

**Job Description**

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| **Job Title** | Palliative Care Social Worker |
| **Department** | Family Support |
| **Hours** | 30 hours per week |
| **Responsible to** | Clinical Lead |
| **Responsible for** | N/A |

**About Us**

Since 1980, Prospect Hospice has provided dedicated end-of-life care service for people living in Swindon, Marlborough and northeast Wiltshire. We bring care, comfort and confidence, around the clock, every day of the year.

Our aim is to provide excellent, personalised and compassionate care for everyone in our community who is affected by a life-limiting illness. We work in close partnership with other organisations – specifically with local health and social care professionals – as well as local people. Working within our community allows us to lead, provide and influence care so that anyone affected by a life-limiting illness has access to the best possible support when and wherever they need it.

**Our Vision, Mission, Strategic Priorities and Values**

Our vision is a community where death is no longer a taboo and everyone lives and dies well.

Our mission is that we will work with and through others using our skills and expertise so that people have choice and support at the end of their life.

In order to make these a reality we have developed four strategic priorities which give direction to all that we do. Our values, guiding the work of the hospice focus on six areas. These apply to all who work on behalf of Prospect Hospice, including trustees.

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| * Secure the continuity of Prospect Hospice charity for our community for generations to come
* Take pride in being a great place to work and thrive
* Deliver bespoke specialist care that supports dignity and choice
* Use our expertise to educate and influence the delivery of excellence in end-of-life care
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**Our Team**

Our family support team, including an experienced team of social workers help patients, their families and carers adjust emotionally and practically to the impact of their illness. Our expert team provides family support, advocacy, practical planning and children’s advice, either at the hospice or in patients’ homes.

**Main Purpose & Scope**

The Social Worker is responsible for ensuring the provision of a coordinated family support and bereavement service for patients and those close to them living with a life-threatening illness, to ensure each person gets fair access to care and to maximise their comfort and well-being. To see whole people living within whole families and communities, understand the connections to life and support people to come to terms with what is happening to them and support them to live as they choose for as long as they can.

Act in an advisory position to other team members on social care issues and to the wider health and social care community, educating or acting as a mentor as appropriate.

Work directly with patients and their families, and collaboratively with multi-disciplinary colleagues. Complex issues will be identified and appropriate onward referral to more senior colleagues or external organisations will be initiated.

The post holder does not have any direct budgetary responsibility but is required to negotiate health and social care packages for patients with statutory bodies.

**Key Accountabilities and areas of responsibility**

**Patient and Family Care**

* To be proactive in triaging and responding to appropriate incoming referrals from the In-Patient Unit, Day Hospice, and Prospect Hospice Clinical Nurse Specialists and other agencies.
* Support patients and their families to deal with the impact of what’s happening to them, loss and bereavement and to have a good life and a good death.
* Provide pre and post bereavement support to families and patients.
* To assess and review the psychosocial, cultural and spiritual needs of service users, their carers and relatives which will contribute towards a holistic assessment within the multi-professional team with a recognition of the diversity, values and human rights that may influence the decisions of people who use the service.
* To work in partnership with patients and carers requiring specialist palliative or end of life care to identify and respond to changing psychosocial needs. Provide practical and emotional support.
* To undertake direct work with patients and their families using one to one, group and family techniques and involving other members of the multi-professional team as appropriate.
* Facilitate discussions that resolve chaos and conflict and negotiate solutions to disputes about how people will live.
* To implement appropriate strategies to enable the patient, family and carer/s to adjust to new and changing situations. Consider and co-develop alternative ways of meeting peoples‘ needs who choose not to take up existing services.
* To provide written assessment reports and negotiate health and social care packages, including nursing home placements.
* To provide information and advocacy services regarding welfare benefits.
* To assess the bereavement needs of family members and others close to the patient.
* To use effective interpersonal skills to communicate sensitive information where agreement and co-operation is required and where there may be barriers to understanding such as vulnerable and at risk patients.
* To advocate for and ensure that the holistic needs of patients and families are identified and met.
* To work independently in community settings, and assess, manage and document clinical risk.
* Design and undertake holistic assessment of patients and families to ensure that needs are met and support complex discharge.
* Make enquiries and arrange safeguards with people if they are at risk of abuse or neglect.

