



# The Opportunity

## 1. Job Identification

<b>Job Title</b>	Contact Tracing Practitioner
<b>Band</b>	Band 5
<b>Salary</b>	£24,670 - £30,742 (pro rata)
<b>Scale</b>	Agenda for Change**
<b>Hours</b>	Full Time 37.5 hours per week
<b>Contract Type</b>	Fixed Term 18 months
<b>Department</b>	Public Health
<b>Reporting to</b>	Justine Laurie
<b>Base</b>	Mountainhall Treatment Centre

\*\* NHS Scotland's AFC pay system differs slightly from NHS England, Wales or Northern Ireland. Please click [here](#) to access the most up to date pay scales and Terms and Conditions.

## Contact Details

**Line Manager**  
Justine Laurie

We welcome informal contact from prospective candidates who wish to better understand the role.

Please contact: Justine Laurie – [Justine.Laurie@nhs.scot](mailto:Justine.Laurie@nhs.scot) Call our switchboard on 01387 246246 and ask for extension 30180 |

# Job Description

## 1. JOB PURPOSE

The postholder will be responsible for the management of a designated caseload of complex confirmed Covid 19 cases and contacts for the NHS Dumfries and Galloway Contact Tracing Centre and National Contact Tracing Centre (as required), particularly where there are areas of outbreak or potential clusters where there may be requirement for increased restrictions. This will involve in depth communication and discussion with cases and contacts in order to ascertain the full facts of the source of the infection and potential additional contacts.

Working to Public Health Scotland and local protocols and guidance the postholder will be responsible for completing telephone interviews and follow up action of COVID-19 cases and their contacts, seeking information to support further investigation of possible sources of infection, providing advice on self-isolation or quarantine; infection control advice and signposting those called to testing or support services as appropriate.

The postholder will be required to determine where the case should be escalated to the Health Protection Practitioner, as appropriate.

## 2. DIMENSIONS

The postholder will work alongside the team of Contact tracers who will normally provide the first point of contact of straightforward cases of COVID-19 (i.e. the people who have just received a positive lab result). In accordance with the Public Health Scotland and local protocols and guidance if a case is deemed to be complex due to potential clusters or risk of increased outbreak, it will be allocated to the Contact Tracing Practitioner to manage with professional guidance and support provided as appropriate by the Health Protection Practitioner.

The postholder will also be required to support the case management of complex cases by providing a higher-level expertise and support to cluster and other complex investigations. COVID 19 related precautions

The postholder will deal with calls throughout the day with COVID-19 cases and their contacts, ensuring that all information is recorded accurately on the Case Management System and escalated where required. Taking into account the information received from the contacts, the postholder will also identify where there are potential clusters or patterns of COVID 19.

The postholder will contribute to improvement activities that enhance and develop the contact tracing service.

### **3. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION**

Reporting to the Service Manager with a professional link to the Health Protection Practitioner in NHS Dumfries and Galloway. Work will be allocated by the Team Manager and professional guidance and support on the management of complex cases will be through the Health Protection Practitioner.

### **4. ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT**

The overarching goal of the Contact Tracing service is to break the chain of transmission between individuals by contacting people at risk of transmission. The service is delivered in a two tier approach:

Tier one of the Contact Tracing service is the National Contact Tracing Centre comprising Team Managers, Contact Tracers, Contact Tracing Practitioner, and is responsible for contacting cases and contacts within a target timeframe of 24 hours, informing them about self-isolating, gathering information on their contacts, and advising those contacts of their suitable isolation period. Over time, the service may also have a role in monitoring that isolation through automated messaging, or through phone calls.

The overall goal of Tier two is to investigate cases where there is evidence that they may be part of a cluster or new outbreak and to put in measures to prevent further spread of infection, supported by information generated by Tier one. Tier two, which is housed within NHS Boards, comprises public health consultants, health protection practitioners, data officers and administrative assistants and is also the escalation point from Tier one for cases that are complex, or have wider implications. Tier 3 provides the specialist health protection support at Health Protection Consultant level.

