



**Relief Switchboard
Operator**

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Welcome from Michael Dickson, Chief Executive

Thank you for your interest in this position.

Considering a move to somewhere like Orkney can feel like a daunting decision, what will it be like? Where will I live? What about Schools and childcare? Why should I come to Orkney?

We have tried to answer some of these questions and give you some information about living and working in Orkney and further details about NHS Orkney. I hope that you find this pack useful and it helps you come to the conclusion that you should apply to work with us.



NHS Orkney is committed to the delivery of high-quality, safe, and effective care for all that need us. We are proud to employ about 700 staff across our community, primary and secondary care services.

NHS Orkney has seen significant changes in how we deliver services to our community with a real focus on providing care in Orkney and ideally in their own home. The pace of change will continue to accelerate driven by the committed staff who are keen to adopt new and innovative ways of working without losing what is special to working in Orkney, our community. I am committed to working in an open, honest and transparent way that supports staff to innovate, be bold and be brave knowing that not everything we do turns out as we intended, and it is important that we learn from these events so we can continue to improve what we do. NHS Orkney has a clear set of core values and these drive all we do:

- Care and Compassion
- Dignity and Respect
- Quality and Teamwork
- Openness, Honesty and Responsibility

The final thing I would like to say to any prospective applicant is that Orkney occupies an enviable location at the north of Scotland with breath taking beaches, hills, mountains and rolling countryside right on our doorstep. Orkney has consistently come out top in national lifestyle and happiness surveys, with an open and vibrant community, it is the perfect location to provide a safe and welcoming home. This, along with Orkney's direct flight connections to other major cities in Scotland, means the area can offer employees plenty of opportunities for those in pursuit of finding the right work-life balance.

Michael Dickson
Chief Executive
NHS Orkney



Job Advert



Relief Switchboard Operator

The Balfour - Facilities Services

Band 2 £20,923 – £22,929 including Distant Islands Allowance pro rata per annum.

Relief Contract – hours as and when required basis including Night and weekend shift work

We are seeking flexible individuals to join as Relief Switchboard Operatives to facilitate prompt communications in response to internal and external callers/visitors via The Balfour switchboard and in person.

As the Relief Switchboard Operative, you will play a crucial role in NHS Orkney's response to requests for medical assistance, including major emergencies, occurring both within the hospital and elsewhere in the county. You will also monitor internal and external alarm systems and perform mailroom duties.

You will have a professional telephone manner and must be able to take initiative when assessing calls and situations, dealing with them efficiently and effectively. You will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills and be able to work unsupervised in a busy and pressurised environment. You will be IT literate, and preferably hold an ECDL qualification or have equivalent IT knowledge. Experience of operating a telephone system would be desirable. As a relief you will also be required to have flexibility to work various shifts covering leave and may be required to work at short notice.

For more information on these posts please contact Mandy Ward by email at mandy.ward@nhs.scot

This post is subject to a Disclosure Scotland check.

Job Description

1. JOB DETAILS	
JOB TITLE	Relief Switchboard Operative
SERVICE	NHS Orkney
DEPARTMENT	Estates & facilities - Switchboard
GRADE	Band 2
LOCATION	The Balfour
REPORTING TO	Facilities Manager

1. JOB PURPOSE

To provide essential cover to an efficient 24/7 switchboard, reception, and information service for NHS Orkney, facilitating prompt communications in response to internal and external stakeholders via the switchboard and in person, in a courteous and professional manner.

To act as principal point of contact for staff, patients and other external stakeholders out of normal working hours