**Multidisciplinary Team**

* To provide consultations to other disciplines on psychosocial aspects of care, particularly issues related to Mental Capacity and Safeguarding.
* Work closely with the multidisciplinary team to plan patient and family care and provide psychosocial intervention.
* To maintain knowledge of local community services and to liaise with community agencies on behalf of patients and their families/carers.
* To participate in, and where appropriate, lead team meetings, discharge planning meetings and case review meetings.
* To have open and honest conversations with the wider team as well as with patients and families to ensure a person centred approach.
* To be a resource for the wider team, patients and families regarding wider social care policy and expertise.
* To implement effective communication and referral processes and enable effective multi-professional and multi-agency working to support the smooth transition of patients between services.
* To facilitate discussion between healthcare professionals, patients, and families around discharge planning and ongoing support.
* Actively participate in reflective practice and debrief sessions with team members – leading sessions as required.
* To actively contribute to the Patient Services clinical governance framework through participation in education, development, research and audit initiatives.

**Operational**

* To ensure patient and service records are recorded and maintained in accordance with Prospect Hospice Operational and Practice Guidelines.
* To develop and embed social work as an integral part of the in-patient and community teams to provide expert psychological support to patients and their families.
* To build relationships with wider social care, health and voluntary organisations to ensure patients and family’s needs are met.
* To develop and strengthen relations with Local Authority Teams and other organisations through attendance at meetings, training events and joint working, seeking always to promote the interests and rights of patients, families and carers.
* Identify opportunities for teaching and training opportunities at Prospect. Educate and deliver training and support to others, which will include psychosocial aspects of care and support, MCA, DoLS, Safeguarding and Best Interest decisions.
* Adhere to Prospect Hospice policies and social work professional standards.

**Service Improvement**

* To contribute to and participate in development of new initiatives in family support in line with team specific and organisational priorities.
* To be willing to develop and trial new ways of working to ensure best outcomes for patients and families. Planning and evaluation on practice.
* Identify opportunities for audit and research, innovation and quality improvement and take an active role in working with others to deliver improvement programmes and be committed to improving services.

**Professional**

* To formally and informally reflect on practice and performance with the Senior Social Worker.
* To know own limitations and where to access support and guidance.
* Continue to develop the emotional intelligence essential to undertake the role.
* To be professionally and legally accountable for all aspects of own work and to engage in professional self-development.
* To adhere to the Health and Care Professions Council Code of Conduct and comply with local and national standards of practice.
* To effectively utilise clinical supervision.
* To develop personal and professional skills and knowledge relevant to palliative care social work. This should include yearly attendance at the Association of Hospice and Specialist Palliative Care Social Workers conference and/or regional meetings.
* To update and develop knowledge of statutory and legislative changes which impact on the lives of patients, their carer(s) and family.
* To act as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO) at Prospect Hospice for safeguarding children issues and alerts (Family Support Team Leader fulfils the (DSO) function).
* To formally supervise social workers and social work students within the team as required and to ensure that informal supervision is available for wider team members of hospice staff and volunteers is available.
* To always act as a role model and ambassador for the Prospect Hospice.

**Key Contacts**

* Directors/Heads of corporate functions and senior managers across the organisation
* Stakeholders/Partners including Swindon Borough Council
* Suppliers/agencies and other bodies, commercial and non-commercial, relevant to the role and purpose of the post.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We are committed to creating a truly equal and inclusive workplace, and we value diversity of thought, ability and individuality. Ours is a learning culture. We know that we can only retain our position at the forefront of excellence in end of life care by learning, reflecting and innovating, and we expect all our people to pursue continuous professional development.

This applies to both service delivery and to our own people practices. You will be willing and able to demonstrate commitment to our equality, diversity and inclusion policy and practices at all times.

