

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION

Job Title:	Covid-19 Contact Tracing Practitioner
Responsible to (insert job title):	Team Manager
Department(s):	National Contact Tracing Centre
SBU:	Strategy, Performance and Service Transformation
Location:	Home Based

### 2. JOB PURPOSE

The postholder will undertake contact tracing and telephone management of cases and contacts for the National Contact Tracing Centre which may be complex and require additional investigation.

Working to Public Health Scotland protocols and guidance the postholder will be responsible for completing telephone interviews 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 Specialist, as appropriate.

### 3. DIMENSIONS

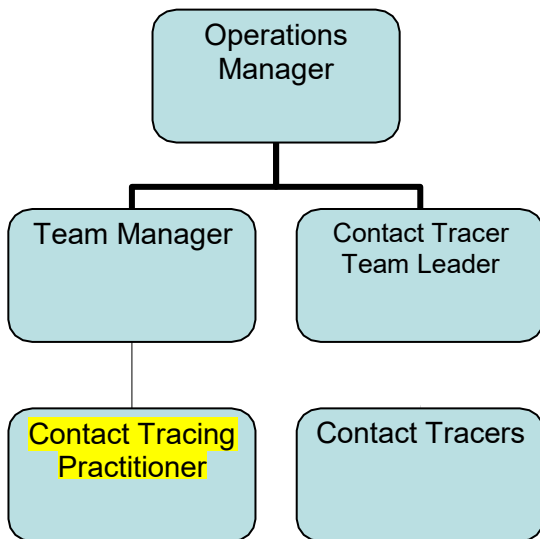
The postholder will form part of a team of Contact tracers who will normally provide the first point of contact of cases of COVID-19 (i.e. the people who have just received a positive lab result)

The postholder will work in collaboration with Health Board Health Protection Contact Tracers working across Scotland undertaking contact tracing activities of COVID-19 cases which are more complex in nature. The Contact Tracer will provide additional support to cluster investigations when cases are assigned by the Contact Tracing Team Manager.

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. The postholder will also identify where there are clusters or patterns of COVID 19.

The postholder also contributes to improvement activities that enhance and develop the contact tracing service.

#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL POSITION



#### 5. ROLE OF 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 and to put in measures to prevent further spread of infection. This 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.

#### 6. KEY RESULT AREAS

1. Undertake case interviews and perform an initial public health risk assessment of COVID-19 cases identified for 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.
2. Undertake interviews with contacts of COVID-19 cases in line with contact tracing protocols and guidance.
3. Provide advice to COVID-19 cases and contacts as directed by protocols/procedures/guidance including details about isolation period and what to do if contacts have or develop symptoms of

## COVID-19.

4. Provide infection control advice to cases and their contacts as directed by protocols and procedures.
5. Interpret and assess information obtained from COVID-19 cases and their contacts and derived through the Contact Case Management System in an effective manner, using healthcare knowledge and experience to recommend an appropriate course of action to address queries or determine that the matter should be escalated to the Health Protection Practitioner, guided by operating procedures and protocols.
6. 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 and outbreaks of COVID-19 re referred to them timeously.
7. 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 operational guidance and procedures.
8. Utilise judgment and knowledge to advise or redirect a caller to support services.
9. Support planning and organisation for large-scale complex contact tracing incidents working with various agencies
10. Supporting the HP Practitioner in undertaking a wider PH assessment where evidence of a possible cluster of cases is emerging
11. Promote and enhance the image of Contact Tracing service at all times
12. 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 Information Governance protocols and operational arrangements.

## **7. 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 healthcare knowledge and experience and taking account of a wide range of factors.

Examples include:

- adjusting plans on a daily basis for unexpected situations such as a sudden increase in COVID-19 cases
- 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.
- Using knowledge and experience to assess when the responses from a COVID-19 may require additional probing out with the normal protocols in order to gain full information about the

particular case

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 NSS Performance Review/Appraisal process.

## **8. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS**

The postholder is required to develop ongoing robust working relationships with a variety of clinical and non-clinical roles within both NSS, PHS and the Health Protection Teams in the NHS Health Boards.

This will include Team Managers, Contact Tracers, Public Health Consultants, Health Protection Practitioners, Operations Managers, Data Managers and administrative support staff. The postholder will work closely with the Health Protection Practitioners with communications 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.

The postholder will deal with COVID-19 cases of varying degrees of complexity and provide advice to the public and to health professionals 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 PHS Information Governance and Data Protection legislative requirements in all communications with the public.

## **9. 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

## 10. 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

## 12. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB

### Physical Effort

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 Effort

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
- 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 Effort

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.

## 13. 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, managers and colleagues

### 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 interpret information in an effective manner and to recommend an appropriate course of action to address issues
- Ability to work within a 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.