



**INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE NOTES
FOR APPLICANTS**

Completed Application Forms must be received
prior to the relevant closing date and time

FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in applying for a position with Southern Area Hospices Services.

Should you require any additional information please contact the HR department at hr@southernareahospiceservices.org

Prior to completing and submitting the required application form we recommend that all applicants familiarise themselves with the information contained in this document.

IMPORTANT NOTE

All communication relating to your application will be sent to you via email. You should continually check your email account for correspondence including your junk mail.

DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT

Under the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), it is important you are aware that when you apply for employment with Southern Area Hospice Services, we will keep your information safe & secure.

The information that you provide us with and that obtained from other relevant sources will be used to process your application for employment. The personal information provided will be used confidentially. If you are successful in this recruitment process and take up employment with us, then the information will be used in the administration of your employment and to provide you with information about us or third parties. We may also use this information if there is a complaint or legal challenge. We may also use or pass to third parties' information to prevent or detect crime.

By signing the application form, you are consenting to the processing of personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Please refer to our privacy statement at <https://www.southernareahospiceservices.org/privacy-policy>.

Please note all information is held safely and securely with restricted access to designated personnel. Personal information will be confidentially destroyed in line with Southern Area Hospice Data Protection Policy if an individual is unsuccessful or leaves the organisation.

ABOUT SOUTHERN AREA HOSPICE SERVICES

Our Purpose

SAHS exists to provide the best quality of life for patients and their families through the equitable delivery of specialist palliative care to patients and carers residing in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area.

SAHS primarily meets the needs of those living with Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone Disease and AIDS.

Our Vision

Our ambition is to be recognised as:

- The provider of high-quality specialist palliative and end-of-life services, meeting the needs of patients and their families in the place of their choice.
- A progressive, continually improving and cost-effective organisation respected by those commissioning specialist services for our local population.
- An employer of choice for a highly committed and qualified group of staff.
- The local voice influencing regional and national policy decisions on palliative and end-of-life care.
- A trusted partner in the delivery of integrated care, maximising our contribution to care through the education and training of others.

Our Core Values

In carrying out its work SAHS is guided by six core values. These inform strategic and operational decisions and are our benchmarks for the attitudes and behaviours of staff and others working with us.

COMPASSION

We will show caring concern and understanding for everyone

INTEGRITY

We will be honest, open and fair in all our dealings

DIGNITY

We will treat everyone with dignity and respect

INNOVATION

We will promote innovation and embrace change

EXCELLENCE

We will strive for excellence in everything we do

EQUALITY

We will extend a welcome to all, irrespective of gender, age, religion, race, disability or sexual orientation.

OUR SERVICES

SAHS provides a range of specialist palliative services in a number of different settings. Services can be broadly described as specialist in-patient, hospital based/out-patient, day care or community-based services.

The in-patient unit is based at St John's House, Newry where there are 12 beds. Specialist care is provided by a multi-disciplinary team and includes medical and nursing care and physiotherapy. Emotional, practical and psychological support is provided by the social work team and the chaplaincy team provide spiritual support. Bereavement support is available.

Day care services are provided in 2 settings. There are day hospice therapy units in St John's House, Newry, and South Tyrone Hospital, Dungannon. In addition, the Donaldson Counselling and Therapy Centre, at St John's House Newry, provides a number of services on an appointment basis including counselling, complementary therapies, garment fitting and Benefits clinic.

Hospital-based services include Out-patient Clinics in Craigavon Area Hospital, Daisy Hill Hospital and South Tyrone Hospital. In addition, there are SAHS staff in the Specialist Palliative Care Teams in the hospitals.

Community Services include a specialist homecare palliative nurse covering the Armagh and Dungannon Districts and is an example of SAHS reaching out into the community.

In delivering our services we work closely with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

Information for Internal Candidates

SAHS supports and encourages staff to develop and reach their full potential. All advertised vacancies are open to current employees and agency workers.

As participation in a recruitment and selection exercise forms part of the professional development of employees, upon request, internal applicants will be provided with feedback following their interview.

SELECTION CRITERIA

It is essential that you read the Job Description and Personnel Specification carefully to allow you to demonstrate in your application form how you meet the essential criteria.

Essential Criteria

Candidates possessing all of the essential criteria as outlined in the relevant job description/person specification will be deemed eligible to be shortlisted for the position. It is therefore essential that applicants provide sufficient details, clearly demonstrating by way of example, how and to what extent they meet these requirements.

Applications will also be considered from applicants with relevant formal qualifications considered by the selection panel to be of an equivalent or higher standard to those required for the relevant role. If putting forward an equivalent qualification, please clearly detail the type of qualification and how an equivalency is justified.

