**Occupational Therapy Assistant**

**National Forensic Mental Health Service (NFMHS)**

**Job Specification & Terms and Conditions**

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| **Job Title, Grade Code** | **Occupational Therapy Assistant**  *(Grade Code: 6505)* |
| **Remuneration** | The salary scale for the post is: 01/03/2025:   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | €35,434 | €36,883 | €38,410 | €38,816 | €39,813 | €40,675 | €41,917 | €43,204 | €44,539 |   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. |
| **Campaign Reference** | NFMHSOTA1 |
| **Closing Date** | Monday 7th April 2025 @ 12.00 |
| **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** | **National Forensic Mental Health Service**  There are currently one permanent, whole-time post available.  The post holder will be based in the National Forensic Mental Health Service(NFMHS) in Portrane, North Co Dublin.  A panel may be created for the NFMHS from which current and future, permanent and specified purpose vacancies of full or part time duration may be filled. |
| **Informal Enquiries** | Padraic O’Flynn,  Occupational Therapy Manager,  Email padraic.oflynn@hse.ie  Mobile 086 7959436 |
| **Details of Service** | **National Forensic Mental Health Service (NFMHS)**  The NFMHS is based in the Central Mental Hospital (CMH). The CMH is the only specialist HSE Mental Health Service provider that provides Forensic Mental Health assessment and treatment in Ireland. It is the only approved and designated centre in the state that provides psychiatric care in conditions of maximum and medium security. The CMH operates as a therapeutic rather than penal institution and is part of the HSE.  The CMH has transitioned to a new purpose built campus facility in Portrane, in North Co. Dublin and includes the development of additional Forensic Mental Health Services  The campus is designed to provide care and treatment within high and medium secure services and includes a number of shared facilities. The new facility consists of 9 in-patient units, a medical and therapy centre and an administrative complex. Adjacent but external to the main hospital is a newly constructed 10-bed forensic CAMHS unit and a 30-bed Intensive Care Rehabilitation Unit (ICRU).  <https://www.hse.ie/eng/national-forensic-mental-health-service-portrane/about-the-national-forensic-mental-health-service/about-us/> |
| **Reporting Relationship** | The Occupational Therapy Assistant will report to the Occupational Therapist Manager through the line management structure / work under the supervision and direction of a nominated Supervisor as appropriate to the site. |
| **Purpose of the Post** | The role includes clinical and administrative duties that support Occupational Therapists in providing a high-quality service to users. |
| **Principal Duties and Responsibilities** | *The Occupational Therapy Assistant will:*  **Clinical / Administrative**   * Manage own caseload in accordance with the needs of the post. * Collaborate with service users, family, carers and other staff in treatment / intervention planning and in the provision of support and advice. * Follow treatment plans as determined and delegated by an Occupational Therapist including assisting in the provision of education and advice to service users on the use of enabling equipment. * Carry out duties related to the planning, organisation and maintenance of Occupational Therapy programmes as directed by the Occupational Therapist. * Carry out generic programmes and groups for service users to the specifications agreed with the Occupational Therapist Supervisor and treating Occupational Therapists. * Liaise with other staff and agencies in the provision of therapeutic programmes as directed by Occupational Therapist Supervisor. * Prepare resources for assessment / intervention for clinic appointments, home visits and group interventions. * Prepare the environment for group or 1:1 interventions according to service user needs and therapeutic goals, as directed by the Occupational Therapist. * Work directly with service users under the direction of an Occupational Therapist, providing intervention in both individual and group settings for example:   + Assist service users with training and rehabilitation in e.g.:     - Personal activities of daily living (PADL’s).     - Domestic activities of daily living (DADL’s).     - Work/vocational skills.     - Leisure activities.     - Community living skills.   + Assist service users with quality of life interventions e.g.:     - Providing opportunities for service users to engage in purposeful activities.     - Providing opportunities for service users to maintain appropriate occupational roles and habits.     - Providing opportunities for service users to maintain / develop a sense of personal empowerment and esteem.     - Providing opportunities for service users to maintain / develop occupational performance ability, including, cognitive skills, social interaction and physical ability. * Record intervention outcomes as appropriate and report outcomes to the Occupational Therapist. * Maintain accurate records of service user assessments and interventions. Maintain clinical notes relating to clinical work in service user files in accordance with local service protocols. * Maintain professional standards in relation to consent, confidentiality, ethics and legislation. * Carry out joint home assessments / follow up home visits with the supervising Occupational Therapist. * Carry out the administrative and clerical duties required to support the Occupational Therapy staff and the Occupational Therapy department e.g. the scheduling of appointments. * Assist in the organisation, maintenance and / or ordering of equipment and materials used in assessment and treatment, in conjunction with the Occupational Therapists. * Comply with department procedures with regard to recommendation and provision of all assistive equipment / custom made devices. * Keep up-to-date statistics and other administrative records as required within the Occupational Therapy department. * Contribute to the planning and development of the Occupational Therapy Service and participate in service improvements, in conjunction with the Occupational Therapists.   **Education and Training**   * Attend induction and mandatory in-service education relevant to the role. * Participate in the induction of new staff as directed. * Participate in appraisal and the development of a personal development plan in conjunction with the line manager. * Participate in team based development, education, training and learning.   **Health & Safety**   * Observe all rules relating to Health and Safety and Conduct at Work and use any equipment provided in a safe and responsible manner. * Report any incident or potential incident, which may compromise the health and safety of others and take appropriate action. Report any accidents, near misses to the person in charge and ensure completion of incident / near miss forms. * Do not undertake any duty related to patient / service user care for which he/she is not trained. * 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 Standards etc. and 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 Specification is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties involved and consequently, the post holder may be required to perform other duties as appropriate to the post which may be assigned to him/her from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.** |
