 **Helpline Addiction Counsellor**

**Job Specification & Terms and Conditions**

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| **Job Title, Grade Code** | Helpline Addiction Counsellor  (Grade Code:391T) |
| **Campaign Reference** | NRS14778 |
| **Closing Date** | Thursday, 26th June 2025 12:00PM |
| **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** | **Addiction Services, Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow (CHO Area 7)**  There is currently one permanent and whole-time vacancy available in Addiction Services, Bridge House, Cherry Orchard Hospital Campus, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10  A panel may be formed as a result of this campaign for **Helpline** **Addiction Counsellor,** **HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline and HSE HIV and Sexual Health Helpline, Addiction Services, Community Healthcare Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow (CHO Area 7)** from which current and future, permanent and specified purpose vacancies of full or part-time duration may be filled. |
| **Informal Enquiries** | Aileen Dooley, Helpline Manager,  HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline and HSE HIV and Sexual Health Helpline  Email: [aileen.dooley@hse.ie](mailto:aileen.dooley@hse.ie)  Mobile: 087 9967954 |
| **Details of Service** | The Addiction Service provides a multidisciplinary service for those affected by addiction. The Addiction Service provides clinical interventions forchildren, adolescents and adults at all stages of the addiction continuum. The HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline and HSE HIV and Sexual Health Helpline sits within the Addiction services and has a national remit. It has two distinct services: The Drugs & Alcohol Helpline and Email Support Service and the HIV and Sexual Health Helpline and Email Support Service. The Helpline is currently open Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5.30pm |
| **Reporting Relationship** | The post holder will report to the Helpline Manager as Head of Discipline accounting for operational and professional practice and clinical governance. |
| **Key Working Relationships** | * Working with service users by email or by phone. * Working alongside fellow Helpline counsellors including in training and team supervision * Working alongside and under the supervision of the Helpline Manager * Liaising with support service providers: Staff regularly contact services to update the information that the Helpline holds on each service. |
| **Purpose of the Post** | The Helpline Addiction Counsellor will work as part of a small team of Helpline Staff. The role is to provide Helpline and Email support to service users but in addition to that there is collaboration across the team around best practice for Helpline calls; email double checking; updating our services database; monthly group supervision etc. The person will report directly to the Helpline Manager |
| **Principal Duties and Responsibilities** | **The Helpline Addiction Counsellor duties and responsibilities:**  **Best Practice**   * To provide the phone and digital support (through email, chat etc) to those who use the Drugs and Alcohol Helpline and /or the HIV, Sexual Health and Email Support Helpline * To deal with service users in a courteous and professional manner that demonstrates warmth, openness and a willingness to explore the content and context of each unique contact. * To provide service users with an appropriate level of information to enable them to make informed choices, appropriate to their own needs without prejudice or bias * To provide support along the journey of recovery, for example, harm reduction interventions, brief interventions, relapse prevention and aftercare. * To assist people in identifying their needs at the time and giving onward referral information to other health and social care services as appropriate. * To provide support to drug/alcohol users and also those concerned for them including family members, professionals, friends etc * To provide an appropriate level of guidance to students doing research. * To provide accurate information, support, guidance and referral around HIV and Sexual health etc in accordance with our role as the HSE HIV and Sexual Health and Email Support Helpline * To maintain a professional stance without advertising personal views, opinions or beliefs. * To work collaboratively within the team to share information and skills and be open to learning from others within the team too. * Develop and maintain good collaborative relationships with specialist services to ensure that the information on the services database is accurate and up to date. * Keep good and accurate (anonymous) records of calls and emails, in order to contribute fully to the data collection needed for Helpline statistical reports. * Work in accordance with the Policies and Guidelines of the Helpline service and observe professional ethical standards and behaviours as required by HSE Policies and Guidelines, Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act and requirements of relevant Professional Accrediting Bodies, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of records and security of same.   **Ongoing development and training:**   * To work in a manner that respects service users, colleagues, management and the wider organisation. * To work collaboratively within the team to share information and skills and be open to learning from others within the team too. * To reflect, using the Helplines processes, on each contact with the service and consider how your listening skills contributed to the call/email and also in what areas your practice could that be improved. * To reflect, using the Helplines processes, on how your personal wellbeing or experiences might influence how you deal with service users and take steps to minimise any negative impacts from this on you or service users. * To engage fully with external group supervision and use this opportunity effectively to gain and offer support, develop and share skills/ knowledge, explore your own and others professional objectives and to treat those involved with respect. * To engage fully with individual manager’s supervision; team meetings; debriefing and support and use these opportunities effectively to reflect upon professional practice, receive personal support and guidance and identify strengths and educational/training needs * Attend in-service training and other relevant training opportunities * Attend mandatory training through the HSE as required * As a mandated person under the Children First Act 2015 you will have a legal obligation to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla and assist, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report * Support models of evidence based best practice. * Participate in the on-going monitoring, audit