If a candidate believes a qualification to be equivalent to the one required, the onus is on the candidate to provide the panel with the details of modules studied etc, so that a well-informed decision can be made. All claimed qualifications and equivalencies will, where possible, be verified.

Desirable Criteria

In addition, applicants should be aware that following the essential criteria-based eligibility sift, should it be necessary to further shortlist candidates to progress to the next stage of the selection process, desirable shortlisting criteria will be used as defined within the person specification.

It is therefore essential that applicants provide sufficient details, clearly demonstrating by way of example, how and to what extent they meet these requirements.

Important Information

All applicants must ensure that all relevant qualifications, experience and key skills, both essential and desirable, are clearly detailed by way of example within the application

submitted. The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant's post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience gained. Consequently, it is not sufficient to simply list your duties and responsibilities.

If sufficient detail regarding how both the essential and desirable criteria is met is not provided within the submitted application, the application may be rejected by the selection panel.

Please note that the details provided in a submitted application form (qualifications, experience, key skills) are the only basis from which the selection panel will determine eligibility for the post.

Only those applicants who appear from the information available at the closing date, to have met the essential and, if appropriate, desirable criteria will be progressed to the next stage of the selection process.

ABOUT SOUTHERN AREA HOSPICE SERVICES

SALARY AND BENEFITS

SAHS enjoys a reputation for the delivery of specialist, high quality hospice care and you benefit from being part of a small supportive unit which focusses on building expertise in palliative care. Staff to patient ratios are above those currently recommended in the NICE guidelines. SAHS continues to achieve Investors in People accreditation and have also achieved the Investors in Volunteers standard.

Salary

Depending on the role, salary is either benchmarked using Agenda for Change (AfC) paycales used in the NHS or using appropriate market rates. We regularly benchmark employment benefits against those of other relevant organisations in order to ensure that we remain competitive.

Annual Leave Entitlement

The holiday year runs from 1 April to 31 March each year and all full-time employees are entitled to five weeks annual leave and in addition 10 public/bank holidays. Part time staff are entitled to the pro rata equivalent of this.

Pension Scheme

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you may continue your membership of or re-join the HSC Pension Scheme. In all other cases, you will be automatically enrolled, have the right to opt in or be entitled to join a pension scheme provided by Southern Area Hospice Services. The category which you qualify under will be determined by the eligibility criteria under auto-

enrolment legislation. If you meet the criteria which requires you to be auto enrolled in the pension scheme, you will be entitled to opt out.

Training & Development

SAHS has a culture of continuous improvement. As well as regular mandatory training, you will receive regular updates necessary for your particular role in the organisation, including Clinical Supervision for professional care roles. In addition, annual performance reviews link people development to the growth of our people and their effectiveness in achieving the needs of the business. A Training & Development Forum oversees and allocates development opportunities in line with the budget availability each year.

Work Life Balance

SAHS has a number of policies and benefits in place to assist employees in maintaining and improving their work life balance and general wellbeing:

- Maternity/Paternity/Adoption/Shared Parental Leave
- Emergency Leave
- Parental Leave
- Occupational Sick Pay
- Flexible Working Policy
- Healthshield Healthcare Scheme
- Yearly Health Checks – for relevant staff
- Hepatitis B Vaccinations – for relevant staff
- Confidential Counselling Service
- Life Insurance
- Pension Scheme
- Subsidised Meals
- Paid Tea Breaks
- Employee Discount Schemes

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications

Where possible please complete an on-line application at www.southernareahospiceservices.org

Hard copies are acceptable if you do not have access to a computer.

The space and limitations on the application form are the same for all applicants and cannot be altered.

We do not accept CVs, letters or any other supplementary material in place of fully completed application forms. We reserve the right to reject an incomplete application form.

Applications submitted after the deadline on the closing date will not be considered. Please note that the onus is placed upon the applicant to ensure that the completed application is submitted successfully on or before the closing date. SAHS will not take into consideration the failure of external IT services to deliver completed forms by the closing date. Applicants using the postal service should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery.

Applicants with a disability who require assistance will be facilitated upon request.

Applicants who wish to receive an information pack in accessible formats are requested to advise the HR Team of their requirements as promptly as possible allowing for the fact that the closing date for receipt remains the same for all applicants.

Application Form

The application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the eligibility requirements as defined by the relevant essential and desirable criteria in the advertisement for the job.

Details of how you meet the relevant criteria, both essential and desirable, should be detailed clearly by way of example within the application form. For example, if GCSE English Language, Grade A to C or equivalent is required and only English is recorded or the grade is not recorded, the application may not be progressed. The shortlisting panel will not assume the grade if this is not clearly recorded on the application form.

Clearly demonstrate your personal involvement in any experience you, i.e. use 'I' rather than 'we' statements, e.g. 'I organised training', 'I managed a budget' etc. it is how **you** actually carried out a piece of work that the panel will be interested in.

