



**Patient  
Advocacy  
Service**

# **Team Lead**

**Candidate Pack**

**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.

## Team Lead Role

The Team Lead role is an essential position within the Patient Advocacy Service. The successful candidate 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.

As an Advocacy Team Lead, you will manage a team of Patient Advocates and Advocacy Officers in the delivery of a quality patient advocacy service which supports users of public acute hospitals and HSE Operated Nursing Homes and Nursing Homes operated under arrangement pursuant to S.38 of the Health Act 2004 that come within the complaint's mechanism under

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the Health Act 2004 (Your Service Your Say) and in the aftermath of Patient Safety Incidents. You will support the Service Manager in the development of the operations and services of the organisation. In limited circumstances you will provide direct advocacy support in complex situations.

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.

### Values

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

#### **1 Independence**

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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.

[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

Service Manager

### Responsibilities

#### **Staff Support and Supervision**

- Responsible for the day-to-day operational management of a team of Patient Advocates/Advocacy Officers in conjunction with the Service Manager.
- Responsible for the line management of a team of Advocates/Advocacy officers.
- Ensure the delivery of a high-quality Advocacy Service in accordance with the organisation's Code of Practice, values, policies and procedures.
- Mentor and coach Advocates and Advocacy Officers for optimum performance and achievement of agreed targets.
- Develop and maintain a safe and supportive working environment for the Advocacy team.
- Safeguard the independence of advocacy in the delivery of the advocacy service.
- Monitor the team's compliance with data protection legislation requirements.
- Support the development and sharing of specialist expertise within and across advocacy teams.
- Develop systems for review of cases within the team and proactively seek to identify process improvements.
- Encourage and support the advocacy team's active engagement in social policy and identification of issues that arise for service users.

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These can inform requirements for systemic changes in Department of Health service delivery and policy.

- Oversee the equitable distribution of work and assign tasks through a planned approach with other team leads and the Service Manager.
- Monitor and audit case management entries of the advocacy team.
- Induction and training of new Advocates/Advocacy Officers.
- Identify staff development, mentoring and training needs of the advocacy Team including new skills, information, legal, safety systems etc. and make recommendations.
- Develop, coordinate and ensure implementation of individual training plans.

### **Support Service Manager**

- Produce, analyse and present service activity data on a regular basis.
- Assist in developing and reporting on measures that demonstrate the effectiveness of outcomes achieved by the service.
- Assist with the allocation of staff resources to ensure the service reaches those most in need of advocacy support.
- Collaborate with other advocacy Team Leads in the implementation of quality standards, staff training and development and service delivery initiatives.
- Assist with financial planning and monitoring as required.
- Assist with the development and oversee the implementation of a communication strategy.

### **Case Load Management**

- Take direct responsibility for a defined caseload as required/directed by the Service Manager, particularly cases that require a high level of experience and expertise.
- Support service users to effect change that ensure their rights, dignity, choices and decisions are safeguarded.

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- Provide accurate and comprehensive information and support to Patients or their representatives around the 'Your Service Your Say' complaints process within public acute hospitals and/or Nursing Homes and in the aftermath of Patient Safety Incidents.
  - Keep up to date records of all activities in relation to individual 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.
  - Ensure support for advocacy teams including additional clinical supervision if required.

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

- Follow all Patient Advocacy Service manuals and standards.
- Seek and evaluate client feedback to understand whether needs are being met and plan any necessary adjustments.
- Undertake further personal development as discussed and agreed with the line manager and keep 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 advocacy service.
- Comply with all appropriate policies and procedures.
- 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 the service.
- Liaise with other staff to provide a distinct and specialised service.
- Work in a manner that facilitates inclusion and diversity.



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- 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.
  - Collaboration with staff of the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities as requested.
  - 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.
  - Participate in working groups/committees/ fora as requested by the Service Manager.
  - Chair, co-ordinate, attend and manage a range of meetings both internally and externally as required.
  - Undertake any other duties or projects equal with the nature and grade of this post as required.

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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.
- Minimum 2 years' experience of staff support/mentoring.

### Desirable Educational Qualification and Experience

- Postgraduate degree in management, leadership, healthcare or similar
- Advocacy Qualification

### 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 complex information and come to well-balanced judgements.
- 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, plan and set goals for short, medium and long-term goals.
- Ability to work on your own initiative to develop opportunities for the service.
- Experience of motivating, supporting and coaching staff.
- Ability to identify training needs.

