# **JOB DESCRIPTION**

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| 1. JOB IDENTIFICATION   **Job Title: Qualitative Research Fellow**  **Grade: Band 6**  **Responsible to: Dr Joanna Bowden & Dr Stephen Fenning – Consultants in Palliative Medicine**  **Department(s): Fife Specialist Palliative Care Service**  **Directorate: Fife Health and Social Care Partnership**  **Job Reference number (coded): JDNP960** |

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| 1. **JOB PURPOSE** |
| We are seeking an experienced qualitative researcher to join our Palliative Care research team.  Around one third of people in Scotland with a new diagnosis of cancer live less than 12 months. There are no regional or national standards for advanced cancer care and no agreed clinical pathways. This leads to variation in the quality of care and support that patients and families receive and a lack of accountability for its delivery. Our mixed methods study will illuminate the reality of clinical pathways, experiences and outcomes for people in Fife with advanced cancer.  The foundation of our qualitative work will be interviews with patients and their families and other unpaid caregivers, generating rich insights into the reality of care for this population. Alongside this, large-scale data linkage work, led by data analysts, will provide objective evidence of current pathways and outcomes. The combined findings from the qualitative and quantitative studies will provide the breadth and depth of understanding that has been lacking in this important area. Ultimately, we envisage our study findings transforming care for people advanced cancers by informing the development of national standards of care and by establishing a programme of improvement work to ensure that people can access the support that they need, when they need it.  The qualitative study will involve longitudinal interviews for a sample of people with a new diagnosis of advanced (stage 4) cancer. The Fife post-holder will be responsible for planning and conducting Fife-based interviews.  The post holder will have the opportunity to contribute to qualitative analysis of interview transcripts. They will also be actively involved in research dissemination activities, including writing for publication and presentations. |

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| **3. DIMENSIONS** |
| The post does not involve direct line management of staff but the post holder will be expected to liaise with clinical and research colleagues. |

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| **4 ORGANISATIONAL POSITION** |
| Consultants in Palliative Medicine  Clinical Research Fellow (this post) |

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| **5. ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT** |
| Fife Specialist Palliative Care Service will ensure that the post holder is well supported, including an induction period to orientate them to the clinical settings and circumstances of the research population. Dr Jo Bowden and Dr Stephen Fenning, both Consultants in Palliative Medicine, will provide mentorship and support around the clinical research role, supported additionally by an experienced qualitative researcher.  Office/desk space will be provided in Fife for the duration of the post, along with administrative support. |

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| **6. KEY RESULT AREAS** |
| - Project manage (at a local level in Fife) the implementation of a research strategy relating to study.  - Work closely, through regular meetings, with the wider study team and actively communicate progress at other times in verbal / written format.  - Liaise with members of the research team and clinical collaborators to identify potential study participants.  - Undertake informed consent with participants, conduct interviews with patients and caregivers. This may be face to face in a healthcare setting, their own home or remotely by phone or video call, as per participant preferences.  -Ensure interview data is securely uploaded to transcription platform.  - Contribute to qualitative data analysis, supervised by a senior researcher.  - Contribute to the development of the knowledge exchange strategy. This will include an active role writing up data for reports to the funder and peer reviewed publications, and presenting data at group meetings and conferences.  - Monitor and report progress on the work to evidence progress, allow variations to be addressed in a timely manner and to meet reporting requirements and deadlines.  - Contribute actively to the continuing professional development (CPD) |

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| **7a. EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY** |
| The post holder is required to use a personal computer and other office equipment (which can be supplied if needed).  The post-holder will need to manage interview recording equipment, including uploading recordings and using transcriptions for analysis. |

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| **7b. SYSTEMS** |
| Experience with the qualitative computer software package NVivo is desirable |

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| **8. ASSIGNMENT OF REVIEW OF WORK** |
| The post holder is accountable to the Consultants in Palliative Medicine based in NHS Fife.  The post holder and the Consultants in Palliative Medicine will agree a work plan with specific objectives and regular deadlines.  The post holder will manage their own work schedule and will be required to demonstrate initiative in ensuring that the workload is prioritised and submitted in line with agreed deadlines.  The work will be delegated and directed by the line manager.  The post holder will receive support from the line manager by regular face to face meetings and with video call and email contact. |

