



**Patient  
Advocacy  
Service**

**Advocacy Officer x 5  
Dublin, Cork, Galway,  
or Donegal**

**Candidate Pack**

V1.0

**September 2022**

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# The Patient Advocacy Service

## What We Do

The Patient Advocacy Service provides a free, independent, and confidential service to support users of public acute hospitals or HSE Operated nursing homes making or intending to make a formal complaint through the Health Service Executive (HSE) investigation process "Your Service Your Say" and following a patient safety incident.

The Patient Advocacy Service is provided by the **National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities (NAS)** and is funded by the Department of Health. The Patient Advocacy Service contract was awarded to NAS after a competitive tendering process and became operational in October 2019. A further contract for the Patient Advocacy Service has been awarded to NAS by the Department of Health. As the Service continues to grow and develop over the duration of the new contract, we are adding to our dynamic team.

## Advocacy Officer Role

The Advocacy Officer role is an essential position within the Patient Advocacy Service. The successful candidates will support the delivery of an independent advocacy service for users of public acute hospitals and HSE-operated nursing homes who wish to make a formal complaint under the HSE investigation process 'Your Service Your Say' or following a patient safety incident.

The key responsibilities of the Advocacy Officer are to provide information, advice, and empowerment advocacy, via the National Phone Line, by email and in person, to service users wishing to make a complaint in relation to care that they have received in a public acute hospital or HSE Nursing home

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under the HSE's "Your Service Your Say" complaints process. The appointed candidates will provide an excellent, independent, confidential, and high quality first point of contact to service users. They will also offer support to their team and Team Lead in the development of the Service and reporting on key performance indicators. The successful candidates will be expected to effectively network and promote the service, build relationships, and engage with and influence health and social care stakeholders throughout the country.

It is a requirement of employment that the successful candidates successfully complete the QQI level 7 accredited Patient Safety and Complaints Advocacy Training Programme, within 12 months of commencement of employment.

## Our Vision, Mission, and Core Values

### Vision Statement

The Patient Advocacy Service recognises the right of all people to support, guidance and information when issues arise in relation to their care and treatment which may lead to their wish to complain about their treatment or care or seek answers in the aftermath of a patient safety incident.

We identify the core human rights as being dignity, autonomy, equality, and independence.

### Mission Statement

The Patient Advocacy Service is free, independent and confidential. We support and empower service users of public acute hospitals and HSE-operated nursing homes through the (i) HSE Complaints Process 'Your Service Your Say' and (ii) in the aftermath of patient safety incidents.

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## Values

The Patient Advocacy Service has adopted five core values which underpin its work.

### **1 Independence**

We work with the person independently of others and free from all conflicts of interest. The advocacy process is led and guided by the person. The Patient Advocacy Service is entirely independent of the HSE.

### **2 Autonomy**

We support the right of the person to have their complaints processed in a balanced, fair and transparent manner and support the right of the person to self-direction/determination (i.e. to be in control of their own life) and to make informed decisions based on their will and preferences.

### **3 Equality/Citizenship**

We support the right of the person to assert and enjoy their human rights, to participate in society as an equal citizen and to fulfil their full potential within a life of their own choosing.

### **4 Respect**

We work with the person in a way which demonstrates respect for them as an individual and for their privacy, dignity and autonomy.

### **5. Empowerment**

We aim to empower a person to make a complaint or engage with a review process and seek answers when things go wrong, and to facilitate a person to be an active participant in decisions which affect their life, through the way in which the advocacy process is carried out as well as the outcomes it seeks to achieve.

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Are you interested in supporting these core values and working as part of an expanding and dynamic team? Read more below about the role, job description and required competencies.

## Job description

### Reports to

Advocacy Team Lead

### Responsibilities

#### **Providing a First Point of Contact for Service Users**

- Access to the patient advocacy service is primarily through its national phone line and as an Advocacy Officer you will act as a first point of contact for those looking to access our service.
- Provide an excellent, independent, confidential, and high quality first point of contact to service users primarily by phone, but also by email and in person.
- Provide independent empowerment advocacy for patients and/or their representatives by empowering them to know their rights in making a complaint to raise concerns and seek answers to their healthcare.
- Providing accurate and comprehensive information and support to patients or their representatives around the 'Your Service Your Say Process' and/or patient safety incidents and Nursing Home complaints process.
- Assisting people with understanding and securing their rights to complaints management under 'Your Service Your Say' stage 2 to stage 4.
- Record all service user contact accurately on the case management system.
- Operate according to the Patient Advocacy Service Code of Practice and other policies and procedures at all times.
- Support patients to effect changes that ensure their rights, dignity, choices, and decisions are safeguarded.