### **5. KEY RESULT AREAS**

- Undertake case interviews and perform an initial public health risk assessment of individuals who have been confirmed as testing positive for COVID-19, particularly in areas where there may be increased outbreak/cluster or risk of wider transmission. Undertake contact tracing in line with the contact tracing and management protocols, and further protocols or guidance as provided, capturing all the information through the Contact Case Management System.
- Identify the contacts of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and create a contact list to either pass to the Contract Tracing Team for further contact where the initial assessment is low or alternatively continue managing where there may be a risk of increased clusters.
- Challenge and capture a range of information from the interviewees to enable a decision to be made around whether a person should be traced based on the risk of transmission.
- Provide advice to COVID-19 cases and contacts in line with procedures about isolation period and what to do if contacts have or develop

symptoms of COVID-19. This will involve providing support and reassurance to contacts on next steps and documenting conversations and potential risk on the contact tracing system

- Provide infection control advice to cases and their contacts as directed by protocols and procedures, taking guidance and support from the Health Protection Practitioner as appropriate.
- Interpret, analyse and assess information obtained from COVID-19 cases and their contacts derived through the Contact Case Management System in an effective manner. Use analytical and probing skills to identify patterns to recommend an appropriate course of action to address issues or determine whether the matter should be escalated to the Health Protection Practitioner, guided by operating procedures and protocols.
- Work closely with the Health Protection Practitioner keeping them updated on any case issues or potential areas of concern and ensuring that challenging or complex cases or incidents, for example, where there is potential increased risk of transmission, clusters or outbreaks of COVID-19, are referred to them timeously.
- Ensure accurate, up to date information and actions from interviews of COVID-19 cases and their contacts are maintained by completion of relevant records on the Case Management System and compliance with team handover procedures, in line with PHS and local operational guidance and procedures.
- Utilise judgment and knowledge to advise or redirect a caller to support services, e.g. NHS24, local NHS Boards, local authorities for isolation support.
- Support planning and organisation for large-scale complex contact tracing incidents working with various agencies
- Supporting the Health Protection Practitioner in undertaking a wider public health assessment where evidence of a possible cluster of cases is emerging
- Promote and enhance the image of Contact Tracing Service at all times
- Contribute to the development of improvements to practices and protocols across the Contact Tracing Service
- Maintain confidentiality in relation to personal data held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and Caldicott Guardianship principles. Adhere to and operate within PHS and local Information Governance protocols and operational arrangements.

## 6. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK

The postholder is expected to assume a high degree of autonomy necessary to execute all duties without routine direction from the Team Manager. The postholder maintains regular liaison with the Health Protection Practitioner and whilst they are expected to work independently within their own area of competence and adhere to protocols and procedures, they should also be able to recognise when it is appropriate to seek guidance from the Health Protection Practitioner.

The postholder is required to exercise their initiative and judgement to decide appropriate action/s, drawing from their analytical and probing skills to take account of a wide range of factors. Examples include:

- adjusting plans on a daily basis to take into consideration the potential for unexpected situations, for example identified increased risk of transmission, new outbreaks or emerging clusters of Covid 19 cases.
- Using knowledge and experience to assess when the responses from a contact who has tested positive for COVID-19 may require additional probing outwith the normal protocols, in order to gain full information about the particular case and thereby assess any additional risk.
- assessing the complexity of cases and making a judgement as to when matters should be communicated and/or escalated to the Health Protection Practitioner.
- modifying and adapting methods of communication to account for the differing needs of those contacted.

The postholder is responsible for planning and monitoring the delivery of agreed performance targets/measures and will frequently be required to determine how this is best achieved.

The postholder will agree their objectives and personal development plan with the Team Manager, with clinical input from the Health Protection Practitioner, and will participate in a mid-year and annual performance review meeting in line with the NHS Dumfries and Galloway Performance Review/Appraisal process.

## 7. COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

The postholder is required to develop ongoing robust working relationships with a variety of clinical and non-clinical roles within NHS Dumfries and Galloway, Public Health Scotland and the National Contact Tracing Centre. This will include Team Managers, Team Leaders Contact Tracers, Health Protection Practitioners, Public Health Consultants, Operations Managers, Data Managers and administrative support staff. The postholder will work closely with the Health Protection Practitioners as their professional lead, involving information exchange and updates on a daily basis, as well as in situations where the postholder deems it necessary to escalate a complex case or query for additional guidance and support.

The postholder will deal with COVID-19 cases of varying degrees of complexity and provide advice to the public (for example, on where to seek help if they fall ill while in isolation) and to health professionals in Health Board Health Protection Teams (for example, when dealing with emerging clusters and outbreaks) in line with the protocols and procedures associated with the contact tracing service.

The postholder must be able to (and be able to recognise the need to), modify and adapt methods of communication to account for the differing needs of contacts especially in stressful and difficult situations, ensuring polite, efficient and appropriate communications exist at all times.

Effective interpersonal skills are required to build rapport with those who are COVID 19 cases and their contacts, for example, when these individuals may be distressed, angry or reluctant to engage in conversation or where the postholder must provide reassurance to the individual in relation to contact tracing aspects of concerns or queries raised or when the postholder is communicating over more sensitive issues arising from complex cases. Such situations will require the postholder to utilise effective questioning and listening skills and employ empathy and understanding.

