

Core Job Description for a Palliative Care Educator.

The Issues:

- No recognition currently exists within job descriptions or person specifications of the unique combination of skills and knowledge needed for the delivery of palliative care education
- Educators are employed by a variety of institutions each with different operational philosophies and financial agendas which influence provision and support for educators
- Pay scales are highly variable for similar jobs and responsibilities and are subject to either national agreement i.e. universities or NHS hospices or local discretion i.e. charitable hospices
- Educators often work in isolation with highly variable academic, administrative, and professional support
- Palliative care education is generally not seen as a core component of service provision and is subject to the cutbacks and vagaries of political, financial and charitable trends

Sample Job Description for a Palliative Care Educator

This job description is a composite of several and is intended to represent a broad spectrum of responsibilities that are applicable to educators employed by either a charitable or NHS hospice, a university, or both and includes statements that may apply to those who have management and financial responsibilities for education departments or a clinical practitioner role.

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Professional Managerial Duties

- Establish and maintain personal contacts with other major institutions involved in the provision of education in specialist palliative care services and allied areas of health and social care.
- Establish, maintain and develop educational activities within the post holders host organisation and promote such activities within agreed areas.

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- Forge links with the community hospitals, private hospitals, elderly care units (nursing and residential homes, social services) within the community and the cancer networks with a view to offering education programmes and advice
- Submit statistical information and complete reports as necessary.
- Maintain appropriate records in accordance with educational policy/Hospice policy/University policy/NHS policy
- Maintain an up to date knowledge base of palliative care issues and ensure professional academic and practice credibility.
- Evaluate own teaching input and actively participate in quality assurance evaluation and audit.
- Be proactive in identifying ongoing educational needs and marketing programmes of study days that provide relevant educational opportunities.
- To participate in annual appraisal activities, maintain a personal development plan and professional portfolio where applicable and providing evidence of continual professional development.

Educational Duties

- Leading and participating in relevant educational projects within the organisation.
- Responsible for the planning, teaching and evaluation of specific course elements or modules relevant to palliative care for the Hospice/University/NHS organisation
- Responsible for the support and assessment of students in, both undergraduate and post graduate programmes. This includes membership of module teams
- Leadership of seminar groups, modules and course and involvement in meetings with external examiners.
- To be professional/personal tutor to an agreed number of students on relevant pre and post registration courses.
- Supervise students as appropriate for the purposes of: independent studies, dissertation and other practice-based modules/courses
- Contribute to the development and management of courses in which she/he is involved as a full member of the course committee where applicable. This includes involvement in the recruitment and selection of students, membership of working groups and in some courses, understanding of the financial bases of the course

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- Identifies and selects mentors in practice areas within his/her educational remit, assists in preparing them for their role and supports them in practise
- Contributes to the Departmental work on practice based learning.
- Work with departmental managers and team leaders in the development of educational opportunities for health care assistants/other disciplines and volunteers.
- Contributes to relevant professional forums associated with the educational role
- Contributes to local, regional national and where appropriate international debate and discussion about palliative care issues
- To maintain academic and theoretical credibility both within palliative care and within the broader context.
- To provide support to professionals undertaking placements.
- To select prepare and support mentors in clinical practice areas.
- To support ward/department manager in providing clinical support and preceptorship to new and junior members of the team
- To organise where appropriate and participate in and assist with clinical supervision, audit and research and team development as required.
- To facilitate and support In-Service Education activities of staff and volunteers.

Clinical Duties

- To maintain clinical skills and credibility by undertaking relevant clinical practice within the identified unit and in other settings as required.
- Together with the Head of Education/Hospice Nursing Director/Management team/ Principal Lecturer/ identify and develop strategies, which will explore links and collaboration between practice development and education.
- To contribute and participate in the clinical management and/or support of palliative care patients in the required setting.
- To provide specialist clinical advice and empower other nurses, health care professionals and agencies in the delivery of high quality palliative care.
- To be an active team member, contributing to operational management and service developments.

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- To demonstrate clinical leadership in appropriate situations
- To ensure all clinical practice is in accordance with the requisite professional code of conduct applicable to the post holders' background.
- Utilise evidence-based practice initiatives in the development of clinical and educational activity.
- Is accountable for the practice learning environment in his/her practice base including its development and the monitoring of educational standards

Research and audit

- To remain up to date and ensure that their clinical practice and academic teaching are evidence based ensuring dissemination of research findings.
- To facilitate and be part of annual educational audit of the clinical areas for the university
- To promote and actively engage in palliative care research.
- To identify and participate in audit and evaluation of relevant clinical services and programmes

Placement/Secondment Development Role

- Work collaboratively with other organisations to facilitate the active placement/secondment of appropriate staff.
- Work collaboratively with the ward/department manager to strategically plan and implement processes for managing the allocation of placements/secondments to identified staff on an annual basis.
- Work in partnership with the ward/department manager to map placement requirements against availability and identify shortfalls.
- Take responsibility for addressing local placement issues ensuring that students are appropriately allocated.
- Co-ordinate induction programmes for new students with the clinical manager.
- Keep the clinical manager informed about changes and developments relating to placements.

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