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- Ability to respect and promote people's right to make informed decisions/choices.
  - Excellent Leadership Skills.
  - Ability to work effectively as part of a team.
  - High degree of person integrity.
  - Ability to keep the service user at the center of all processes.
  - Determined, positive and outcome focused attitude.
  - Ability to work well under pressure and an ability to adapt to change.
  - Excellent interpersonal skills including communication skills, influencing skills and negotiations skills.
  - Ability to engage with others and develop positive relationships.
  - Openness to support and feedback.
  - Ability to give presentations to a variety of audiences.
  - Ability to report effectively on your work.

### Desirable Knowledge and Skills

- 2 + years patient care experience or in similar role.
- Experience of complaints advocacy and/or complaints management within public acute hospitals and/or a Nursing Home setting.
- Experience and ability to adapt to a fast-paced and evolving environment.
- A good understanding of public service administrative, finance and governance.
- Experience of managing and leading a team.
- 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.

Competency	Indicator (not exhaustive)
1. Specialist knowledge & Self-Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the context for advocacy &amp; Patient Complaints Advocacy Service in particular.</li> <li>• Contributes to the development of appropriate standards, policies &amp; procedures for PCAS.</li> <li>• Operates from values deeply grounded in a commitment to human rights and inclusion.</li> <li>• Demonstrates and uses a breadth of knowledge across a wide and diverse subject matter.</li> <li>• Develops new ways of understanding or doing things.</li> </ul>
2. Effective Communication & Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is skilful in facilitating and supporting the individual's communication process.</li> <li>• Writes reports/memos that are accurate, well-structured and clear.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds and presents a compelling positive vision for the service.</li> <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>• Adopts a structured &amp; process orientated approach to supervision &amp; support of other advocates.</li> </ul>
3. Analysis, Evaluation & Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively deals with a wide range of information sources, investigating all relevant issues.</li> <li>• Collects all relevant information in a structured and comprehensive manner.</li> <li>• Identifies patterns &amp; trends in data &amp; draws appropriate objective conclusions.</li> <li>• Comes to a balanced judgement that reflects all the key factors &amp; perspectives in an issue or situation.</li> </ul>
4. Planning, Coordination & Service Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans ahead to make best use of the available advocacy resources.</li> <li>• Prioritises well between competing demands.</li> <li>• Balances own time well between planned activity and responding in a timely manner to issues that arise.</li> <li>• Identifies and pursues opportunities to promote the service.</li> </ul>

<p>5. Teamwork &amp; Collaboration</p>	<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>• Develops working relationships based on mutual respect and positive intentions.</li> <li>• Works well with all stakeholders, both internal and external.</li> <li>• Actively helps and supports others to achieve team goals.</li> <li>• Identifies and addresses conflict in a timely and constructive manner.</li> </ul>
<p>Competency (continued)</p>	<p>Indicator (not exhaustive)</p>
<p>6. Drive &amp; Commitment to Patient Advocacy Services Core Values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can demonstrate commitment to values similar or the same as the Patient Advocacy Services 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>• Takes the initiative to progress issues &amp; address obstacles.</li> <li>• Shows fairness &amp; consistency in how he/she deals with others.</li> <li>• Adapts quickly to changing circumstances.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintains composure in emotionally fraught or difficult circumstances.</li></ul>
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## Terms & Conditions

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

### Location

Dublin or Cork

The successful candidate 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 position may entail occasional travel throughout the country; therefore, a willingness to travel to regional sites as required is necessary.

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

### Salary

€47,675 to €53,022

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

24 days per leave year (January to December)

## Requirements

1. 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.
2. The Team Lead will be asked to obtain Garda Clearance before they begin work.

## How to Apply

1. A relevant application form can be assessed at [www.patientadvocacyservice.ie/about-us/careers/](http://www.patientadvocacyservice.ie/about-us/careers/)
2. 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.
3. Curriculum Vitae (CVs), late, incomplete or hand-written applications **will not** be considered. Applications must be typed.
4. Please contact [recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie](mailto:recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie) if you have any special requirements in relation to completing the application form.
5. Closing Date for receipt of applications: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022 @ 2pm.
6. Please email the completed application form (as an attachment) to [recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie](mailto:recruitment@patientadvocacyservice.ie) (stating 'TL' in the subject line).
7. Canvassing will disqualify.
8. A national panel may be formed of qualified candidates from which Team Lead posts which arise within the next 12 months will be filled, should vacancies arise in this period.
9. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by email.

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