The postholder will attend meetings relating to service matters which will include regular meetings with Health Protection Practitioner and with Team Managers.

The postholder will receive and deliver sensitive and confidential information and must adhere to NHS Dumfries and Galloway Information Governance and Data Protection legislative requirements in all communications with the public.

## **8. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB**

Being able to deliver high quality care and guidance to COVID-19 cases and their contacts within a tight timescale and balance conflicting priorities in supporting the Contact Tracing and Health Protection Teams in addressing the complex health challenges arising from COVID-19 pandemic.

Being able to modify communication styles and apply appropriate questioning skills to extract accurate information to enable a thorough assessment from people with COVID-19 and their contacts, who may be in an agitated or anxious state or have communication difficulties.

Delivering an effective contact tracing service whilst often working under pressure and to tight timescales

## 9. SYSTEMS

The postholder is responsible for the maintenance, storage and retrieval of information, and for ensuring the timely and accurate recording of data by self and the team using systems and software provided. This includes:

- Contact Case Management System
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Information Communication Technology such as telephony, Teams, email
- NSS and PHS portal - use as a means of accessing information, administration and management of Communities to publish and disseminate information

## 9. PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

### Physical

A significant part of the working day will be spent at the workstation dealing with calls/complex case queries.

Good keyboard skills and high degree of accuracy is required.

### Mental

Concentration is required when:

- dealing with complex COVID-19 cases and their contacts, to ensure that all relevant information is obtained and to assess situations that may need to be referred to the Health Protection Specialists
- analysing, interpreting and probing information
- responding to queries or concerns raised during a call, particularly where Covid-19 advice may be required
- participating in meetings

The postholder will deal with frequent interruptions throughout the day via phone calls, emails etc from, people who are COVID-19 cases or their contacts, from Health Protection Practitioner and from other managers and colleagues - requesting advice or assistance, etc, - which may require the need to alternate from task to task depending on nature and importance.

### Emotional

The postholder may be required to deal with people who will be anxious, distressed or angry over their circumstances or reluctant to engage in conversation and the postholder will need to handle such situations sensitively and tactfully, showing empathy and understanding.

## 10. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB

### Qualification

- Educated to Degree level or equivalent (relevant) experience

### Experience

- Experience of establishing and maintaining good relationships with patients and public.

### Skills and Knowledge

- Effective communication and interpersonal skills, with an excellent telephone manner
- Ability to show empathy to individuals who may be distressed by their situation and to identify solutions to issues or concerns raised
- Ability to work independently, manage and prioritise own workload and cope with competing demands
- Ability to meet deadlines and work under pressure, maintaining quality and effectiveness of own performance
- Ability to analyse, interpret and probe information in an effective manner and to recommend an appropriate course of action to address issues, adjusting the approach according to circumstances
- Ability to work effectively within a multi-disciplinary team
- Evidence based approach to practice
- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office suite, including Word and Excel
- Proficient in the use of electronic systems, databases or other information systems forms to support the public health management of cases
- Awareness of and ability to follow information governance policies and procedures and Data Protection legislation.

## 11. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

**Job Holder's Signature:**

**Date:**

**Head of Department Signature:**

**Date:**

# Person Specification

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p><b>QUALIFICATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management qualification at HNC level or equivalent experience</li> </ul>	
<p><b>KNOWLEDGE &amp; SKILLS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent telephone manner</li> <li>Able to lead a team</li> <li>Effective interpersonal and communication skills, verbal and written Ability to work independently, manage and prioritise own and team workload</li> <li>Ability to problem solve across a variety of situations whilst working under pressure and to tight timescales Ability to motivate and support staff and to foster team spirit in situations where staff are working from home.</li> <li>Close attention to detail when listening to and recording information during contact calls. High level of concentration required, for example, when dealing with complex queries escalated by the team or when studying performance data.</li> <li>Ability to deal with people who are anxious or distressed and to handle such situations sensitively and tactfully</li> <li>Evidence of good organisational and time management skills Flexibility required due to working hours (Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong Knowledge of the principles of Health Protection</li> </ul>
<p><b>EXPERIENCE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working in a customer focused environment Demonstrable supervisory/line management experience</li> <li>Experience of performance monitoring and problem solving. Understands importance of confidentiality during call conversations and when recording contact details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call-centre experience</li> <li>Experience in a health or care setting</li> <li>Experience of delivering training</li> </ul>

