

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

National Health Service in Scotland Management Executive

Dear Colleague

HOSPITAL PLAY STAFF

Summary

1. This letter draws the attention of employing authorities to recent developments in the role, training and qualification of Hospital Play Staff.

Action

2. While this letter has been issued for information only Health Boards and Trusts may wish to consider the advantages of drawing their hospital play specialists into a single occupational group with a discrete function and in recognition of their particular skills, also to consider the advantages of a specific (and locally determined) salary structure.

Background Information

- 3. The hospital play specialist is not a new concept. He or she works closely with the other professional staff on the paediatric team using play to help children through the stressful experience of being in hospital, and to benefit the nursing and clinical management of the children. The value of the hospital play specialist is described more fully in the Department of Health's book "Welfare of Children and Young People in Hospital 1991" which was issued to General Managers in Scotland in January 1992.
- 4. In Scotland the first play specialist was appointed in 1971, and there are now over 80. Management arrangements vary from one Unit or Trust to another, as does the extent to which play staff constitute a cohesive and separately identifiable group.
- 5. The Hospital Play Staff Examination Board certificate is recognised as the appropriate national qualification for Hospital Play Specialists. The certificate training course is available in 6 Colleges in England and the first play specialist course in Scotland began in Stevenson College, Edinburgh in October 1992. The 10 students attending the first course expect to qualify in June 1993.
- 6. The National Association of Hospital Play Staffs recommendations on career structure and on job

St. Andrew's House Edinburgh EH1 3DG

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Addressees

For action:

General Managers, Health Boards

General Manager, Common Services Agency

General Manager, State Hospital

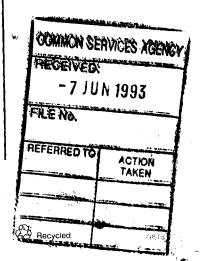
Chief Executives, NHS Trusts

For information

General Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland

Enquiries to:

Mr J McElhinney Directorate of Manpower NHS Management Executive Room 61A St Andrew's House EDINBURGH EH1 3DE Tel: 031-244 2473 Fax: 031-244 2837



description are set out in Annex A. The suggested salary and conditions of service are set out in Annex B.

7. It is for authorities themselves, however, to consider their staffing organisation and structure and the role to be played by hospital play specialists in the light of their numbers, present grades and local circumstances.

Yours sincerely

Janer & Mistagor

JANET A McGREGOR

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOSPITAL PLAY STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Career Structure and Job Description

1. Career Structure

Play Assistant/Formal qualifications not necessary.

Play Specialist

Basic Grade
Senior Grade II
Senior Grade I
Managerial Grade

) Holds qualification ie HPS, or recognised equivalent qualification

2. Job Description

Play Assistant

The post holder will be working with children of all ages, individually or in groups in a variety of settings, whenever possible under the supervision or guidance of a qualified HPS. He/She will be expected to create a suitable environment for play, select and maintain a wide range of suitable play equipment and will work as a member of the multi-disciplinary health care team, contributing to the emotional support and care of the child and the family in hospital.

The post holder will have a good knowledge of normal child development and a mature approach to working with sick children and their families.

Play Specialist: Basic Grade

The post holder will be working with children of all ages, individually or in groups, in a variety of settings. He/She will assess the individual child's needs and provide appropriate play activities which could include remedial and developmental play, facilitating expression of feelings and encouraging the maintenance of links with home. He/She will be involved in advising and supporting parents and carers in the play needs of children in hospital. post holder may contribute to the teaching of student nurses and other students on placement and other health care professionals. participate holder will liaise with, and multi-disciplinary team in the total care of the child, advising on play and communication with children.

Play Specialist: Senior Grade II

The post holder will use his/her understanding, skill and experience to provide and assess a wide range of normal and therapeutic play activities. This will include play preparation, post procedural play and pre admission preparation. The post holder may take individual referrals in conjunction with other professionals to provide specific goal-orientated therapeutic play programmes and developmental assessments. The post holder will be responsible for the teaching of learner and qualified staff on all aspects of play in hospital. He/She

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may be responsible for play service resources. The post holder may supervise and be responsible for unqualified staff such as play assistants, student HPS or volunteers.

Play Specialist: Senior Grade I

The post holder will demonstrate his/her considerable experience and understanding and a thorough specialist knowledge in providing a high quality play service in any speciality. This may include referrals, working in the community, counselling, running support groups for parents or siblings.

The post holder will be a specialist and may have some responsibility for qualified and unqualified staff and the development of the play service which may include staff support, documentation and record keeping.

Play Specialist: Managerial Grade

The post holder having working experience of hospital play is required to demonstrate a high degree of professional development He/She will manage the Play Services and managerial skills. or more hospitals, Department in one with responsibility for maintaining and developing service standards, quality control, resources and research. The post holder responsible for recruiting and managing staff including assessment, training and counselling. He/she will promote liaison with other departments and professionals acting in an advisory representative capacity.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR HOSPITAL PLAY SPECIALISTS EMPLOYED BY NHS DISTRICTS OR TRUSTS

Hours

As many Hospital Play Specialists work a $37\frac{1}{2}$ hour week, it is up to the individual Units to negotiate hours of work. It is recommended by the National Association of Hospital Play Staff that new contracts be set at a $37\frac{1}{2}$ hour week.

Excess Hours

Where any Hospital Play Specialist (HPS) is required to work excess hours then:

- 1. time off in lieu should be given where possible
- 2. payment should be made at the rate of time and a half, where such work is performed on a Saturday, a Sunday or a Bank Holiday or statutory holiday, the amount of such a payment being calculated to the nearest half hour.

Annual Leave Entitlements

It is recommended that Annual Leave should be allowed as follows:

- 25 working days + bank holidays on entry
- 27 working days + bank holidays after 5 years service
- 30 working days + bank holidays after 10 years service

Part Time Staff

All part time staff shall be entitled to annual leave pro rata to the whole time allowance. The entitlement of paid annual leave expressed as working time shall be proportioned to the annual leave entitlement of a full time post also expressed as working time.

All other Conditions of Service as per the General Whitley Council handbook.

RECOMMENDED SALARY SCALE FOR HOSPITAL PLAY SPECIALISTS

GRADE TITLE	POINT 00	POINT 01	POINT 02	POINT 03	POINT 04	POINT 05
Play Co-ordinator Managerial Grade	15,765	16,396	17,052	17,734		
Senior I	13,476	14,015	14,576	15,159	15,765	16,396
Senior II	11,520	11,980	12,468	12,958	13,476	14,015
Basic Grade Hospital Play Specialist	9,710	10,250	10,670	11,090	11,520	12,075
Hospital Play Assistant	8,900	9,170	9,440	9,710		

June 1992 For Annual Review