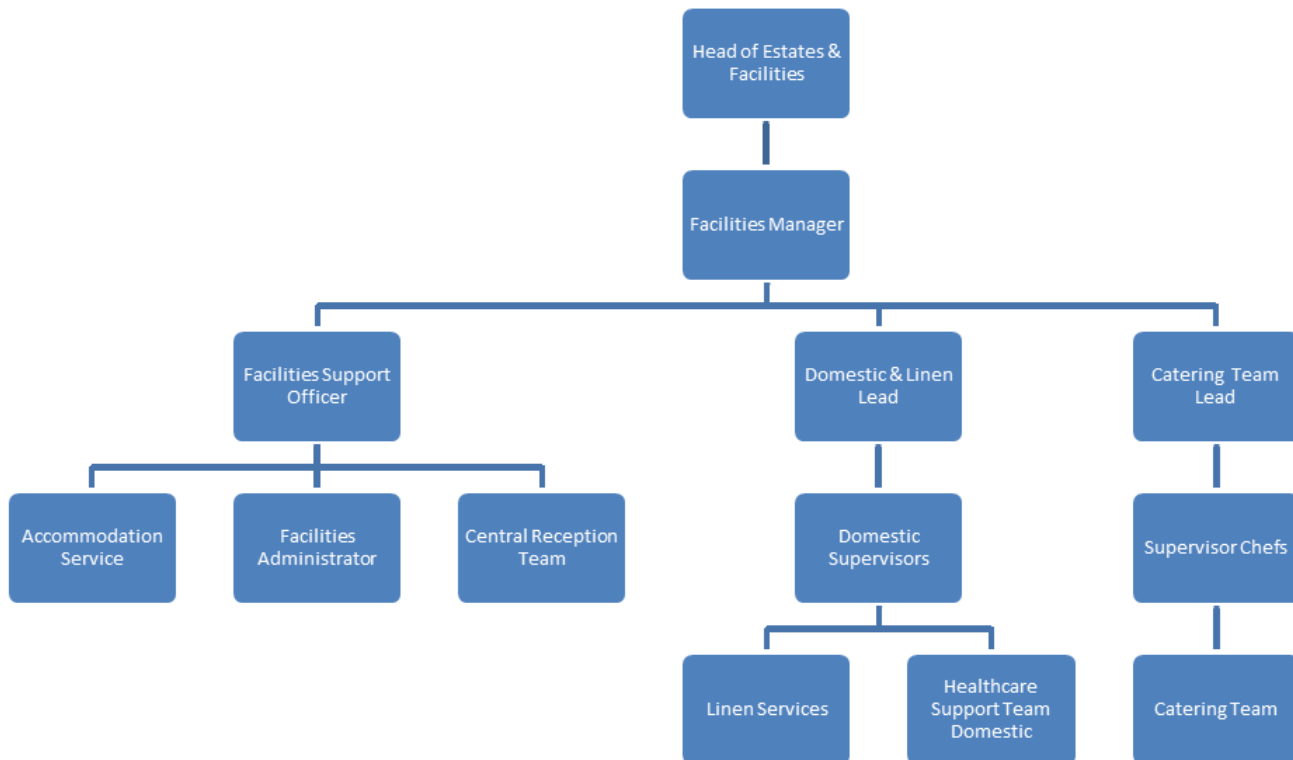
To summon key staff in an emergency situation

2. DIMENSIONS

The Switchboard Operative plays a crucial part in NHS Orkney's response to requests for medical assistance (although 999 calls are initially routed to Scottish Ambulance Service Inverness Control), and in major emergencies, occurring both within the hospital and elsewhere in the county. Such emergencies have to be dealt with over and above an already high volume of 'routine' calls and numerous other duties.

- The switchboard serves over 450 extensions.
- There are 15 doctors' practices within the county.

3. ORGANISATION CHART



4. KEY RESULT AREAS

Listed below are the principal duties of the post holder. However, the post holder is required to adopt a flexible approach in order to meet the changing needs of NHS Orkney, as and when they are identified.

Communications

- To provide comprehensive switchboard, reception and information services to NHS Orkney, aiming to resolve queries as quickly and efficiently as possible
- To act as the principal point of contact for staff, patients, and other external visitors to NHS Orkney 'out of hours'
- To answer calls efficiently and politely, using initiative to provide information, directing and prioritising queries as appropriate.
- To be familiar with all aspects of the PC-based switchboard consoles, including accessing directory information, in order to facilitate prompt communications and for calls to be connected to appropriate extensions efficiently.
- To take messages, and pass them on to appropriate people, accurately and efficiently
- To communicate with all stakeholders (patients, visitors and staff) in a friendly, courteous and professional manner

- To communicate professionally with all callers who at times can be rude, aggressive, distressed, anxious, and/or upset, remaining understanding and empathetic with their situation and needs
- To provide support for various doctors' practices out of practice opening hours during the working day where necessary (including receiving their phone calls and contacting on-call GPs when required by patients).
- Receipt of calls requiring Rapid Response/Night Support Worker
- To use radiopaging and radiotelephony technology to contact health service personnel within and out with the hospital as appropriate (i.e. doctors, ambulance, porters, etc)
- Receipt of e-mails, and ensuring emails are responded to efficiently and professionally
- To inform Accident & Emergency Unit of NHS 24 referrals
- To implement on-call procedures as required, including calling out specific on-call staff. On call list is extensive and includes:
 - Corporate Management Team
 - Senior Nurse / Nurses / Community Nurses
 - GPs / GPSTs
 - Theatre staff (Surgeons, Anaesthetists, Nurses)
 - Laboratory
 - X-ray
 - Pharmacy
 - Domestic Infection Control
 - Community Social Services
 - Dentists / Dental Nurses
 - Public Health
- To ensure strict confidentiality is maintained at all times in relation to patients, staff and NHS Orkney.

