**Grade VIII Deputy Head of Press & Media**

Business Team, HSE Communications

HSE, Cornmarket, Dublin 8

**HSE Communications& Public Affairs Division**

**Job Specification & Terms and Conditions**

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| **Job Title and Grade** | Grade VIII Deputy Head of Press and Media, Communications and Public Affairs Division  *(Grade Code: 0655)* |
| **Campaign Reference** | NCD 210325 |
| **Closing Date** | 10th April 2025  Completed application form submitted to [commshr@hse.ie](mailto:commshr@hse.ie) |
| **Proposed Interview Date(s)** | Candidates will normally be given at least two weeks' notice of interview. The timescale may be reduced in exceptional circumstances. |
| **Taking up Appointment** | A start date will be indicated at job offer stage |
| **Location of Post** | 10/11 Cornmarket, Dublin 8 |
| **Informal Enquiries** | Amanda Kenny, Head of Press & Media  Amanda.kenny@hse.ie |
| **Details of Service** | HSE Communications and Public Affairs works with health service teams around the country to share the important work of the HSE, to create communications programmes that support people to live healthier lives, and to help build health services valued by everyone in Ireland. Through our news, campaigns, digital, staff and stakeholder channels, and our engagement with political representatives, we aim to build trust and confidence in the HSE, and to garner support for the ongoing programme of health reform.  The Press and Media Team play an important role in telling external audiences the story of the work of the health service. The team proactively organises operational and issue driven communication through press and media. They deal with a substantial number of media queries, media engagements and act as a liaison between our operational divisions and the media.  The successful applicant will be joining a team of professionals to;   * Deputise and assist in leading the HSE National Press Office * Lead and manage a team of press officers, helping them to achieve the best results possible   Assist in development and implementation of long and short-term press strategies, in line with organisational goals and national communications strategy   * Highlight services and supports available to the public * Respond in an agile way to the demands of the fast-moving news cycle * Supports Sláintecare reform and the continuing roll out of the six HSE Health Regions in 2025 and beyond.   In addition to raising awareness of the work of our health service, an important priority is building and maintaining trust and confidence in the HSE with key stakeholders.  **If you want to take the next step in your communications career and are looking for a rewarding and, exciting communications role you will find it here in the HSE Press Office. There is a supportive and expert team in place, with opportunities for professional development.** |
| **Purpose of the Post** | The Deputy Head of Press, will be joining a busy and demanding press office. They will be centrally involved in operational issues management and must be able to respond to the news cycle, working with HSE divisions to provide timely, accurate and clear information to the media. They will also be helping to tell the HSE story. This is an incredibility exciting time in the organisation with the implementation of the new Health Regions.  They will manage a team of press officers, prepare press releases, liaise with media contacts, answer media queries, arrange media interviews and monitor media coverage.  They will work alongside another Deputy Head of Press & Media, whose role will be focussed strongly on the planning and delivery of the HSE’s strategic communication projects and stories. |
| **Reporting Relationships** | The post holder will report directly to the Head of Press & Media |
| **Principal Duties and Responsibilities** | **General:**   * Acting as Deputy Head of Press, in a busy and responsive press office * Handling press queries and responses on a daily basis * Leading and providing strategic advice on media issues * Communicating externally the context to important topics and operational issues * Media management: Preparing statements; arranging and attending briefings, press conferences and onsite media activity; coordinating photocalls; arranging media interviews; media site visits in collaboration with our regional comms colleagues; ensuring our media responses are clear, easy to understand and accurate * Providing media relations advice to HSE services and their senior management * Regularly leading the National Press Office in the co-ordination of emergency and issues management * Bringing new and innovative ways of working to the HSE Press Office, that will enhance our ability to respond to media queries, and to share new service developments for patients and service users * Liaising with relevant bodies, key stakeholders and external agencies as required * Contributing to the evaluation of campaign and initiatives * General upkeep of administration tasks * Line management of press officers * Working with Senior Communications Managers, Operational Communications leads, and regional colleagues across multiple issues and projects   **Planning and Operations**   * Environmental scanning - monitoring the media environment, and developing an effective understanding of current and possible future issues. * Creating a proactive media relations