**Social Worker, Senior Medical**

**Job Specification & Terms and Conditions**

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| **Job Title, Grade Code** | Social Worker, Senior Medical  Oibrí Sóisialta Sinsearach Míochaine  (Grade Code: 3019) |
| **Remuneration** | The salary scale for the post is: (as at 01/03/2025)    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** | PC.011.2025 |
| **Closing Date** | Monday 9th June 2025 at 12noon. |
| **Proposed Interview Date (s)** | Due to the urgent requirement of this post interviews will take place as soon as possible once the closing date has passed. This means that you may be called forward for interview at very short notice. |
| **Taking up Appointment** | A start date will be indicated at job offer stage. |
| **Location of Post** | Donegal Hospice, Primary Care, Knocknamona, Letterkenny  Ospís Dhún na nGall, Cúram Príomhúil, Cnoc na Móna, Leitir Ceanainn  There is currently 1 permanent whole-time vacancy available in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.  A panel may be formed as a result of this campaign for **Social Worker, Senior Medical, Donegal Hospice,** from which current and future, permanent and specified purpose vacancies of full or part-time duration may be filled. |
| **Informal Enquiries** | We welcome enquiries about the role.  Contact Tina Gardiner, Principal Social Worker  [tina.gardiner@hse.ie](mailto:tina.gardiner@hse.ie) / 074 9104721 for further information about the role.  Contact Donegal Hospice 074 9177258 for further information about the Hospice and Specialist Palliative Care Service.  Contact recruitdonegal@hse.ie for enquiries relating to the recruitment process. |
| **Details of Service** | The mission statement of the Donegal Hospice is: to provide comprehensive physical, emotional and spiritual care for individuals and families promoting the highest quality of living during life-limiting illness and bereavement. As you can see it is not just about the individual, nor is it just about medical intervention, but is about identifying what is appropriate in each individual case and providing a range of support services that are appropriate to that person and their individual circumstances. These may involve the Home Care team providing support at home; it may be a short period in the Hospice to provide symptom control; or it may involve visiting satellite outpatient clinics.  Donegal Hospice is an 8 bedded inpatient unit to serve the population of County Donegal. The Palliative Care team consists of Palliative Care Consultants, Director of Nursing, Nursing staff and HSCP staff who offer multi-disciplinary support to palliative care patients in the inpatient unit and in outpatient clinics around the county. |
| **Reporting Relationship** | The Social Worker, Senior Medical will report to the HSE Principal Social Worker Donegal. |
| **Purpose of the Post** | To provide a Social Work Service to inpatients and families in Donegal Hospice in the first instance. Providing counselling, emotional and practical support to patients and their families which will assist them in developing strategies to cope with the psychosocial and emotional impact of illness.  To provide a Social Work Service to Palliative Care patients in the community working closely with the Palliative Care Consultants, the Director of Nursing and with other members of the Specialist Palliative Care Multi-Disciplinary Team. |
| **Principal Duties and Responsibilities** | * The person holding this post is required to support the principle of Person Centred Care and will approach their work with the flexibility and enthusiasm necessary to make this principle a reality for every patient to the greatest possible degree. * The post holder will work closely and collaboratively with the Palliative Care Consultants and the Director of Nursing to provide a comprehensive and holistic package of care to both inpatients and palliative care patients in the community. * Performance management systems are part of role and you will be required to participate in the Hospice and Social Work Service performance management programmes.   **Professional/Clinical**  *The Senior Medical Social Worker will:*   * Deliver a quality service to service users ensuring professional standards are maintained in accordance with the requirements as set out by CORU <https://coru.ie/files-education/swrb-standards-of-proficiency-for-social-workers.pdf> * Participate in the development of Medical Social Work in Donegal Hospice through needs assessment and implementation of a defined social work service. * Provide a comprehensive social work service to the hospice and Palliative care patients in the community. * Provide counselling, emotional and practical support to patients and their families which will assist them in developing strategies to cope with the psychosocial and emotional impact of illness. * Carry out social assessments where social issues are a factor in illness management and advise the multidisciplinary team (MDT) on assessment outcomes. * Be a resource to the MDT regarding the psychosocial aspects of the patient’s life which may impact on ability to cope with illness. * Assist in discharge planning in the context of the MDT. * Consult and liaise with other agencies. * Ensure the delivery