Emergency Response Communications

- To summon key staff in an emergency situation following appropriate policies and procedures in accordance to the specific emergency.
- To provide 24-hour monitoring of, and respond to, various emergency alarms as per NHS Orkney procedures including:
 - Cardiac Arrest
 - Fire
 - Blood refrigerators
 - Intruders

- Medical gas
- Personal attack
- Plant alarms
- To use own initiative, where necessary, in response to emergency situations, where specific contingency plans are not catered for.
- To assist with the operation of emergency systems (i.e. pagers, panic alarms, fire alarms, etc)
- To log emergency and private calls as per NHS Orkney procedures (calls may involve major accidents and emergencies including medical, dental, diving incidents, maternity, psychiatric, and Police clients or personnel).
- To respond to routine emergencies as per NHS Orkney procedures including: Cardiac Arrest, Trauma Team, Psychiatric emergencies, Paediatric/Obstetric emergencies, fire calls, bomb threats and major incidents
- In the event of serious disruption to telecommunications 'out of hours', the post holder is required to be proactive in reporting faults to IT and the relevant telecommunications suppliers, and in setting up contingency arrangements
- In the event of a fire, remain in switchboard following Fire Emergency Management Plan, until instructed by Fire Response Team to leave the building. If evacuated, Switchboard Operator will be expected to continue with emergency procedures from a safe location using a deck phone.

Security

- To monitor the issue of keys both in and out, keeping accurate records as per policy
- To operate the electronic door-locking system, allied to CCTV
- To manage visitor access through main entrance
- To monitor CCTV and inform security of any incidents/breaches on NHS property

Administration / Miscellaneous tasks

- To test pagers as required
- To test the Crash (Cardiac Arrest) pager and GPST pager daily, keeping records as appropriate
- To make taxi bookings as required
- To frank post, and sort internal and external mail for collection and delivery to ensure it is received by recipient in a timely manner
- To process recorded and special deliveries
- To monitor and issue lost property, sending communications as appropriate
- To take responsibility for all articles left at switchboard (e.g. urgent medical equipment)

- To provide effective handover at the end of each shift, keeping colleagues informed of amendments/communications, and ensuring the 'Stateboard' (containing information on personnel's contact details) is up-to-date
- To keep records/information such as are necessary for the smooth running of switchboard, and advise and assist in their updating (i.e. on-call rotas, etc).
- To assist and contribute towards the development, management and review of policies and procedures for duties and activities within switchboard
- To liaise with the IT Department ensuring Internal Telephone Directory and Pager System is accurate and relevant.
- To monitor stock levels required within switchboard, and reorder stock through supervisor as necessary
- To develop a reasonable understanding of the NHS Orkney estate in order to advise visitors/callers how both to travel to the sites and how to 'wayfind' around the sites on arrival
- To keep the reception area tidy and smart at all times
- To arrange cover for sickness out with working hours and at weekends
- To update Turas as necessary in preparation for annual appraisals and participate in staff appraisals in accordance with NHS Orkney policy
- To undertake and maintain all mandatory training, and undergo any further training which may be necessary
- To assist with the induction and training of new staff
- To adhere to all correct Health and Safety legislation
- To familiarise with and adhere to all NHS Orkney policies and procedures as appropriate (i.e. confidentiality, computer misuse, smoking, etc) and ensure these are followed at all times.
- To report any incidents via the Datix Incident Reporting System
- To undertake any other reasonable duties in accordance with the needs of the service and appropriate to the scope and grade of the role.

5. DECISIONS & JUDGEMENTS

Many calls are routine but the routines themselves frequently change thus a high degree of initiative has to be employed. Speedy assessment of each caller's requirements is required in order to direct them to the most appropriate service as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The service is dynamic and in constant flux, affected by a variety of factors such as time of day, limits and preferences of on-call personnel, and the state of casualties. Frequently during busy time periods calls from various sources will 'stack up' and decisions of prioritisation have to be made rapidly.

The post holder will work unsupervised, and thus may be required to make crucial decisions and judgments which may have serious outcomes or implications.

In the absence of the supervisor, the post holder will be expected to arrange shift cover for unexpected absences (i.e. sickness)

6. ASSIGNMENT AND REVIEW OF WORK

Report directly to Facilities Manager

Responsible for managing PDP and ensuring training needs are identified

Ensure Learn Pro training is up to date

Attend mandatory training

Undertake Turas review process with line manager

7. COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Communications

The Switchboard Operative is the first point of contact for people requiring the services of NHS Orkney. They will encounter communications with a wide range of both internal and external stakeholders, including staff, managers, patients, relatives, carers, external agencies, and the emergency services. These communications could be via the telephone, in person or via email, as well as having to contact staff members using a paging system.