approach that builds and protects reputation and influences the public and stakeholdersWorking with staff across the health service to ensure that the work that they do is accurately and positively represented in the media * Assisting in the delivery of HSE Accredited Media Training programme (training in this will be provided) * Identifying and building relationships with key stakeholders that help to achieve strategic goals * Work collaboratively with the other [National Communications teams](https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/communications/) across strategic projects to ensure communications objectives are achieved and outcomes are delivered * Working with the Parliamentary Affairs Division and FOI decision makers to ensure responses to press queries, FOI requests and PQs are consistent and include relevant contextual information   **Service Delivery**   * Work with the Press and Media Team to set communications priorities and develop plans that are aligned to the organisation’s strategic goals * Work collaboratively with operational comms leads to ensure a consistent approach to communications activities for the organisation * Organise and manage responses to media queries and liaise with HSE divisions in managing day to day operational and issue driven communications * Build positive working relationships with journalists and key stakeholders   **Stakeholder engagement and relationship management**   * Develop clear links with, and provide advice and support to our colleagues and the health regions * Demonstrate proactive commitment to all communications with internal and external stakeholders * Develop and maintain a strong focus on both internal and external communications relevant to the work of this function   **Additional:**   * Have a working knowledge of the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Standards as they apply to the role for example, Standards for Healthcare, National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections, Hygiene etcand comply with associated HSE protocols for implementing and maintaining these standards as appropriate to the role. * Support, promote and actively participate in sustainable energy, water and waste initiatives to create a more sustainable, low carbon and efficient health service   **The above Job Description is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties involved. The post holder may be assigned other duties as appropriate to the post from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.** |
| **Eligibility Criteria**  **Qualifications and/** | **Candidates must have at the latest date of application: -**   * Significant experience in a communications leadership role including senior experience in a press office or journalistic environment. * Significant experience of project management including the planning, delivery and evaluation of communications projects. * Significant experience dealing with issues and crisis management, including but not limited to risk and reputation management, stakeholder relations and media engagement. * Significant experience of leading and developing a team to deliver at a high-level in a fast-paced environment   **Health**  A candidate for and any person holding the office must be fully competent and capable of undertaking the duties attached to the office and be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.  **Character**  Each candidate for and any person holding the office must be of good character. |
| **Post specific requirements** | * Minimum of 10+ years’ experience in a senior digital role * Significant experience in all aspects of Data Protection and GDPR * Experience in a senior management role * Experience managing and configuring analytics and content management solutions |
| **Other requirements specific to the post** | There is a requirement to provide on call duty. The Out of Hours Roster is managed collaboratively on rotation between all senior communications professionals working in National Communications  Flexibility in relation to working hours as needed. |
| **Skills, competencies and/or knowledge** | **Professional Knowledge and Experience**  Demonstrate:   * Knowledge of the role of the HSE Communications and Public Affairs Division, the broader health service structure and its relationship with external agencies * An understanding of the media and political environment, with a keen interest in and knowledge of health related issues * Detailed knowledge of the issues, developments and current thinking on best practice in relation to healthcare delivery and reform * Knowledge and experience in relation to dealing with complex media operations and project management * A thorough understanding of the Irish media market and of the requirements of different kinds of media i.e. print, TV, radio and digital * Experience and proven ability in writing for public consumption.   **Planning and Organising**  Demonstrate:   * The ability to successfully manage a range of different projects and work activities concurrently, utilising computer technology effectively and delegation of work projects and tasks to meet strict deadlines * The ability to proactively identify areas for improvement and to develop practical solutions for their implementation * The ability to embrace change and adapt local work practices accordingly by finding practical ways to make policies work, ensuring the team knows how to action changes * The ability to use resources effectively, challenging processes to improve efficiencies where appropriate   **Evaluating Information and Decision Making:**  Demonstrate:   * Excellent analytical, problem solving and decision making skills * The ability to quickly grasp and understand complex issues and the impact on service delivery * The ability to evaluate complex information from a variety of sources and make effective decisions * The ability to confidently explain the rationale behind decision when faced with opposition * Initiative in the resolution of complex, fast moving issues   **Building and Maintaining Relationships including Teamwork and Leadership Skills**  Demonstrate:   * The ability to build and maintain relationships with colleagues and other stakeholders and to achieve results through collaborative working * The ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a dynamic team and multi stakeholder environment * The ability to lead the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required. * Flexibility, adaptability and openness to working effectively in a changing environment   **Communication and Interpersonal Skills**  Demonstrate:   * Effective verbal and presentation communication skills, understanding complex information with the ability to distil and communicate it clearly and concisely * Excellent written communications skills and the capacity to prepare briefing materials that are relevant, timely, concise and targeted at the appropriate audience. * Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to work effectively with and support a wide range of stakeholders.   **Commitment to a Quality Service**  Demonstrate:   * Evidence of practicing and promoting a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service for internal and external customers * Commitment to developing own knowledge and expertise, continuous professional development is encouraged * Evidence of setting high standards of performance for self and others, ensuring accurate attention to detail and consistent adherence to procedures and current standards within area of responsibility |
| **Campaign Specific Selection Process**  **Ranking/Shortlisting / Interview** | A ranking and or shortlisting exercise may be carried out on the basis of information supplied in your application form. The criteria for ranking and or shortlisting are based on the requirements of the post as outlined in the eligibility criteria and skills, competencies and/or knowledge section of this job specification. Therefore it is very important that you think about your experience in light of those requirements.  Failure to include information regarding these requirements may result in you not progressing to the next stage of the selection process.  Those successful at the ranking stage of this process (where applied) will be placed on an order of merit and will be called to interview in ‘bands’ depending on the service needs of the organisation. |
| **Diversity, Equality and Inclusion** | The HSE is an equal opportunities employer.  Employees of the HSE bring a range of skills, talents, diverse thinking and experience to the organisation. The HSE believes passionately that employing a diverse workforce is central to its success – we aim to develop the workforce of the HSE so that it reflects the diversity of HSE service users and to strengthen it through accommodating and valuing different perspectives. Ultimately this will result in improved service user and employee experience.  The HSE is committed to creating a positive working environment whereby all employees inclusive of age, civil status, disability, ethnicity and race, family status, gender, membership of the Traveller community, religion and sexual orientation are respected, valued and can reach their full potential. The HSE aims to achieve this through development of an organisational culture where injustice, bias and discrimination are not tolerated.  The HSE welcomes people with diverse backgrounds and offers a range of supports and resources to staff, such as those who require a reasonable accommodation at work because of a disability or long term health condition.  Read more about the HSE’s commitment to [Diversity, Equality and Inclusion](https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/diversity/diversity.html) |
| **Code of Practice** | The Health Service Executive will run this campaign in compliance with the Code of Practice prepared by the Commission for Public Service Appointments (CPSA).  The CPSA is responsible for establishing the principles that should be followed when making an appointment. These are set out in the CPSA Code of Practice. The Code outlines the standards that should be adhered to at each stage of the selection process and sets out the review and appeal mechanisms open to candidates should they be unhappy with a selection process.  Read the [CPSA Code of Practice](https://www.cpsa.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.cpsa.ie/media/275828/b88e3648-c663-4293-9471-d2d75bd1d685.pdf) |
| The reform programme outlined for the Health Services may impact on this role and as structures change the job description may be reviewed.  This job description is a guide to the general range of duties assigned to the post holder. It is intended to be neither definitive nor restrictive and is subject to periodic review with the employee concerned. | |

