme to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Actively seek opportunities to support the development and delivery of departmental strategic objectives, working with key internal and external stakeholders.

Design and carry out appropriate user satisfaction surveys to ensure continuous quality improvement of services

Take a proactive role in establishing and maintaining high quality standards.

Adhere to professional best practice guidelines (including ACGS and EMQN).

Write, review, update and approve quality management documentation, including policies, departmental training documentation and SOPs (where appropriate).

Actively participate in both internal and external Quality Assurance schemes to ensure the highest standards of genomic testing.

Work to Trust Policies, Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Contribute to and work within a safe working environment by adhering to statutory requirements, codes of practice, Health and Safety and COSHH regulations, protocols and policies of the laboratory.

FINANCIAL/PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Responsible for the procurement and maintenance of stock and supplies for their area of work, including authorising invoices, to ensure continued uninterrupted service provision within their area of responsibility.

Responsible for procurement and resource allocation within their area of responsibility.

Responsible for the appropriate, efficient and safe use of resources within their area of responsibility.

Evaluate the cost effectiveness of new services and technologies when compared to existing services and recommend new investments where required.

Contribute to the development of business cases and funding proposals to support service improvements and strategic objectives.

Support the procurement, management and optimisation of physical resources, including equipment, IT systems, and facilities, ensuring they are maintained, safe, and fit for purpose.

Identify and implement improvements for service efficiency and effectiveness in their area of responsibility.

Ensure compliance with UKAS accreditation and other relevant quality and safety standards in relation to laboratory assets and financial governance.

Ensure adherence to environmental sustainability initiatives in line with NHS Green Plans, reducing waste and promoting efficient use of resources.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Responsible for the line management of the staff within their area of responsibility.

Responsible for overseeing recruitment process for new scientists working within the section, including developing and writing job descriptions, short-listing applications, interviewing and organising their laboratory induction.

Foster and maintain collaborative relationships to ensure the delivery of high quality genomic testing services.

Participate in supervision and appraisal process, supporting staff to identify and undertake relevant activities to meet objectives set in their personal development plan.

Provide oversight for the development and delivery of training programmes for their area of responsibility.

Responsible for monitoring and managing staff, performance, capability issues and attendance (e.g. sickness absence) in accordance with Trust policies and imparting unwelcome news to staff (e.g. termination of fixed term contract) where necessary.

Responsible for maintaining an up-to-date knowledge-base while demonstrating advanced competencies through a personalised Continued Professional Development portfolio.

Abide by relevant codes of professional conduct (HCPC Standards of Proficiency).

Supervise staff, trouble-shoot assays and working closely with colleagues to ensure tests are performed in a timely and accurate manner. The highest level of accuracy is required to minimise clinical risk (e.g. an erroneous result that results in an incorrect diagnosis or prediction of carrier status).

Undertake training to develop a range of knowledge and skills in order to deliver high quality technical interventions.

In partnership with the local leads, support the education of the genomics workforce.

Participate in Continued Professional Development (CPD) in accordance with HCPC and RCPath guidelines (if appropriate).

Keep a record of own training and development, maintain a portfolio, working to sustain acquired competencies for the post.

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

Demonstrate a professional and responsible manner at all times.

Take a flexible approach in supporting colleagues during times of caseload pressures.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Use analytical data for their area of responsibility to monitor and manage turnaround times (TATs) for reports, identify trends, bottlenecks, and opportunities for process improvements to ensure timely and efficient reporting of results.

Responsible for monitoring the processing, presentation and storage of extensive and highly complex genomic data.

Responsible for writing and maintaining accurate records of service improvements and their validation to comply with ISO15189 (UKAS) accreditation.

Responsible for maintaining accurate patient records in the laboratory information management system (LIMS).

Provide an accurate, timely and unambiguous response to queries regarding patient referrals and ensure effective communication, both within the laboratory and with associated healthcare professionals, ensuring that all records of communication are stored and maintained in an appropriate manner.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Regularly undertake and design research and development activities to improve service provision and the efficiency of existing diagnostic tests, including checking and validation of new diagnostic equipment and services.

Oversee the day-to-day operations and/or research and development activities relating to area of responsibility, collaborating with other operational Principal Clinical Scientists to ensure appropriate resource allocation and proactively incorporating plans to ensure resilience and continuation of the service.