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## **Case Load Management**

- Effectively and professionally manage an individual case load.
- Open and manage advocacy cases as allocated by the Advocacy Team Lead.
- Ensure the accurate and timely recording of casework activities for all service users, ensuring compliance with GDPR, the organisation's Confidentiality Policy and case management requirements.
- Ensure the Advocacy Team Lead is fully informed at all times of the progress of cases.
- Use the Patient Advocacy Service case management system to manage and report on contact and case work.
- Keep up to date records of all activities in relation to individual enquiries and cases on the case management system.
- Manage cases efficiently so that they are processed and completed according to time standards, targets and other organisational requirements.
- Work with management, communication and administrative sections of the organisation in reviewing and developing the access process and case management system.

## **Contributing to the effectiveness of the Organisation**

- Adhere to all Patient Advocacy Service manuals and standards.
- Seek and evaluate service user feedback to understand whether needs are being met and to plan any necessary adjustments.
- Participate in quality assurance systems and practices.
- Undertake further personal development as discussed and agreed with the Team Lead and keep own knowledge up to date.
- Take responsibility for personal learning and development, to support the learning and development of others and the whole organisation.
- Contribute to the evaluation of the Patient Advocacy Service.
- Comply with all appropriate policies and procedures.



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- Raise awareness of the Patient Advocacy Service through active promotions and networking opportunities.
  - Identify and report on systemic issues.
  - Highlight gaps in policy that are affecting access to services.
  - Produce information and written reports for the Advocacy Team Lead as required.
  - Liaise with other staff to provide a distinct and specialised service.
  - Undertake any other duties or projects equal with the nature and grade of this post as required.
  - Work in a manner that facilitates inclusion and diversity.
  - Organise and administer own work to ensure that it is accurate and meets quality targets, KPIs reasonable deadlines and reporting requirements.
  - Participate in mentoring activities.
  - Develop and share knowledge of relevant legislation, appeals/redress mechanisms and social policy and practices in relation to advocating on behalf of patients.
  - Operate within a Performance Management Development System.
  - Undertake other duties assigned by the Advocacy Team Lead or management team.

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## Person Specification

### Minimum Educational Qualification and Experience

- Educated to graduate level in one or more of the following areas: social sciences, humanities, law, training and development. Equivalent experience and training will also be considered.
- An Advocacy Qualification is desirable.

### Essential Knowledge and Skills

- **Specialist Knowledge** - An understanding and knowledge of the philosophy, background and operation of patient advocacy, patient safety and the 'Your Service Your Say' Complaint's process *and/or* understanding and knowledge of the legislative framework within which Nursing Homes operate i.e., HIQA Regulations, Health Act 2007 and HSE Safeguarding Policy.
- Understanding of and commitment to human rights and diversity.
- Ability to research, analyse and evaluate information.
- Ability to document information in a clear and precise manner and in compliance with data protection and confidentiality requirements.
- Ability to organise one's own workload, and to plan and set goals.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team.
- Excellent interpersonal skills including communication skills, influencing skills and negotiations skills.
- Ability to provide a high quality and professional service to service users on the national phone line.
- Ability to engage with others and develop positive relationships.
- Openness to support and feedback.
- Ability to keep the service at the centre of all processes.
- Determined, positive and outcome focused attitude.
- Ability to work well under pressure and an ability to adapt to change.

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## Desirable Knowledge and Skills

- Experience and ability to adapt to a fast-paced and evolving environment.
- Good experience and understanding of IT systems, particularly Case Management Systems.
- Demonstrated ability to establish effective working relationships with stakeholders.

## Required Competencies

The Patient Advocacy Service operates a competency-based application and interview process, however there may be skills testing or a presentation involved in latter stages (this will be made known to those shortlisted).

The application form will ask you to write about your experiences in your career to date under several competencies and indicators. Use the below indicators to help you shape your responses, ensuring you clearly list employers (if applicable) and times of the experiences. ***\*Please note that failure to complete each competency in Section 8 of the application form will deem the application as incomplete.***