The bulk of communications during office hours are routine. However frequently the post holder may have to communicate with distressed or injured parties, and occasionally those in need of psychiatric care or under the influence of drink and/or drugs. The post holder must always acknowledge the sensitive nature of the topics discussed and use skills of tact and diplomacy.

Relationships

Key relationships will be made with those within the Estates and Facilities team including Porters, Security, Estates, Catering, Domestic and Laundry staff. Close relationships will also be formed with nursing staff, GPs, Hospital Medical Staff, Mobile Responders, Home Care, NHS 24, Social Services, CPN's, Police, Coastguard, Hyperbaric Chamber team, Highland Hub, Orkney Islands Council and Ambulance team.

8. MOST CHALLENGING PART OF THE JOB

To be flexible and available at short notice at all times

In effect the Switchboard Operative is alone and dealing with a communications bottleneck.

There are times when the number of calls is great, and decisions regarding prioritisation must be made rapidly

Concentration is required while inputting phone numbers and dealing with enquiries – extremely challenging when busy and working alone

Switchboard Operators part in emergencies is usually brief but crucial, and the level of responsibility is high

Required to keep a calm and professional demeanour when under pressure especially when dealing with emotional/distressed callers and/or situations.

Must adapt quickly as situations develop

A flexible approach is required as post holder will work alternating shifts (including night and weekend working), and there is a necessity to work at short notice to cover annual leave and sickness. The essential nature of the switchboard service is such that, in the unusual event of an operator unexpectedly not attending for work, the duty operator may be expected to remain in situ until cover arrangements can be arranged.

9. SYSTEMS/EQUIPMENT

- Switchboard
- Computer
- Pager system
- Mitre Super Console
- Numerous other alarms (i.e. cardiac arrest, fire, fridges, medical gas, etc)
- Fire Panel
- Electronic Door Locking system
- CCTV
- Franking Machine/Scales
- Fax Machine
- Photocopier/Printer
- Turas
- Datix Incident Reporting
- NHS Orkney Blog

10. QUALIFICATIONS AND/OR EXPERIENCE SPECIFIED FOR THE POST

- IT skills – word processing, spreadsheets and databases
- Excellent written and oral communication skills with attention to detail
- Excellent organisational skills
- Ability to deliver within tight deadlines
- Infection control Training
- Induction
- ECDL
- Ability to work un-supervised and be a good team member
- Experience of dealing with difficult people
- Good numeracy skills

- Basic Life Support Training
- Mandatory training – Learn Pro

11. PHYSICAL EFFORT & SKILLS

The Switchboard Operative is seated for the majority of their shift, in order to answer calls immediately, day and night.

Continuous VDU use

Continuous noise during busy shifts

12. MENTAL EFFORT

There are times when the number of calls is great, and decisions regarding prioritisation must be made rapidly

Concentration is required while inputting phone numbers and dealing with enquiries – extremely challenging when busy and working alone

13. EMOTIONAL EFFORT

Required to keep a calm and professional demeanour when under pressure especially when dealing with emotional/distressed callers and/or situations.

14. WORKING CONDITIONS

Lone working in office/post room environment with constant interruptions

Job Description Agreement	
Job Holder's Signature	Date:
Head of Department Signature	Date:

Person Specification

Job Title: Relief Switchboard Operative
Department: Estates & Facilities
Location: The Balfour

FACTOR	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
EXPERIENCE	IT skills – word processing, spreadsheets, and databases	ECDL qualification or equivalent Qualification in the operation of telephones systems
QUALIFICATIONS TRAINING RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS	Experience in working unsupervised in a lone working environment Experience in the use of phone systems Previous experience working with the general public.	Experience in dealing with emergency response situations. Experience of working within the NHS. Customer Service Experience Experience of emergency incidents Mail sorting/franking
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	Excellent communication skills, written and verbal. Excellent listening skills Effective influencing and negotiating skills. Ability to adhere to health & safety IT skills Effective interpersonal and skills Excellent customer service skills, with the ability to deal with customer / public complaints professionally and effectively.	
DISPOSITION	Ability and expertise to build credible working relationships. Positive and flexible approach to changing environment. Ability to work to prioritise a range of work and issues to tight deadlines	

	Ability to use initiative Professional telephone manner Flexible approach to work with ability to work unsociable hours Availability at Short Notice	
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Introduction to Orkney and NHS Orkney



Lying off the northern coast of Scotland, between John O’Groats and the Shetland Isles, Orkney is an archipelago of over 70 beautiful islands; 17 of which are inhabited. The total population is approximately 22,000, with most people living on the Orkney Mainland. Kirkwall, the capital with its spectacular red sandstone 12th-century cathedral and a population of 7,500, is the administrative centre of Orkney with a good mixture of shops, supermarkets, and businesses.

