

1. JOB IDENTIFICATION

Job Title: Mortuary Assistant

Responsible to: Mortuary Manager

Department: Pathology

Directorate/CHCP/CHP : Diagnostics

2. JOB PURPOSE

The post holder will:

Assist the Mortuary Manager and the team of Anatomical Pathology Technicians in the running of a safe, secure, effective and comprehensive mortuary service for the needs of NHSGG&C, Procurator Fiscal and the wider community. The post-holder will act as a Mortuary Assistant at the main Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Mortuary, and the various satellite mortuaries operated by NHSGG&C. They will be expected to work at a range of sites.

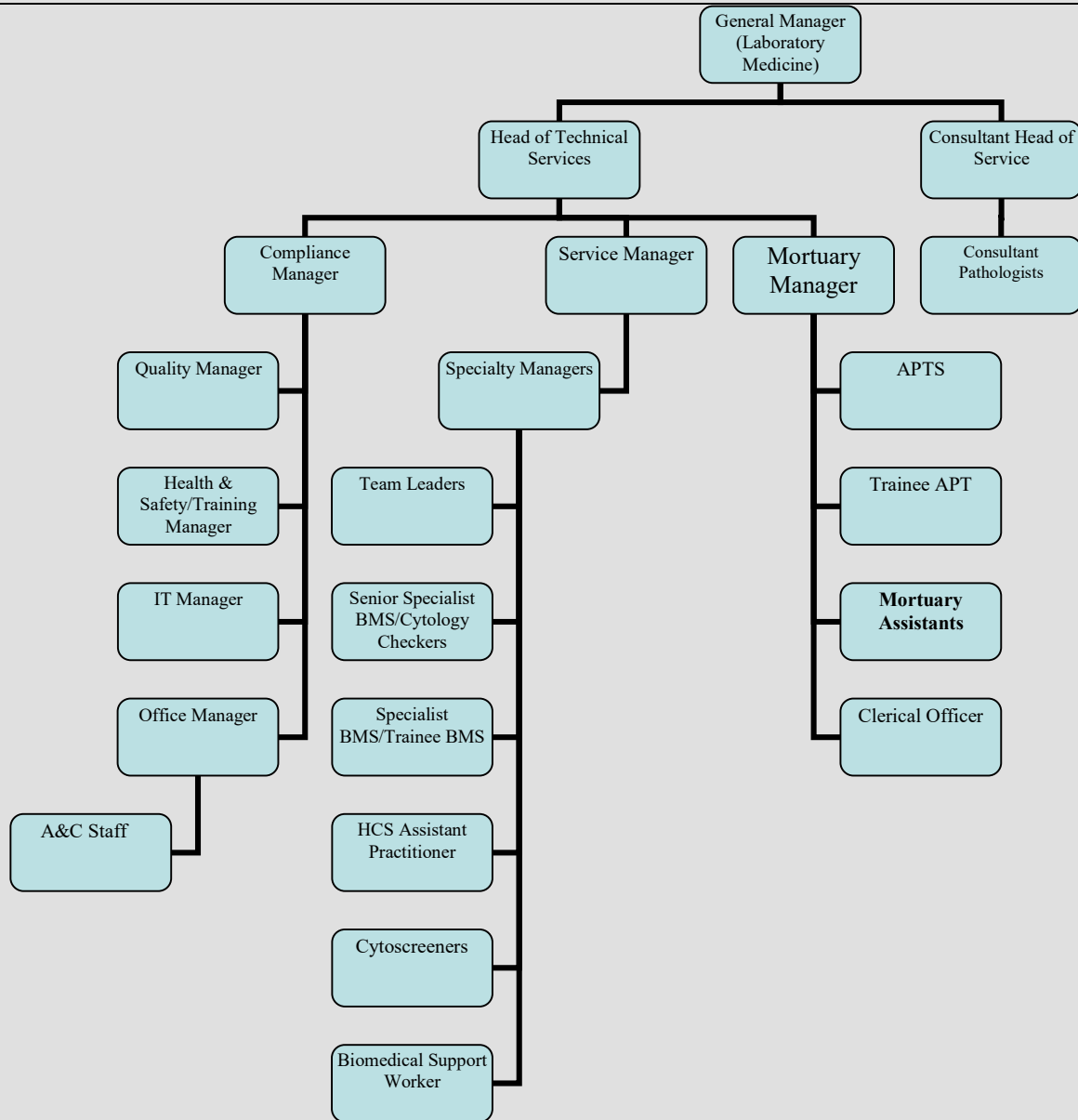
- Dealing with the receipt, removal and transfer of deceased.
- Assisting with enquiries from families, undertakers and Procurator Fiscals office
- Prepare deceased for identification and/or viewing
- Paperwork and release of deceased to undertakers
- Maintenance of an accurate mortuary register
- Liaising with relatives of the deceased in a courteous and respectful manner, including conducting viewings
- Provision of Pathology supplies to hospital users (for example formalin pots for histology biopsies)

