

### 1. JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title** Healthcare Science Support Worker Higher Level

**Department(s)** Pathology

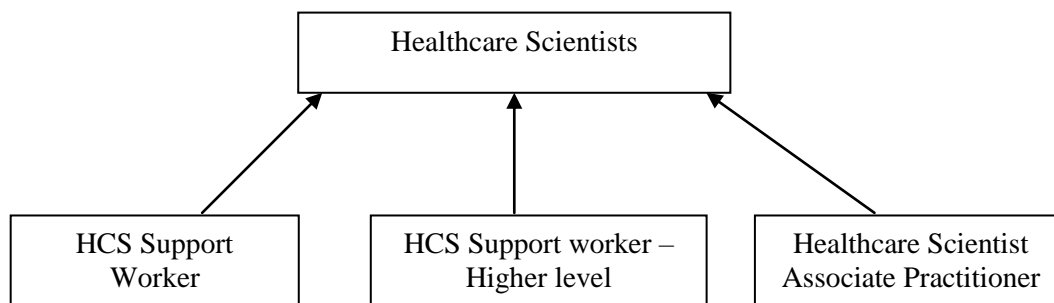
**Job Holder Reference** A-CS-PTB-017

**No of Job Holders** 3

### 2. JOB PURPOSE

- Collects and prepares materials and clinical specimens for analysis and safe disposal of clinical waste.
- Registers patient related information onto Laboratory Information System or other manual systems.
- Deals with reception and telephone queries from staff from other departments and external agencies.
- Provides assistance to Healthcare Scientists for provision of a laboratory service.
- Performs specific laboratory tests with senior staff available for reference.
- Assists in the training of new or less experienced staff.

### 3. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



*See appendix for complete organisation chart*

**4. DIMENSIONS**

The Clinical Laboratories in NHS Forth Valley (NHSFV) comprises Biochemistry, Haematology (including Blood Transfusion), Microbiology (including Virology) and Pathology (including Cytology and Mortuary) Services.

A comprehensive, analytical, interpretive, and clinical advisory laboratory-based service is provided to:

- Hospital In-patient, Out-patient, and Day Care Units.
- General Practitioners in Primary Care and Community Health Services and Hospitals.
- Public Health Medicine.
- Occupational Health
- Procurators Fiscal at Stirling, Falkirk and Alloa

The Laboratories support point of care testing directly in wards and clinics and at local Health Centres e.g., one stop breast clinics, Anticoagulant clinics, Genito Urinary Medicine, Male infertility clinics, diagnosis of Cystic Fibrosis,

In addition, the services collaborate in a range of research and development and clinical audit projects with clinicians and other Healthcare professionals and provide research and development support to drug and diagnostic companies.

A staff of 180 provide services to a Forth Valley population of 265,000 with a total of more than 5 million investigations per annum (> 1.2 million samples). Approximately 50% of the investigations are carried out for hospital-based patients and 50% for the 210 General Practitioners in around 56 locations. Population screening programmes include Cervical Cytology, Blood Borne Virus Testing (e.g., antenatal screening) and other investigations link to programmes of health improvement across the county.

All acute aspects of the service operate 24 hours each day 365 days per year.

The service is provided by various staff including Healthcare scientists in Healthcare Science, Administrative and Clerical Staff, Cytology Screeners, HCS Support workers, Medical Staff, Mortuary Staff, Nursing Staff and Phlebotomy Staff.

**5. KEY DUTIES / RESPONSIBILITIES****Policies and Procedures**

- Adherence to policies and procedures relevant to all areas of work in accordance with Departmental, Directorate, Hospital and regulatory requirements. These would include the following:
  - All Standard Operating Procedures
  - Quality Management Policies
  - External Quality Assessment and Internal Quality Control
  - Laboratory and Hospital Health and Safety
  - Risk Management
  - NHSFV policies and current data protection legislation

**Technical Duties**

- Work under the supervision of a HCPC Registered Healthcare Scientist or Senior Mortuary Staff.
- Prepare samples for analysis and register the request ensuring accuracy of sample identification and documentation.
- Centrifuge and separate samples into secondary tubes for testing.
- Respond to questions and enquiries by page, telephone and in person. If unable to assist, direct enquiries to the appropriate staff member.
- Organise samples for storage and retention in accordance with Department Policy and Procedure.
- Process samples being referred to reference laboratories outwith the Hospital and accurately document these transfers with adherence to packaging and transport policy and procedures.
- May be required to prepare and assist with secondary testing e.g., basic tests to identify pathogenic bacteria and tests to identify antibiotic sensitivity.
- Loading and unloading samples onto automated analysers including recognition of samples requiring further tests according to Standard Operating Procedures.
- Manage time and resources effectively in carrying out all duties of the post.
- Operation of Autoclave for sterilisation of samples and Bacteriology media.
- Store samples and file slide material.
- Carry out relevant administrative and clerical duties.
- May be required to file and mail laboratory reports.
- Monitor and record stock levels.
- Prepare basic chemical solutions.
- Safe disposal of specimens and other consumables.
- Perform delegated duties as agreed with senior laboratory staff.

**Information Resources**

- Keyboard skills important with high levels of speed and accuracy when using the laboratory computer to input patient/specimen details and when accessing patient information.
- Register the request ensuring accuracy of sample identification and documentation.
- May be required to produce lists of outstanding investigations.
- Registers patient related information and sample identification onto the Laboratory Information System or other manual systems.