Competency	Indicator (not exhaustive)
1. Specialist knowledge & Self-Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a reasonable breadth of knowledge about how the health service &amp; hospitals and/or nursing homes work.</li> <li>• Understands the range of potential patient concerns from patient issues to complaints.</li> <li>• Broad understanding of the context of advocacy.</li> <li>• Operates from values deeply grounded in a commitment to human rights and inclusion.</li> <li>• Constantly learns from experience and takes the initiative to develop new skills and expertise through research, learning and training.</li> </ul>
2. Effective Communication & Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to explain, advocate and express facts and ideas in a convincing way.</li> <li>• Active, empathetic, and impartial listening skills.</li> <li>• Expresses self clearly and confidently in both written (email/letter) and oral communication (telephone/in person).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information to all stakeholders in a clear and confident manner.</li> <li>• Builds and maintains good working relationships with colleagues and other external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Engages with a support and supervision process in an open and learning orientated manner.</li> </ul>
3. Analysis & Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively deals with a wide range of information sources, investigating all relevant issues.</li> <li>• Analysis's information accurately and can process a lot of information in a reasonable timeframe.</li> <li>• Ability to absorb, analyse and evaluate information from a variety of sources.</li> <li>• Capacity to deliver information impartially, accurately and clearly to all service users.</li> <li>• Makes recommendations on the basis of analysis and evaluation.</li> <li>• Treats personal information in strict confidence.</li> </ul>
4. Planning & Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates efficient use of own time and maximises resources available to them.</li> <li>• Priorities well at short, medium and long-term levels.</li> <li>• Has demonstrated ability to successfully plan and organise events.</li> <li>• Is flexible and is adaptable to changing circumstances.</li> </ul>
5. Teamwork & Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work co-operatively within a group and to achieve goals in a respectful manner.</li> <li>• Understands and is tolerant of differing needs and viewpoints.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works well with all stakeholders, both internal and external.</li> </ul> <p>Actively helps and supports others to achieve team goals.</p>
Competency (continued)	Indicator (not exhaustive)
6. Drive & Commitment to Patient Advocacy Service Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can demonstrate commitment to values similar or the same as the Patient Advocacy Service Core Values of Independence, Autonomy, Equality/Citizenship, Respect and Empowerment in personal and/or professional life.</li> <li>• Puts the complainant's issues and concerns at the centre of the advocacy process.</li> <li>• Ensures the service user is at the heart of all service provided.</li> <li>• Adapts quickly to changing circumstances.</li> <li>• Is personally honest and trustworthy and can be relied upon.</li> <li>• Through leading by example, fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity.</li> </ul>

## Terms & Conditions

Full Time (35 hours per week) (Contract of Indefinite Duration – subject to continued funding)

### Location

Dublin, Cork, Galway, or Donegal

The successful candidates can elect to be based at one of these locations and will be required to attend that office base one to two days per week in line with our organisational Blended Working Model which is being trialled at present. This will be subject to review based on the operational needs of the organisation and the outcome of the trial of blended work. Where the successful candidate does not have an appropriate space to work from home other local arrangements can/will be explored.

The successful candidates will be required to attend the Patient Advocacy Service National Office for two days per week for an initial six-week period.

### Salary

€32,937 to €42,573

It is expected that all new entrants to the Patient Advocacy Service will be appointed at point one of the salary scale, however the Patient Advocacy Service operates an incremental credit process for appointments higher than point one. This process is applicable to new entrants into the Patient Advocacy Service. Incremental credit criteria, based on the competencies for the role, are assessed against employment history as laid out in the application form only. A request for incremental credit from a successful candidate must be made within the first 3 months of employment.

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## Pension

A company pension scheme is in place, and membership is obligatory upon commencement. Employee contribution; 5% of salary, Employer contribution; 7% of salary. The Patient Advocacy Service has a normal retirement age linked to the State Pension Age (currently 66).

## Annual Leave

23 days per leave year (January to December)

## Requirements

- The position entails some travel; therefore, access to use of a car, a current full driver's licence, valid car insurance and a valid NCT certificate are essential requirements for the post. You will be asked to provide employer indemnity by way of a Letter of Indemnity from your motor insurance company.
- The Advocacy Officer will be asked to obtain Garda Clearance before they begin work.



## How to Apply

- A relevant application form can be accessed at [www.patientadvocacyservice.ie/about-us/careers/](http://www.patientadvocacyservice.ie/about-us/careers/)
- Applicants must meet the minimum criteria for the role set out in the person specification and possess all required competencies and will be shortlisted solely on the basis of information provided in their completed application form.
- Curriculum Vitae (CVs), late, incomplete or hand-written applications **will not** be considered. Applications must be typed.
- Please contact [recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie](mailto:recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie) if you have any special requirements in relation to completing the application form.
- Closing Date for receipt of applications: **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022 @ 2pm.**
- Please email the completed application form (as an attachment) to [recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie](mailto:recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie) (stating 'AO' in the subject line).
- Canvassing will disqualify.
- A national panel may be formed of qualified candidates from which Advocacy Officer posts which arise within the next 12 months will be filled, should vacancies arise in this period.
- Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by email.

**The Patient Advocacy Service is an Equal Opportunities Employer.**