Examples provided should be concise and relevant to the criteria. This is very important as the examples which you provide may be verified at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about your examples in detail if you are invited for an interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team or department.

The shortlisting panel will shortlist solely on the information provided by the applicant on the application form. Members of the selection panel will not make assumptions or, in the case of internal applicants, take into consideration information known to them personally about any applicant.

Shortlisting

After the closing date, the first stage in the selection process will be to conduct a shortlist of completed application forms against the essential and, where applicable, desirable criteria. Applicants who have not fully demonstrated on their application form how they meet each of the criteria will not be progressed to the next stage of the process.

Psychometric Assessments

Our assessment tools vary according to the competencies required for the job and sometimes involves psychometric assessments. Psychometric assessment tools provide additional information regarding particular areas of ability which cannot be objectively assessed from an interview alone. These assessments can range from Ability/aptitude tests, management in-try exercises and/or personality profile questionnaires.

Test results will have an impact on the recruitment decision, but they are not used in isolation. Instead, they are considered alongside the other information gathered during the selection process so that an overall view of role suitability can be formed.

Practice tests are available free on- line for applicants encountering psychometric assessment for the first time and we would encourage applicants to explore those before attending such assessments. All candidates within each specific recruitment exercise will be required to complete the exercises to ensure that all candidates are afforded the opportunity to be assessed on a fair and objective basis.

Interviews

Following the shortlisting exercise, it is intended that the selection process will involve a competency-based interview in accordance with the competencies required in the job description and person specification for the relevant post.

When reading through the core competencies for the role consider your personal experience in each of the areas. In your interview you should provide recent and relevant examples, which will give the interview panel an insight into your experience, skills and abilities in each competency area.

If this is your first experience of a competency-based interview, bear in mind that it does not require you to:

- Talk through previous jobs from start to finish
- Provide generalised information as to your background and experience, or
- Provide information that is not specifically relevant to the competence the question is designed to test

A competency-based interview does however require you to:

- Focus exclusively, in your responses, on your ability to fulfil the competences required for effective performance in the role, and
- Provide specific examples of your experience in relation to the required competence areas.
- The panel will ask you to provide specific examples from your past experience in relation to each of the competences. You should therefore come to the interview prepared to discuss in detail a range of examples which best illustrate your skills and abilities in each competence area.

Interview Schedules

It can be difficult to re-schedule interview for those who cannot attend at their allocated day or time but in the event that you are unavailable please contact the HR team and we will do our best to accommodate you at an alternative time. This may not always be possible given the commitments of members of the panel.

If an applicant fails to present him or herself for interview, it will be deemed that they have withdrawn from the selection process.

As a Charity with limited financial resources, we cannot contribute to travel expenses incurred by applicants invited for interview.

Selection Decisions

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit. The selection panel will assess candidates against the relevant criteria. Those candidates who meet the required standards will be deemed suitable for appointment in order of merit, with the highest scoring applicant ranked first. We will then allocate a candidate to a vacancy in the order listed and where a Reserve Register of suitable applicants is drawn up it will remain valid for 12 months from the date of selection.

Feedback

Due to the volume of applications continuously received we are unable to provide external candidates with individual feedback following interview. Each candidate will however be advised of the overall outcome of each stage of the selection process.

APPOINTMENT VERIFICATION

Applicants should note that being informed of the outcome of the selection panel is not in itself an offer of employment and it should not be treated as such. An applicant is deemed to have been offered a post only upon receipt of a formal written offer. A formal written offer of employment from Southern Area Hospice Services is conditional upon the following:

- Satisfactory Access NI checks where applicable

- Receipt of two satisfactory references from two recent employers
- Validation of qualifications where required (original certificates)
- Validation of eligibility to work in the UK
- Satisfactory pre-employment medical (where applicable)

In the event of failure to meet the criteria above, SAHS reserves the right to withdraw the offer.

KEEPING OF RECORDS

All applicant records are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act and to enable us to carry out our statutory duties under the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Southern Area Hospice Services is committed to the promotion and principle of equality of opportunity and as such it is our policy and practice to provide equality to all irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnerships status
- Having or not having dependents
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Any decisions regarding recruitment and selection, promotion, the provision of training or any other benefit will be based on merit alone.

SAHS monitors applications for employment in terms of community background, sex, marital status, racial group, disability, and sexual orientation. Monitoring demonstrates our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and enables us to measure the effectiveness of our equal opportunity policies.

Any answers you do provide will be treated in the strictest confidence, will not be provided to the shortlisting or interview panels and will not be used to make any unlawful decisions affecting this recruitment exercise or during the course of your employment with us. The information you provide will only be used for monitoring, investigations or proceedings under the requirements of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998.