**Terms and Conditions of Employment**

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| **Tenure** | The current vacancy available is **permanent** and **whole time.**  The post is pensionable. A panel may be created from which permanent and specified purpose vacancies of full or part time duration may be filled. The tenure of these posts will be indicated at “expression of interest” stage.  Appointment as an employee of the Health Service Executive is governed by the Health Act 2004 and the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2004 and Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Amendment Act 2013. |
| **Remuneration** | The salary scale for the post is: (as at 01/03/2025)    81,444 82,175 85,389 88,616 91,818 95,033 98,23  New appointees to any grade start at the minimum point of the scale. Incremental credit will be applied for recognised relevant service in Ireland and abroad (Department of Health Circular 2/2011). Incremental credit is normally granted on appointment, in respect of previous experience in the Civil Service, Local Authorities, Health Service and other Public Service Bodies and Statutory Agencies. |
| **Working Week** | The standard working week applying to the post is to be confirmed at Job Offer stage  HSE Circular 003-2009 “Matching Working Patterns to Service Needs (Extended Working Day / Week Arrangements); Framework for Implementation of Clause 30.4 of Towards 2016” applies. Under the terms of this circular, all new entrants and staff appointed to promotional posts from Dec 16th, 2008, will be required to work agreed roster / on call arrangements as advised by their line manager. Contracted hours of work are liable to change between the hours of 8am-8pm over seven days to meet the requirements for extended day services in accordance with the terms of the Framework Agreement (Implementation of Clause 30.4 of Towards 2016). |
| **Annual Leave** | The annual leave associated with the post will be confirmed at job offer stage |
| **Superannuation** | This is a pensionable position with the HSE. The successful candidate will upon appointment become a member of the appropriate pension scheme. Pension scheme membership will be notified within the contract of employment. Members of pre-existing pension schemes who transferred to the HSE on the 01st January 2005 pursuant to Section 60 of the Health Act 2004 are entitled to superannuation benefit terms under the HSE Scheme which are no less favourable to those which they were entitled to at 31st December 2004 |
| **Age** | The Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act, 2018\* set 70 years as the compulsory retirement age for public servants.  ***\* Public Servants not affected by this legislation:***  Public servants recruited between 1 April 2004 and 31 December 2012 (new entrants) have no compulsory retirement age.  Public servants recruited since 1 January 2013 are members of the Single Pension Scheme and have a compulsory retirement age of 70. |
| **Probation** | Every appointment of a person who is not already a permanent officer of the Health Service Executive or of a Local Authority shall be subject to a probationary period of 12 months as stipulated in the Department of Health Circular No.10/71. |
| **Protection of Children Guidance and Legislation** | The welfare and protection of children is the responsibility of all HSE staff. You must be aware of and understand your specific responsibilities under the Children First Act 2015, the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 in accordance with Section 2, Children First National Guidance and other relevant child safeguarding legislation and policies.  Some staff have additional responsibilities such as Line Managers, Designated Officers and Mandated Persons. You should check if you are a Designated Officer and / or a Mandated Person and be familiar with the related roles and legal responsibilities.  For further information, guidance and resources please visit: [HSE Children First webpage](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/primarycare/childrenfirst/resources/). |
| **Infection Control** | Have a working knowledge of Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Standards as they apply to the role for example, Standards for Healthcare, National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections, Hygiene Standards etc. |
| **Ethics in Public Office 1995 and 2001**  **(Positions remunerated at or above the minimum point of the Grade VIII salary scale €71,077 as at 01.02.2022)** | Positions remunerated at or above the minimum point of the Grade VIII salary scale (€70,373 as at 01.10.2021) are designated positions under Section 18 of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995. Any person appointed to a designated position must comply with the requirements of the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001 as outlined below:  A) In accordance with Section 18 of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995, a person holding such a post is required to prepare and furnish an annual statement of any interests which could materially influence the performance of the official functions of the post. This annual statement of interest should be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer not later than 31st January in the following year.  B) In addition to the annual statement, a person holding such a post is required, whenever they are performing a function as an employee of the HSE and have actual knowledge, or a connected person, has a material interest in a matter to which the function relates, provide at the time a statement of the facts of that interest. A person holding such a post should provide such statement to the Chief Executive Officer. The function in question cannot be performed unless there are compelling reasons to do so and, if this is the case, those compelling reasons must be stated in writing and must be provided to the Chief Executive Officer.  C) A person holding such a post is required under the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001 to act in accordance with any guidelines or advice published or given by the Standards in Public Office Commission. Guidelines for public servants on compliance with the provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001 are available on the Standards Commission’s website <https://www.sipo.ie/>. |
| **Health & Safety** | It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that the management of safety, health and welfare is successfully integrated into all activities undertaken within their area of responsibility, so far as is reasonably practicable. Line managers are named and roles and responsibilities detailed in the relevant Site Specific Safety Statement (SSSS).  Key responsibilities include:   * Developing a SSSS for the department/service[[1]](#footnote-1), as applicable, based on the identification of hazards and the assessment of risks, and reviewing/updating same on a regular basis (at least annually) and in the event of any significant change in the work activity or place of work. * Ensuring that Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) is integrated into day-to-day business, providing Systems Of Work (SOW) that are planned, organised, performed, maintained and revised as appropriate, and ensuring that all safety related records are maintained and available for inspection. * Consulting and communicating with staff and safety representatives on OSH matters. * Ensuring a training needs assessment (TNA) is undertaken for employees, facilitating their attendance at statutory OSH training, and ensuring records are maintained for each employee. * Ensuring that all incidents occurring within the relevant department/service are appropriately managed and investigated in accordance with HSE procedures[[2]](#footnote-2). * Seeking advice from health and safety professionals through the National Health and Safety Function Helpdesk as appropriate. * Reviewing the health and safety performance of the ward/department/service and staff through, respectively, local audit and performance achievement meetings for example.   **Note**: Detailed roles and responsibilities of Line Managers are outlined in local **SSSS**. |

1. A template SSSS and guidelines are available on the National Health and Safety Function/H&S web-pages [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See link on health and safety web-pages to latest Incident Management Policy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)