3. ROLE OF DEPARTMENT

The Mortuary is located within the new laboratory building at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital site and is one of the largest in the UK, providing adult, paediatric and forensic services including the City Mortuary Service. In addition there are satellite mortuaries located at a number of hospitals throughout the NHS GG&C area as follows: Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Gartnavel General, Drumchapel Hospital, Lightburn Hospital, Royal Alexandra Hospital, Vale of Leven Hospital and Inverclyde Royal Hospital. Mortuary Assistants report directly to the Mortuary Manager who in turn reports to the Head of Technical Services for Pathology.

The Mortuary service is aligned with the Pathology service for NHSGG&C. The entire Pathology service for NHSGG&C is delivered from one new purpose built laboratory on the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital campus. Essential Service Laboratories (ESLs) are located at the Stobhill and Victoria Infirmary ambulatory care hospitals and at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. The Pathology service is provided by various professional groups including medical staff, biomedical scientists, administrative & clerical staff, clinical scientists, cytology screeners, medical laboratory assistants and mortuary staff. The department is the largest of its kind within the UK with a staff of 42 consultants, 30 trainee medical staff and 204 non medical staff and a total budget for 2010/11 of £15.7 million.

4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



5. SCOPE AND RANGE

The post holder will contribute to provision of the Mortuary service for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and will work within clearly defined protocol and procedures, adhering to all NHSGG&C policies e.g. Health and Safety, Data Protection and Confidentiality, Equality & Diversity. The post holder will work under supervision (remote) from the Mortuary Manager.

Within this “scope and range” the post holder is responsible for contributing to the delivery of a high quality mortuary service and for ensuring that they make the best use of all resources available to them, and maintain an environment that is safe and conducive to best working practice.

6. MAIN TASKS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Receive and release deceased brought into the mortuary from the wards or community, ensuring all identification protocols are followed and strictly adhered to.
- Ensuring all relevant documentation is completed correctly, and all mortuary records are kept up to date, including an accurate record being maintained regarding valuables and property accompanying the deceased to the mortuary.

- Ensuring any jewellery or property, removed from the deceased whilst in the mortuary before release to the funeral director, police, identified relative, is recorded in the 'Patient's Property, Clothing, Cash and Valuables' register.
- Check that all statutory documentation e.g. consent forms, cremation forms, release forms have been completed correctly, and follow up any mistakes. Ensure all documents pertaining to foetal death are completed correctly.
- Prepare deceased for viewing/identification by relatives, police etc. Prepare and present bodies for Clinical Staff completing cremation forms.
- Provide assistance to Anatomical Pathology Technicians and Crime Scene Officers in examining, photographing and fingerprinting the deceased as instructed.
- Ensure patient confidentiality and compliance with organisational Data Protection and security policies.
- Help distressed and emotional relatives and staff by providing support and advice in a compassionate way when receiving and giving highly sensitive information.
- Responsible for all domestic cleaning of the satellite mortuaries and body fridges.
- Monitor and report any equipment breakdown or malfunction via the appropriate escalation procedure.
- Maintaining up to date records (manual and/or computerised) of all activities relating to the movement of the deceased into and out of the mortuary, especially the mortuary register and all release documentation pertaining to the deceased.
- To attend the mortuary department in the event of a major incident/mass disaster being declared
- Supply formalin, biopsy tubs, and pre-filled biopsy pots (or other Pathology supplies) to theatres/ward areas, and monitor stock control of these items to ensure a ready supply is maintained

