

PILGRIMS HOSPICES IN EAST KENT – JOB DESCRIPTION

Palliative Specialist Nurse (PSN)

POSITION IN ORGANISATION

Reports to: Community Team Leader

Line Manager for: N/A

Department: Clinical Services

Band: 6

Location: Canterbury, Thanet or Ashford (with community working across East Kent)

Organisational Overview

Pilgrims Hospices provides specialist palliative and end-of-life care for adults living with life-limiting illness across East Kent. Care is delivered through inpatient units, community services, outpatient services and partnership working with health and social care providers.

Supported by dedicated staff and volunteers, Pilgrims provides holistic care for patients and those important to them, including support for families and carers. The multidisciplinary team includes specialist nurses, doctors, therapists, counsellors, social workers, chaplains and other professionals working together to deliver compassionate, personalised and evidence-based care.

Pilgrims works collaboratively with local NHS partners, community services, care homes and other organisations to improve access to high-quality palliative and end-of-life care.

Job Purpose

The Palliative Specialist Nurse (PSN) is an experienced specialist practitioner who provides expert, evidence-based palliative and end-of-life care to patients with life-limiting illness and those important to them.

Working autonomously and as an integral member of the multidisciplinary team, the post holder undertakes complex holistic assessments, provides specialist symptom management advice, leads shared decision-making and advance care planning discussions, and contributes to the coordination of care across organisational boundaries.

The PSN provides clinical leadership, supports service development, quality improvement, education and workforce development activities, and acts as a role model in delivering compassionate, inclusive and person-centred care. The post holder will contribute to the continuous improvement of specialist

palliative care services through evidence-based practice, governance, audit and collaborative partnership working.

Key Working Relationships

Internal:

- Community Team Leaders
- Specialist Palliative Care Teams
- Medical Team
- Inpatient Unit Teams
- Clinical Services Leadership Team
- Allied Health Professionals
- Education and Practice Development Team
- Volunteers and Support Services

External:

- NHS acute trusts
 - General Practitioners
 - Community nursing teams
 - Care homes
 - Social care providers
 - Other statutory and voluntary organisations
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1. Clinical Responsibilities

The post holder will:

- Provide specialist palliative care assessment, advice and support to patients with complex needs and those important to them.
- Undertake holistic assessments considering physical, psychological, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual needs.
- Develop, implement and evaluate individualised care plans in partnership with patients, families and professionals.
- Support and manage patients presenting with highly complex symptom burden, uncertainty, palliative care emergencies and rapidly changing clinical needs.
- Recognise deterioration and respond appropriately to changes in clinical condition, including palliative care emergencies.
- Provide timely specialist advice to patients, carers and healthcare professionals.
- Utilise advanced clinical reasoning and specialist decision-making skills to support complex care planning.
- Promote advance care planning, including discussions regarding preferred place of care and preferred place of death where appropriate.
- Coordinate and facilitate effective transitions between care settings, ensuring continuity of care and communication across services.

- Contribute to ethical decision-making relating to capacity, consent and best-interest decisions.
 - Act as an advocate for patients, families and carers.
 - Participate in multidisciplinary team meetings, contributing specialist nursing knowledge and clinical recommendations.
 - Provide advice regarding appropriate referral pathways and access to specialist services.
 - Work autonomously within professional boundaries and seek advice appropriately when required.
 - Prescribe medicines safely where qualified and authorised to do so, in accordance with legislation, professional standards, local policies and formularies. Maintain competence in independent prescribing practice and contribute to anticipatory prescribing and medicines optimisation in line with service requirements.
 - Maintain knowledge of current evidence-based approaches to palliative symptom management.
 - Contribute to the development, review and implementation of clinical policies, pathways and standards.
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2. Professional Leadership and Clinical Practice

The post holder will:

- Act as a positive professional role model demonstrating compassionate, inclusive and person-centred care.
 - Promote high standards of specialist palliative nursing practice, influence practice across hospice, community and acute settings to promote excellence in palliative care.
 - Provide specialist advice and support to registered nurses, healthcare assistants and other professionals. Coach, supervise and support colleagues to develop competence and confidence in end-of-life care.
 - Contribute to clinical decision-making within the multidisciplinary team.
 - Demonstrate leadership in complex patient situations.
 - Promote dignity, respect, equality and inclusion in all aspects of care delivery.
 - Challenge practice where necessary to improve patient outcomes and experience.
 - Support implementation of evidence-based practice and national guidance.
 - Contribute to succession planning, service and workforce development and improvement initiatives.
 - Actively support the creation of an inclusive, psychologically safe working environment.
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3. Medicines Management

The post holder will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of medicines commonly used within specialist palliative care.
 - Provide advice regarding safe prescribing, administration and monitoring of medicines.
 - Support appropriate medicines optimisation.
 - Work within local medicines management policies and professional standards.
 - Maintain competence in prescribing practice where applicable.
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4. Quality Improvement, Audit and Research