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| **9. DECISIONS AND JUDGEMENTS** |
| The post holder has freedom to exercise their professional judgement to organise, implement and manage their own work priorities to achieve objectives set in their work plan.  The post holder prioritises the workload to ensure that key projects are completed in time.  **In collaboration with others:** Problem solving, sampling and data interpretation  **Referred to manager:** Overall timelines, changes of direction, response to serious and unexpected events, identification of the best way forward and interpretation of complex data (although input to these areas is expected).  **Level of Direction Given:** Study Leads will offer general orientation and advice. Line manager will provide support in developing and implementing the research strategy. |

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| **10. MOST CHALLENGING/DIFFICULT PARTS OF THE JOB** |
| It is anticipated that one of the most challenging aspects of the post will be in the undertaking of interviews with patients with a new diagnosis of advanced cancer, and with their close persons. This will, more than likely, involve some interactions with individuals who are distressed and displaying related emotions. It is, therefore, essential that the post holder has experience of dealing with and supporting people in distress, and that they are able to be with the person who is expressing distress, while supporting them to talk and describe what they are feeling. The post holder will also need to identify situations where a research participant may be vulnerable requiring signposting or referral to a support service, and also recognise when they (the post holder) themselves would benefit from a debrief or discussion with colleagues in the study team.  The post holder will also need to:  - Maintain the highest possible standards of working and completing work to time.  - Manage competing priorities  - Develop and maintain effective relationships with a range of key local and national stakeholders  - Ensure quality control of data |

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| **11. COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS** |
| The post holder should have excellent communication, organisational and time management skills, both for the purpose of working as part of a dynamic and multidisciplinary study team towards common goals, but also in the work of interacting with patients, families, carers and clinicians.  The post holder must be able to demonstrate professionalism in their interactions with colleagues and with research participants – including adherence to codes of ethical practice around confidentiality and identifying individuals who may be vulnerable and requiring additional support. Strong working relationships within the study team will provide support for the post holder and they will be expected to be in close communication with their line manager and colleagues. |

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| **12. PHYSICAL, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS OF THE JOB** |
| **Physical skills:**   * Advanced and accurate keyboard skills.   **Physical effort:**   * Daily requirement for sitting/inputting at a computer keyboard for significant periods of time. * Frequent travelling around Fife including in and around patients’ homes and clinical settings   **Mental demands:**   * Frequent high level of concentration required for the majority of tasks required for the post: writing reports and protocols; taking and writing up interviews; analysing data; preparing presentations/posters and giving presentations. * Managing the qualitative study on a day to day basis, guided by the overall research plan and timetable. * Resolve most day to day problems using accumulated experience and skills, with only more serious and non-standard issues reported to the line manager for assistance.   **Emotional:**   * Dealing directly with patients who are living with advanced cancer, and also with their families and carers. At times, this will include patients and their close persons being distressed and expressing a range of challenging emotions. |

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| **13. KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED TO DO THE JOB** | | |
|  | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications** | * Degree level or equivalent. * Qualification and qualitative research training in social science, nursing, psychology, public health or related subject area | * PhD (or near completion) – or considerable equivalent experience |
| **Skills and Knowledge** | * The skills and competencies normally associated with significant work experience in the health sector. * Demonstrated ability to plan, conduct and analyse in-depth interviews. * Expert computer skills to include use of MS office software, email and internet skills. * Excellent written and oral communication skills | * Knowledge and experience undertaking research in an area relevant to the study e.g. with patients with cancer or chronic life-limiting illness * Good working knowledge of NVivo, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, SPSS or equivalents * Demonstrated ability to publish in peer-reviewed journals in a first author capacity |
| **Attributes** | * Self-motivated. * Good team worker. * Commitment to work to mutually agreed deadlines. * Ability to work independently under appropriate supervision * Willingness to adopt flexible approach to working |  |

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| **14. JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT**  A separate job description will need to be signed off by each jobholder to whom the job description applies.  **Job Holder’s Signature:**  **Head of Department Signature:** | **Date:**  **Date:** |

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