7a. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

- Use of refrigerated and frozen body storage facilities
- Electronic body lifting apparatus
- Cleaning equipment
- Office equipment including PC, fax, scanner &c.
- Use of refrigerated and frozen body storage facilities

7b. SYSTEMS

- Use of Telepath Laboratory Information Management System
- Use of Qpulse Quality Management System
- Use of electronic databases for recording deceased's details and movement.
- Use of Word, Excel, Outlook and Internet Explorer

8. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS

- The post holder must make decisions on the appropriate handling procedure when dealing with the deceased, taking into account any Infection Control factors.
- The post holder uses judgement to determine the degree of contact with the deceased that is suitable for relatives' viewings.
- The post holder will work alone, without direct supervision, for large parts of the working

day. Supervision is provided remotely.

- The post holder must interpret all available documentation and ensure all in order prior to receiving and releasing bodies.
- The post holder follows the Department's Standard Operating Procedures and adheres to Divisional policies.
- Required to use own initiative daily to gauge the nature of any situation that may arise and act accordingly for the benefit of each family.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

- The post holder will communicate daily with clinical users regarding organisation of paperwork and/or regarding required procedures for transfer of deceased to the mortuary facility.
- The post holder will communicate on a daily basis with funeral directors regarding arrangements for release of the deceased.
- The post holder will communicate on a regular basis with relatives of the deceased, requiring the post holder to display empathy, sympathy and sensitivity.
- The post holder will communicate on a daily basis with other departmental colleagues and other NHSGG&C staff including portering staff, medical staff, nursing staff, administration staff.
- The post holder will communicate with Police, Crime Scene officers, Procurator Fiscal and other external agencies as required.

10. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

Physical Skills/Effort

- To be able to use all equipment in the mortuary as required including all body handling and movement equipment.
- To be physically able to move deceased as per instruction and training in accordance with the Boards Manual Handling and Lifting Policy.

Mental Demands

- Prolonged concentration when completing necessary paperwork
- Ability to cope under pressure to ensure paperwork is completed within tight timescales

Emotional Demands

Dealing with highly distressed grieving relatives whilst accommodating viewings, including sensitively dealing with relatives of badly disfigured deceased which are unsuitable for viewing.

Ability to deal with badly disfigured and/or decomposed bodies

Working Conditions

- Daily exposure to dead adult and paediatric bodies who may be in varying stages of decomposition
- Exposure to unpleasant and offensive smells

11. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB

- Daily dealing with noxious decomposing, mutilated or infested cadavers.
- Frequently working with deceased that pose a danger of infection
- Multitasking
- Coping with constant pressure within a demand led service
- Working between and/or across sites
- Working alone
- Highly emotional working environment due to dealing with deceased children.
- Time management and prioritisation of tasks to ensure a quick efficient service is provided,

thus enabling funerals to take place with the minimum of delay and stress to families.

- Daily dealing with distressed relatives whilst maintaining a detached and professional manner.
- Exposure to dead children and babies

12, KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB

Essential

Educated to HNC/ SVQ level 3 or a minimum of 3 Highers at grade C or above (or equivalent qualification)

- Good literacy and numeracy skills
- Experience of working with the public
- Knowledge of Health & Safety policies and procedures
- Knowledge of confidentiality and Data Protection policies
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including good verbal communication skills due to the requirement to liaise with bereaved relatives in a respectful and courteous manner
- Good time management and organisational skills
- Good physical skills due to the requirement for manual handling

Desirable

- Experience of working with the deceased
- Good computer skills
- A driving licence is also desirable due to the requirement to travel between sites

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS – As per Section 10 of AFC Approved Job Description

- Working with bodies that are decomposed and being exposed to offensive odours.
- Dealing with bereaved relatives in highly upsetting and emotive circumstances.
- Will work alone, with remote supervision when working at satellite mortuary sites
- Will be required to travel between sites.
- Working to tight timescales to ensure paperwork is prepared on time for funeral directors.