Orkney is a wonderful place to live and offers excellent schools and leisure facilities, low pollution, low crime, unique wildlife, and amazing scenery. Although remote, there are excellent transport connections with numerous flights to Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Inverness every day. There are ferry services to Aberdeen, Scrabster, and Gills Bay, and of course to the smaller isles in Orkney.

Orkney’s economy is based on agriculture, generating some £30 million per year. Farmers breed and rear beef cattle, dairy cows, and sheep of the highest standard. Orkney has international recognition for its food, with cheese, beef, lamb, and fish produce becoming well known; not to mention whiskey, beer, and gin. Tourism, oil, and the renewable energy sectors are increasingly important. Orkney is at the forefront of the renewable wave and tidal energy drive in the UK.

Kirkwall is a great place for children and a wonderful environment for a family. There is a very strong community spirit with a wide range of cultural and sporting activities for adults and children. Schools in Orkney are very good, with no private fees. Imagine all of this within walking distance of your home and workplace. For residents and visitors there is so much to see and do: playing a round of golf, fishing, kayaking, walking, cycling, diving, wind surfing and horse riding are but a few. The Pickaquoy Centre provides a modern well-equipped sports facility, swimming pool and entertainment centre. There are many cultural activities, with annual music, jazz and science festivals attended by internationally renowned artists and scientists. There is an extremely wide variety of activities for children



and young people. Homes are very affordable and with little traffic, travelling around the islands is easy.

According to the 2020 Bank of Scotland quality of life survey, for eight years in a row Orkney was crowned the best place to live in Scotland. The island took the top prize due to high employment levels, low crime rates, smaller primary class sizes along with good health and happiness scores. With its strong sense of community, picturesque landscape and rich archaeological treasures, the archipelago frequently wins the hearts of visitors.

Not only is Orkney one of the most affordable places to live in the UK, it also has one of the highest employment rates, with 88 per cent of residents between 16 and 64 currently in work. The low crime rate means that many people do not even lock their front doors to allow the postie to place the post and packages inside the door. As for overall wellbeing, more than nine in 10 Orkney residents report good or fairly good health.

To find out more about living and working in Orkney go to www.orkney.com or www.orkneycommunities.co.uk and learn more about NHS Orkney at www.ohb.scot.nhs.uk.



Recruitment Process

The NHS Scotland Everyone Matters 2020 Workforce Vision outlines the commitment the Scottish Government has in putting people at the centre of everything the NHS in Scotland does. Working to a common set of values, the vision will continue to modernise the way we work, embracing technology and digital transformation.

All vacancies will be advertised on NHS Scotland's recruitment website:

<https://apply.jobs.scot.nhs.uk/>

Internal vacancies will be advertised on NHS Scotland's internal recruitment website:

<https://apply.jobs.scot.nhs.uk/internal/>

CVs are not accepted as a form of application; NHS Scotland's electronic application form must be used on the above links.

All adverts will close at midnight on the advertised closing date.

Our selection process will consist of the following assessments:

- **Application short listing** – application forms are reviewed and those meeting the role requirements will be invited to a competency-based interview
- **Interview/Assessment** – competency-based interviews have a focus on NHS Orkney's core values and the candidate's technical expertise. The interview may also include a role specific test or a presentation topic.

Any job offer will be subject to meeting the conditions of NHS Orkney's safer pre- and post-employment checks policy:

- **Employment references** - references should include current and previous employers covering the last 3 years of your employment history
- **Evidence of qualifications** – candidates will be required to provide evidence of their qualifications, including proof of professional registration if required
- **Medical assessment** – the Occupational Health service will make an assessment on your fitness to carry out the information provided in a questionnaire. In certain circumstances further information is required and Occupational Health may contact you by telephone or request that you attend for an appointment
- **Criminal conviction check** – all applicants who apply for posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and who will have access to patients during their employment will be required to consent to a Disclosure Scotland Criminal Records Check or join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme.
- **Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2007 – Prevention of illegal working** – candidates must be eligible to work in the UK, evidence of this must be provided.

For any queries relating to this vacancy, or our Recruitment Process, please email

ork.recruitment@nhs.scot

Equality and Diversity

NHS Orkney is committed to Equality & Diversity <https://www.ohb.scot.nhs.uk/about-us/equality-and-diversity>