and evaluation of service. * Participate in the development of new initiatives: e.g. extension of hours. Staff will need to be part of a rota that involves fair and even distribution of working hours to cover extended opening hours on weekday evenings and weekends, in time * Play an active role in the development of the service   **Record keeping and information updates**   * To keep an accurate record of data related to helpline contacts on the appropriate forms and in line with helpline data protection and other policies * To update information on relevant services and topics and share that information clearly with the other members of the team. * To visit other services and be prepared to share knowledge gained from such visits with the team. * To stay informed on current trends, research issues and services related to drugs; alcohol; HIV and sexual health. * To work using the computerised phone and information systems * To update the information resources of the Helpline when new information becomes available, using the procedures in operation at the time. * To be familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures of the Helpline and its Code of Ethics and Confidentiality. * Comply with Health and Safety regulations and review procedures. * Comply with HSE Policies and review procedures related to risk management, audits, and clinical accountability. * Carry out any other duties that may be reasonably requested of you by the Manager of the Helpline. * Engage in the HSE performance achievement process in conjunction with your Line Manager and staff as appropriate. * Adequately identify, assess, manage and monitor risks within your area of responsibility. * 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 them 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. **Professional Qualifications, Experience, etc.** 2. A professional qualification in counselling or psychotherapy of at least level 7 on the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland’s framework.   **AND**   1. Be accredited as a counsellor with the Addiction Counsellors of Ireland (ACI) or accredited as a counsellor/psychotherapist with the Irish Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (IACP) or a relevant body within the Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP)   **OR**   1. Have an equivalent qualification and full registration from another jurisdiction   **AND**   1. Have a minimum of 2 years post qualification experience working as a professional accredited counsellor in a counselling setting with adults and young people where addiction issues were part of this work.   **AND**   1. Candidates must possess the requisite knowledge and ability, including a high standard of suitability and management ability, for the proper discharge of the office.   **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** | Demonstrate depth and breadth of experience working with those in active addiction and recovery and their families, as relevant to the role. |
| **Other requirements specific to the post** | Have access to appropriate transport to fulfil the requirements of the role  Flexibility in relation to working hours to fulfil the requirements of the role |
| **Skills, competencies and/or knowledge** | Candidates Must:   * Demonstrate knowledge of addiction/ substance use issues * Demonstrate knowledge of sexual health issues * Demonstrate an understanding of brief interventions as compared with ongoing counselling * Demonstrate an ability to support concerned persons as an individual with separate needs to the drug/alcohol user * Demonstrate an understanding of what harm reduction is and a willingness to engage around harm reduction as required * Demonstrate an ability to deal with aggressive or angry service users with professionalism and respect * Demonstrate knowledge of dual diagnosis and mental health challenges * Demonstrate knowledge of how to deal with people who are feeling suicidal * Demonstrate knowledge of notification procedures around child protection and management of other ethical considerations relevant to post. * Demonstrate competence in providing active listening support * Demonstrate competence in responding appropriately to diverse service users who are vulnerable or at risk. * Demonstrate knowledge of notification procedures around child protection and management of other ethical considerations relevant to post. * Demonstrate knowledge of relevant legislation. * Demonstrate knowledge of infection control. * Demonstrate competence in responding appropriately to diverse service users who are vulnerable or at risk. * Demonstrate an ability to work both as part of a team and to work independently, under supervision. * Demonstrate an ability to manage deadlines and effectively handle multiple tasks. * Demonstrate initiative and innovation, identifying areas of improvement, implementing and managing change. * Demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development and effective use of supervision. * Demonstrate an awareness of professional and personal boundaries. * Demonstrate an appreciation of the importance of professional and personal support systems. * Demonstrate experience in written communication, record keeping and information sharing. * Demonstrate effective interpersonal and communication (verbal and written) skills. * Demonstrate an ability to create records effectively * Demonstrate a willingness to develop Information Technology skills relevant to the role. |
| **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 being called forward 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.  For further information on the HSE commitment to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, please visit the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion web page at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/diversity/> |
| **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.  The CPSA Code of Practice can be accessed via <https://www.cpsa.ie/>. |
| 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. | |



**Helpline Addiction Counsellor**

**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)**  €47,647; €49,147; €50,663; €52,215; €53,819; €55,732; €57,420; €59,648; €61,940; €64,109; €66,282; €68,914  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 weekly working hours of attendance for your grade are 35hours per week. Your normal weekly working hours are 35hours. 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.  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. 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-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, here: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/safetywellbeing/about%20us/>

   2 See link on health and safety web-pages to latest Incident Management Policy [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)