**Supervisory**

- Demonstrates technical duties to other less experienced staff.
- Provides advice and guidance when required.

**Quality Control and Quality Management**

- May be required to perform specific simple blood tests and perform the quality control for these with senior staff available for reference.
- Record keeping of maintenance equipment e.g., centrifuges and fridges.
- Maintaining records of laboratory fridges and freezers operating temperatures.
- Responsible for communicating QC failure or instrument malfunction to line manager.

**Research and Development**

- Participates in audits as necessary.
- May process and store samples for clinical trials.

**Teaching/Training**

Acts as a mentor to less experienced Medical Laboratory Assistants.

**6. SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT****Systems**

- Ensure the integrity of the patient database within the laboratory computer system by accurate registration of patient demographics and request details.
- Operation of sample tracking system and compliance with sample storage, retrieval and disposal procedures.
- Complies with Quality Management System.
- Queries the Laboratory Computer system for patient information.
- Works to safe standards as detailed in Containment of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Risk Assessments and Laboratory Health and Safety Procedures

**Equipment**

A wide range of equipment is used to perform duties with costs ranging from £100 to £100,000, examples of a few of these are:

- Use of hospital and laboratory IT systems to input patient data and process all requests.
- Use of computer to produce labels and worksheets from varied software and laboratory IT system.
- Operates laboratory analysers under supervision of qualified staff
- Operate and perform instrument checks on autoclaves to decontaminate hospital high-risk waste on a daily basis.
- Maintenance, cleaning and operation of fridges, freezers, balances, analysers and centrifuges used by themselves and others.
- Use of manual and automated pipettes.
- Use of photocopiers, printers, scanners, date and time logging equipment.

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**ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK**

- Follows Standard Operating Procedures with senior staff available for reference.
- Follows established acceptance and rejection criteria for matching patient request and samples.
- Follows all related Directorate Policies and Procedures.
- Uses own initiative to prioritise urgent work.
- Ensure appropriate tests are requested for defined clinical conditions.
- Ensures appropriate stock levels are maintained.

**8. COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**

- Responds to telephone enquiries and when appropriate, directs enquiries to other senior staff.
- Communicates with members of the public in response to varied enquiries where tact and empathy are required.
- Communicates with other staff groups including Medical, Nursing, Clerical, Porters, Estates Staff and Drivers.
- Communicates specimen results to users in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures.
- Assists in the training of less experienced MLAs.
- Participates in departmental meetings and directorate seminars and contributes to effective communication within the department.
- Communicates non-conformities to other senior staff.

**9. DEMANDS OF THE JOB (physical, mental, emotional)****Physical Skills**

- Keyboard skills using high levels of speed and accuracy.
- Speed and accuracy required when inoculating specimens.
- Accurate pipetting when performing test.

**Physical Demands**

- Disposal of clinical waste containers and needle sharps.
- Controlled exposure to reagents, chemicals, and solvents during test analysis.
- Constant hand washing and glove changes to reduce the possibility of Hospital Acquired Infection.
- Manual handling is involved including pushing heavy trolleys.
- Frequent lifting including bench top equipment, reagents, stores and waste disposal products lifting weights in excess of 10kgs.
- Autoclave duties involves bending and lifting of boxes of media, daily waste and metal boxes.

**Mental Demands**

- High degree of concentration involved in correct patient identification, labelling, data input and sample processing.
- The ability to prioritise work is essential.
- Working often under stressful conditions and during unsocial hours.
- There are frequent interruptions from phone calls and competing priorities.
- Involved in maintaining a service in the presence of possible adverse events including equipment failure.

**Emotional Demands**

- Occasional exposure to distressing or emotional circumstances when dealing with grieving relatives or other members of the public.

**Working Conditions**

- Continuous, unavoidable exposure to open samples of blood and other potentially infectious biological body fluids.
- Manual manipulation of highly unpleasant specimens, sampling from faeces specimens for culture.
- Continuous risk of exposure to or spillage of reagents, chemicals, solvents, radioactive isotopes, during test analysis, many of which are potentially hazardous or carcinogenic.
- Exposure to highly unpleasant smells from autoclaving of laboratory waste e.g. stool and urine samples.

**Most Challenging aspects of the job**

- Processing and preparing large numbers of specimens for analysis.
- Working with samples from highly infectious patients/specimens.
- Maintaining a high degree of concentration and accuracy while performing repetitive and monotonous tasks.
- Multi-tasking nature of the job containing laboratory, clerical, clinical and domestic duties.

**10. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND/OR EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB**

- Standard Grade English and a Science Subject essential or previous laboratory experience.
- A good understanding of Healthcare Science.
- Knowledge of anatomy and physiology is preferred but training will be provided.
- Extended supervised training for a minimum of one year due to the wide range of duties encompassed within the job equivalent to National Vocational Qualification Level 3.
- High awareness of Infection Control Policies and Procedures.
- Good keyboard skills.
- Manual dexterity essential.
- Ongoing personal development in subject through attendance at appropriate meetings and courses.

**11 SPECIFIC DUTIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE POST HOLDER IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Job Description Agreement**

**Job Holder's Signature**

**Date**

**Head of Department Signature**

**Date**



**Appendix:**

**NHS Forth Valley Surgical Directorate Laboratory Management and Clinical Leads Organisational Chart**