Participate in diagnostic and research projects and present the findings at scientific meetings and conferences, through talks, posters and publication in journals.

Make recommendations on clinical protocols and policy relating to area of expertise and oversee local implementation.

Supervise research and development projects.

PHYSICAL SKILLS

Using IT equipment and working with high levels of accuracy.

Ability to work in an efficient manner to enable timely completion of tasks.

PHYSICAL EFFORT

Using IT equipment on a daily basis whilst seated in a restricted position.

Occasionally expected to travel offsite to regional and national meetings

MENTAL EFFORT

Frequent requirement to concentrate for long periods processing complex information.

Frequent interruptions to work patterns, with requirement to shift focus quickly in response to frequent urgent incoming requests from internal and external colleagues.

Frequent need to ensure that professional knowledge is continuously updated, and training undertaken if appropriate.

Frequent need to complete work to tight timescales to ensure that reporting times for samples are met.

Frequent working in dynamic and diverse multidisciplinary team conditions.

Significant time will be spent in meetings internal and external to the Trust, requiring high levels of concentration.

EMOTIONAL EFFORT

Frequent exposure to emotional or distressing circumstances relating to patient referral information.

Ability to cope with difficult staff issues, occasionally.

Ability to cope and deal with areas of conflict, occasionally.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Frequent daily contact with visual display unit (VDU).

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.

APPLICABLE TO MANAGERS ONLY

Leading the team effectively and supporting their wellbeing by:

- Championing health and wellbeing.
- Encouraging and support staff engagement in delivery of the service.
- Encouraging staff to comment on development and delivery of the service.
- Ensuring during 1:1's / supervision with employees you always check how they are.

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

Job Title	Principal Clinical Scientist (Occupational/Research and Development)

Requirements	Essential	Desirable
QUALIFICATION/ SPECIAL TRAINING		
MSc or equivalent in a relevant subject, or equivalent relevant experience	✓	
HCPC registration as a Clinical Scientist	✓	
Fellowship of the Royal College of Pathologists, part 1	✓	
KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS		
Extensive specialist knowledge of the clinical application of genomic testing/analysis in the clinical context.	✓	
Comprehensive understanding of the practice and principles of molecular biology and its application to diagnostic testing.	✓	
Ability to critically analyse and interpret highly complex scientific data, troubleshoot analyses, and design laboratory experiments.	✓	
Ability to supervise laboratory workload by allocating tasks to team members, multitasking of complex procedures and ensuring prioritisation of urgent samples.	✓	
Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills, both verbal and written.	✓	
Ability to facilitate effective team working	✓	
Excellent organization, verbal and written communication skills.	✓	
Good computer literacy.	✓	
Evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) with RCPath scheme or recognized equivalent.	✓	
Recognised management qualification or completion of relevant management courses (recruitment and selection, appraisal etc.).	✓	
Recognised training qualification.		✓
An understanding of academic research practice.	✓	
Up-to-date knowledge of new developments, technologies, national services in genetics and their impact on service provision.	✓	
Up-to-date awareness of national policies affecting the NHS and genomic testing.	✓	
EXPERIENCE		
Substantial experience as a Clinical Scientist in a genomics laboratory.	✓	
Experience managing and leading a service in a genetic laboratory.	✓	
Experience of writing and checking laboratory genetic reports of a complex nature.	✓	
Experience of supervisory work.	✓	
Experience of training scientific and technical staff.	✓	
Experience of ISO15189 lab accreditation assessment process.	✓	
A record of research and development experience as appropriate to the service including experience of presentation of scientific data at regional, national and international meetings and in peer-reviewed journals	✓	
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES		
Friendly, trustworthy and ability to work as a team member	✓	
Self-motivated with a proactive approach to work	✓	
Excellent communication skills (ability to write clear and concise e-mails, presentations and phone conversations)	✓	
Meticulous attention to detail.	✓	
Ability to concentrate and work under pressure.	✓	
Enthusiastic, able to work on own initiative and to lead and motivate others.	✓	
OTHER REQUIRMENTS		
Positive commitment to uphold diversity and equality policies approved by the Trust	✓	
Flexibility in approach towards working hours	✓	
Ability to travel to other locations as required.	✓	-

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	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		