**Safeguarding**

It is the responsibility of the post holder to ensure up-to-date knowledge of and to follow the legislation and guidance regarding Safeguarding Adults and Children as stated in the Hospice Safeguarding Policy. This applies to all staff and all staff should ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and attend the mandatory training as required.

**Health and Safety**

Under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, it is the duty of every employee to:

* To take reasonable care of themselves and others at work
* To co-operate with the Prospect as far as is necessary to enable them to carry out their legal duty
* Not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with anything provided, including personal protective equipment, for health and safety or welfare at work.

**Infection Prevention and Control**

All staff are expected to comply with infection prevention and control policies and for protecting themselves and others against infection risks and ensuring a clean safe environment is maintained. Whether you are in a clinical or non-clinical role you are expected to comply with current infection control policies and procedures and to report any concerns or issues to your line manager. All staff undertaking patient care activities must attend infection control training and updates as required by the hospice.

**Person Specification**

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| Criteria Category | Requirements | Essential (E)Desirable (D) |
| Education and Qualifications | Recognised Social Work Qualification | E |
|  | Registration with the Health and Care Professions Council | E |
|  | Full driving licence | E |
|  | Relevant post-qualifying training or experience (for example: palliative care, family work, counselling, PQ, professional supervision) | E |
|  | Able to travel between Hospice and peoples homes, in Swindon, North Wiltshire, and into Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire | E |
|  | Practice Teacher/Educator qualification | D |

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| Criteria Category | Requirements | Essential (E)Desirable (D) |
| Experience and Knowledge  | Knowledge of relevant voluntary and statutory agencies and their perspectives relating to palliative care | E |
|  | Robust knowledge of current legislation relevant to role including NHS & CCA- MCA/DOLS/Carers legislation etc | E |
|  | 3 years post qualifying social work experience of direct work with individuals and families | E |
|  | Understanding and experience of multi-disciplinary team working | E |
|  | Experience in working within the Mental Capacity Act, and other relevant legislative frameworks | E |
|  | Experience and confidence gained in safeguarding work | E |
|  | Experience and confidence in supervising social workers and other professional staff | E |
|  | Experience in, and willingness to, supervise social work student placements | E |
|  | Experience gained in working with adults. Experience of working with children and families | E |
|  | Experience of specialist social work input to and chairing of case conferences | E |
|  | Experience of providing specialist social work advice and support to the multi professional team | E |
|  | Supporting events for bereaved families | E |
|  | Delivery of education and training events | E |
|  | Experience in working across a range of client groups and settings, e.g. learning Disability/Mental Health/ Hospice/Hospital | D |
|  | Working with people who are bereaved, or coping with loss | D |

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| Criteria Category | Requirements | Essential (E)Desirable (D) |
| Skills | Enhanced communication and interpersonal skills and to be able to use these effectively in a variety of settings, with individuals and groups, children and adults | E |
|  | Well developed, needs-led assessment, planning and negotiating skills, to ensure high quality assessment and timely outcomes for people | E |
|  | Ability to work effectively in an emotionally stressful environment | E |
|  | Ability to be creative and supportive in the role of Social Worker, and appropriately apply a range of social work methods and interventions | E |
|  | Able to plan and manage own workload and activities | E |
|  | Intermediate IT skills | E |
|  | Skills in counselling, therapeutic work, and group work | D |

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| Criteria Category | Requirements | Essential (E)Desirable (D) |
| Personal Qualities | Commitment to and ability to demonstrate Prospect Hospice values and behaviours at all times | E |
|  | Able to maintain the highest professional standards at all times, and act as a true ambassador for the Hospice | E |
|  | To be authentic, open, honest and transparent | E |
|  | Have a track record of working inclusively and a genuine appreciation of the value of diversity | E |

**Scope of Job Description**

This job description is a guide to the work you will be required to undertake. It is not an exhaustive list of the duties but gives a general indication of work undertaken which may vary in detail in the light of changing demands and priorities. Substantive changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

*This job description does not form part of your Contract of Employment*