The post holder will:

- Participate in quality improvement activities to improve patient outcomes and experience.
 - Contribute to clinical audit programmes and service evaluation.
 - Evaluate clinical outcomes and use data to improve patient experience and service delivery. Identify opportunities for improving care pathways and service delivery.
 - Lead and/or contribute to quality improvement projects and implementation of evidence-based practice.
 - Participate in research activity where appropriate.
 - Share learning through clinical forums, education sessions and professional networks.
 - Participate in risk management, incident review and learning processes.
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5. Education, Training and Development

The post holder will:

- Maintain specialist knowledge and competence through continuing professional development.
 - Deliver education and training to hospice staff, healthcare professionals and partner organisations.
 - Support the development of colleagues through coaching, supervision and teaching. Support colleagues following emotionally challenging clinical situations and contribute to a culture of reflection, wellbeing and professional support.
 - Act as a Practice Supervisor and/or Practice Assessor for student nurses in accordance with current NMC standards.
 - Support new staff through induction, orientation and ongoing development.
 - Contribute to clinical competency development.
 - Attend mandatory training and professional development activities.
 - Maintain awareness of current national guidance relating to palliative and end-of-life care.
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6. Safeguarding and Professional Responsibilities

The post holder will:

- Recognise and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
 - Work within safeguarding adults procedures and legislation.
 - Apply principles of the Mental Capacity Act and best-interest decision-making.
 - Maintain professional accountability in accordance with the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code.
 - Maintain confidentiality and information governance standards.
 - Report risks, incidents and concerns appropriately.
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7. Communication

The post holder will:

- Communicate sensitively and effectively with patients, families and carers regarding complex and emotional issues.
 - Use advanced communication skills when discussing diagnosis, prognosis, uncertainty and end-of-life decisions.
 - Build effective relationships with internal and external professionals.
 - Ensure accurate and timely documentation within electronic patient records.
 - Participate in virtual and face-to-face multidisciplinary meetings.
 - Promote effective communication across organisational boundaries.
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8. Information Governance and Digital Practice

The post holder will:

- Maintain accurate clinical records in accordance with professional standards.
 - Use electronic patient record systems effectively.
 - Maintain confidentiality and comply with UK GDPR and information governance requirements.
 - Ensure information is shared appropriately and securely.
 - Develop confidence in digital approaches to supporting patient care.
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9. Personal and Professional Development

The post holder will:

- Maintain professional registration and meet NMC requirements.
 - Take responsibility for personal learning and development.
 - Participate in appraisal and development processes.
 - Identify learning needs and undertake appropriate education and training.
 - Reflect on practice and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.
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General Responsibilities

Health and Safety

The post holder must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The post holder will promote equality, diversity and inclusion and ensure care is delivered without discrimination, respecting the needs, values and beliefs of all patients, families, carers and colleagues.

Infection Prevention and Control

The post holder will comply with infection prevention and control policies and contribute to maintaining a safe environment.

Flexibility

The post holder is expected to work flexibly across Pilgrims Hospices services and locations to meet service needs.

This job description reflects the current requirements of the role and may be reviewed and amended following consultation to reflect service developments.

Person Specification - Palliative Specialist Nurse

Essential	Desirable	Assessed By
Experience		
Significant experience as a registered nurse		
Experienced in the use of common IT software in the workplace to ECDL standard	Use of electronic records	Interview and Portfolio
Qualifications		
1 st level Registered Nurse		NMC Pin No
First degree in nursing/palliative care or associated clinical field or equivalent		CV, Interview and Portfolio
Formal mentorship qualification including as a practice supervisor or assessor		
Skills, Knowledge & Abilities		
Holistic assessment skills	Can demonstrate knowledge, skills and or abilities in a specific area of interest with regards to end of life care	Interview
Demonstrates specialist knowledge in the field of palliative care with a high degree of skills and abilities in managing advanced palliative symptoms		Interview, References and Portfolio
Can effectively impart and transfer knowledge to others and articulate a balanced evidence based review to support patients care plan / care plan reviews in internal and external multi-professional meetings		Interview and References
Demonstrates effective influencing skills		Interview and References
Effective time management skills		Interview and References
Demonstrates knowledge of the clinical audit cycle and can give examples of effective use of audit in improving practice		CV, Portfolio and Interview
Personal attributes		

Ability to meet the complex demands of the post, managing variability of tasks and work under pressure.		CV, References and Interview
Work independently with minimal supervision.		Interview and References
Act as a good role model at all times		Interview and References
Identify own limitations and formulate plan to address these		Interview
Demonstrates proactive traits towards work		Interview
Reliable, conscientious and act with integrity		Interview and References
Personal Circumstances		
Evidence of commitment to ongoing professional development		CV, Portfolio and References
Car owner/driver with full license		Full Valid UK Driving License
Flexible approach to working patterns and the changing needs of healthcare including 24/7 365 day working if required		Interview