of social work services is in accordance, relevant legislation and HSE policies, procedures, guidelines and protocols. * Provide supervision to Students and PQSW grade staff. * Keep adequate records. * Perform other duties as may be assigned from time to time by your line manager. * Attend case conferences, meetings court, tribunals etc. as required. * Participate in working groups / committees. * Keep Line Manager fully informed and up-to-date on all significant matters. * Be responsible for the management of the day-to-day provision of the social work service in conjunction with other Senior Medical Social Worker(s). * Take direct responsibility for a defined caseload as required, in particular cases that require a high level of experience and expertise. * Provide a comprehensive social work service to patients and families, to include psycho-social assessment, intervention, discharge planning and follow up or referral on, as required, to statutory and / or voluntary services. * Provide an initial assessment service to all care groups and develop referral procedures with community and other networked services. * Make it possible for clients / service users to advocate for their own needs, or where appropriate advocate on behalf of service users.   **Education & Training**  *The Senior Medical Social Worker will:*   * Maintain standards of practice and levels of professional knowledge by monitoring and reviewing the standards within area of responsibility, participating in and organising continuous professional development initiatives and professional development planning, and engage in clinical supervision. * Keep updated on current and impending legislation and the perceived impact on practice. * Keep abreast of developments in national policies and strategies and international best practice. * Keep up to date with organisational developments within the Irish Health and Social Services. * Actively engage in staff development and training by making recommendations with regard to the ongoing education, mentoring, training and in-service needs of social work team. * Act as an educational resource by participating in and promoting the education and training of Social Work colleagues, as well as other health professionals and service user including clinical audit and research. * Foster an understanding of the role and contribution of social work by providing professional consultation and education to other members of the Hospice MDT in the hospice education meetings. * Engage in the HSE performance achievement process in conjunction with your Line Manager and staff as appropriate. * To manage, participate and play a role in the practice education of student therapists. * Take an active role in professional clinical supervision and engage in reflective practice in accordance with CORU requirements and the local / national Supervision Policy.   **KPI’s**   * The identification and development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are congruent with the Hospice’s service plan targets. * The development of Action Plans to address KPI targets. * Driving and promoting a Performance Management culture. * In conjunction with line manager assist in the development of a Performance Management system for your profession. * The management and delivery of KPIs as a routine and core business objective.   **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING GENERAL CONDITIONS:**   * Employees must attend fire lectures periodically and must observe fire orders. * All accidents within the Department must be reported immediately to the Director of Nursing. * Infection Control Policies must be adhered to. * In line with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Acts 2005 and 2010 all staff must comply with all safety regulations and audits. * Provide information that meets the need of Senior Management.   **Management**   * Contribute to service developments by monitoring and evaluating emerging needs and trends / identifying unmet needs and service requirements into the future, and recognising and replicating successful interventions. * In consultation with the Principal Social Worker (or designate) develop the role of the social worker and the service through, for example, planning, audit, production of standards, continuing education, quality improvement initiatives and research. * Contribute to policy development, performance monitoring and budgetary control of service. * Provide leadership and motivation in optimising service delivery by developing teams and promoting change management. * Take responsibility for the supervision and line management of staff as required. * Be responsible for the probationary appraisal of staff and the completion of probationary appraisal reports as required. Make appropriate recommendations regarding whether employees’ standard of work during probation is satisfactory and whether appointments should be confirmed. * Ensure compliance with and implement HR policies, procedures and guidelines. * Contribute to a range of reports including annual reports, performance indicators, etc. as required. * Maintain a high standard of documentation, including service user files in accordance with local guidelines, Freedom of Information (FOI) and GDPR Acts. * Maintain accurate up to date records and files, and submit activity data as required. * Write accurate, clear, concise and purposeful reports. * Contribute to the development and implementation of information sharing protocols and audit systems. * Assist in ensuring that the social work service makes the most efficient and effective use of developments in IT.   **Risk Management, Infection Control, Hygiene Services and Health & Safety**   * The management of Risk, Infection Control, Hygiene Services and Health & Safety is the responsibility of everyone and will be achieved within a progressive, honest and open environment. * The post holder must be familiar with the necessary education, training and support to enable them to meet this responsibility. * The post holder has a duty to familiarise themselves with the relevant Organisational Policies, Procedures & Standards and attend training as appropriate in the following areas:   + Continuous Quality Improvement Initiatives   + Document Control Information Management Systems   + Risk Management Strategy and Policies   + Hygiene Related Policies, Procedures and Standards   + Decontamination Code of Practice   + Infection Control Policies   + Safety Statement, Health & Safety Policies and Fire Procedure   + Data Protection and confidentiality Policies * The post holder is responsible for ensuring that they become familiar with the requirements stated within the Risk Management Strategy and that they comply with the Service’s Risk Management Incident/Near miss reporting Policies and Procedures. * The post holder is responsible for ensuring that they comply with hygiene services requirements in your area of responsibility. Hygiene Services incorporates environment and facilities, hand hygiene, catering, cleaning, the management of laundry, waste, sharps and equipment. * The post holder must foster and support a quality improvement culture through-out your area of responsibility in relation to hygiene services. * The post holder must take reasonable care for his or her own actions and the effect that these may have upon the safety of others. * The post holder must cooperate with management, attend Health & Safety related training and not undertake any task for which they have not been authorised and adequately trained. * The post holder is required to bring to the attention of a responsible person any perceived shortcoming in our safety arrangements or any defects in work equipment. * It is the post holder’s responsibility to be aware of and comply with the HSE Health Care Records Management/Integrated Discharge Planning (HCRM / IDP) Code of Practice. * Adequately identifies, assesses, manages and monitors risk within their 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 by the latest date of application:**  **1. Statutory Registration, Professional Qualifications, Experience, etc.**  (a) Candidates for appointment must:  (i) Be registered, or be eligible for registration, on the Social Workers Register maintained by the Social Workers Registration Board at CORU.  **AND**  (ii) Have 3 years full time (or an aggregate of 3 years full time) relevant post qualification experience.  **AND**  (iii) Have the requisite knowledge and ability (including a high standard of suitability and professional ability) for the proper discharge of the duties of the office.  **AND**  (iv) Provide proof of Statutory Registration on the Social Workers Register maintained by the Social Workers Registration Board at CORU before a contract of employment can be issued.  **2. Annual registration**  (i) On appointment practitioners must maintain annual registration on the Social Workers Register maintained by the Social Workers Registration Board at CORU.  **AND**  (ii) Practitioners must confirm annual registration with CORU to the HSE by way of the annual Patient Safety Assurance Certificate (PSAC).  **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 in social work as relevant to the role. * Demonstrate depth and breadth of experience of working with multidisciplinary teams at clinic and administrative level, as relevant to the role. |
| **Other requirements specific to the post** | Candidates must have access to appropriate transport to fulfil the requirements of the role. |
| **Skills, competencies and/or knowledge** | ***Candidates must:***  **Professional Knowledge**   * Demonstrate sufficient professional knowledge to carry out the duties of the post and the responsibilities of the role safely and effectively within the legal, ethical and practice boundaries of the profession. * Demonstrate an excellent understanding of the psychosocial support required by patient, families and carers. * Demonstrate high quality counselling skills. * Demonstrate a good knowledge of the key issues facing Palliative Care Social Work, both regionally and nationally. * Demonstrate good working knowledge of Child Care legislation and Children First guidelines. * Demonstrate good working knowledge of assisted decision making legislation and Consent policies and guidelines. * Demonstrate a good working knowledge of the HSE’s Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults at Risk of Abuse – National Policy and procedures (2014). * Demonstrate good knowledge of the legislative framework as relevant to Medical Social Work. * Demonstrate the ability to utilise supervision effectively and a commitment to continuous professional development. * Demonstrate awareness of Quality Focus initiative in line with the Group’s Continuous Quality Improvement Programme. * Be aware of and adhere to relevant standards, policies and legislation for example Health and Safety, Freedom of Information Act 1997, Childcare Acts, HIQA Standards, etc. * Demonstrate good knowledge of IT skills relevant to the role. * Demonstrate a clear understanding of risk assessment. * Demonstrates knowledge of the various theoretical models, approaches and interventions that apply in current practice. * Demonstrates a commitment to promoting and applying evidence based practice and research.   **Planning and Managing Resources**   * Demonstrate ability to manage self in a busy working environment including the ability to prioritise caseloads. * Demonstrate the ability to plan and manage resources and to deliver services in an effective and resourceful manner. * Demonstrates the ability to effectively plan activities and co-ordinate resources to ensure value for money and maximum benefit for the organisation. * Takes responsibility for the achievement of delivery targets by regularly monitoring, recording and reporting performance statistics / information. * Demonstrates innovation in aiming to work within resource limitations to sustain and enhance the service while promoting a model of person-centred care.   **Commitment to Providing a Quality Service**   * Demonstrate a commitment to assuring high standards and strive for a user centred service. * Demonstrate the ability to empathise with and treat others with dignity and respect. * Demonstrate innovation and openness to change. * Accepts accountability for standards of performance in area of responsibility. * Monitors and reviews the work of the team to ensure its quality and accuracy. * Motivates self and others in facilitating change and improving service delivery. * Promotes the service user as expert through experience by involving service users in care planning, decision-making and service development.   **Evaluating Information & Judging Situations**   * Demonstrate the ability to evaluate information and make effective decisions especially with regard to service users. * Formulates, articulates and demonstrates sound clinical reasoning / synthesises and analyses information available. * Regularly quantifies and evaluates activities against service plans and takes timely action to correct potential difficulties. * Confidently explains the rationale behind decisions when faced with opposition or competing demands. * Establishes integrity by ensuring that the professional, ethical and safety factors are fully considered in decisions into which they have input.   **Managing & Developing (Self & Others)**   * Demonstrate the ability to lead a Social Work Team, supervise and support staff, where appropriate. * Demonstrate ability to motivate and support staff particularly in times of scarce resources and increasing demand for services. * Demonstrate effective team skills including an understanding of team dynamics and the ability to work in multi-disciplinary and inter-agency teams. * Demonstrate good self-motivation and self-management skills. * Demonstrates the ability to manage and develop self and others in a busy working environment including the ability to prioritise caseloads for self and others. * Actively promotes multi / interdisciplinary team working. * Demonstrates effective leadership, providing clear direction for staff in relation to the goals of their function and how they fit in with the broader organisational strategy. * Motivates and empowers staff by appropriately delegating responsibility and authority.   **Communication & Interpersonal**   * Demonstrate the ability to get a message across fluently and persuasively. * Demonstrate the ability to make a compelling case to positively influence the thinking of others. Is strategic in how he/she goes about influencing others, shows strong listening and sensing skills. * Demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills including the ability to collaborate with colleagues and service users and the ability to present complex information in a clear and concise manner. * Displays effective communication skills (verbal & written). * Maintains a professional relationship in all communications, treating others with dignity and respect * Demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively with others to understand and establish expectations and desired outcomes. * Demonstrates sensitivity, diplomacy and tact when dealing with others, is patient and tolerant when dealing with conflict situations. * Demonstrates strong negotiation skills, remains firm but flexible when putting forward a point of view. |
| **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. | |

**Social Worker, Senior Medical**

**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 **35** hours per week. Your normal weekly working hours are **35** 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 effective [incident management](https://www2.healthservice.hse.ie/organisation/qps-incident-management/incident-management/) and review of incidents. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)