| **Eligibility Criteria**  **Qualifications and/ or experience** | **Candidates must have at the latest date of application:**   1. **Statutory Registration, Professional Qualifications, Experience, etc.**   (a) Eligible applicants will be those who on the closing date for the competition have the following:   1. Possess a relevant\* health skills QQI Level 5 qualification (formerly FETAC) having achieved the associated Level 5 minor awards in both Occupational Therapy Assistant Theory and Occupational Therapy Assistant Practice at QQI Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)   **Or**   1. Possess a relevant Healthcare qualification at not less than QQI Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and give an undertaking to successfully complete an approved programme leading to QQI Level 5 minor awards in both Occupational Therapy Assistant Theory and Occupational Therapy Assistant Practice within 1 year of taking up duty.   **Or**   1. Be currently employed as a Occupational Therapy Assistant, Healthcare Assistant, Care Assistant, Attendant, Multi-Task Attendant or in a comparable role for at least 1 year and give an undertaking to acquire an appropriate healthcare qualification at not less than QQI Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) major award, having achieved the associated Level 5 minor awards in both Occupational Therapy Assistant Theory and Occupational Therapy Assistant Practice within 1 year of taking up post.   **Or**   1. Have completed the relevant QQI Level 5 minor awards in both Occupational Therapy Assistant Theory and Occupational Therapy Assistant practice and give a commitment to successfully complete a QQI level 5 major award within a 1 year of taking up post   **Or**   1. An equivalent qualification from another jurisdiction   **And**  (b) Candidates must have the requisite knowledge and ability (including a high standard of suitability and professional ability) for the proper discharge of duties of the office.   1. **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.   1. **Character**   Each candidate for and any person holding the office must be of good character. |
| **Other requirements specific to the post** | Have access to appropriate transport to fulfil the requirements of the role |
| **Skills, competencies and/or knowledge** | **Professional Knowledge**   * Demonstrates a good understanding of the role of an Occupational Therapy Assistant. * Demonstrates an ability to understand and comply with health and safety requirements in work situations. * Demonstrates commitment to continuing professional development. * Demonstrates a willingness to engage with and develop Information Technology skills relevant to the role.   **Planning and Organising Skills**   * The ability to plan and organise effectively. * Demonstrates good time management skills in carrying out both administrative and clinical duties, including the ability to prioritise effectively and manage competing demands. * Demonstrates the ability to take initiative and to be appropriately self-directed.   **Team working / Building Effective Working Relationships**   * Demonstrates effective team skills, shows respect for other team members. * Participates in and contributes to the team, strives to foster good working relationships within the team. * Works collaboratively with others, can be flexible within one’s own role and responsibility. * Demonstrates the ability to react constructively to setbacks, is able to maintain professionalism and manage situations where conflict arises.   **Commitment to providing a Quality Service**   * Demonstrates a commitment to the delivery of a high quality, person centred service. * Treats all service users with dignity and respect and ensures that the welfare of the service user is a key consideration at all times. * Demonstrates the ability to respect and maintain confidentially. * Demonstrates an interest in contributing to alternative methods/new ways of working to improve service user care. * Demonstrates flexibility and an openness to change, has a positive attitude towards change.   **Evaluating Information and Judging Situations**   * Reads situations quickly and responds appropriately; can find common ground and get co-operation with minimum upset. * Recognises and interprets an unsafe situation and takes appropriate action. * Demonstrates the ability to make effective decisions with regard to service user care. * Knows when to ask for help / when to ask another team member to intervene.   **Communications & Interpersonal Skills**   * Displays effective communication skills (verbal & written). * Tailors the communication method and the message to match the needs of the audience. * Acts with professionalism and demonstrates empathy with others in undignified / stressful situations, retains composure. * Demonstrates understanding and appropriate responses to service users with varying degrees of need. * Demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people, particularly in listening, giving explanations / directions and in reporting back on observations. |
| **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 to be followed when making an appointment. These are set out in the CPSA Code of Practice. The Code outlines the standards to 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 Specification may be reviewed.  This Job Specification 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. | |

**Occupational Therapy Assistant**

**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. |
| **Working Week** | The standard weekly working hours of attendance for your grade are **39** hours per week. Your normal weekly working hours are **39** hours. Contracted hours that are less than the standard weekly working hours for your grade will be paid pro rata to the full time equivalent.  You are required to work agreed roster/on-call arrangements advised by your Reporting Manager. Your contracted hours are liable to change between the hours of 8.00am and 8.00pm over seven days to meet the requirements for extended day services in accordance with the terms of collective agreements and HSE Circulars. |
| **Annual Leave** | The annual leave associated with the post will be confirmed at Contracting 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 joining the public service or re-joining the public service with a 26 week break in service, between 1 April 2004 and 31 December 2012 (new entrants) have no compulsory retirement age.  Public servants, joining the public service or re-joining the public service after a 26 week break, after 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.  Visit [HSE Children First](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/primarycare/childrenfirst/resources/) for further information, guidance and 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. and comply with associated HSE protocols for implementing and maintaining these standards as appropriate to the role. |
| **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-2), 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-3). * 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 [writing your site or service safety statement](https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/safety-statement/).

   2 Structures and processes for [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)