**THE LUTON AND DUNSTABLE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**POST TITLE:** Freedom of Information Officer

**BAND: 4**

**HOURS: 37.5 per week** (days and times to be agreed)

**BASE:** The Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation

Trust, Bedford Hospital, Cranfield and any other associated Trust

Establishments; including Outreach Clinics and

Establishments used in the course of Trust

Business.

**REPORTING TO:** Information Governance Manager

**ACCOUNTABLE TO:** Head of Information Governance

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE:** Currently those of Agenda For Change and other local agreements

For staff currently employed by the Luton & Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: protection arrangements as set out in the Agenda

For Change agreement will continue to apply.

**JOB SUMMARY:**

The Freedom of Information Officer will be a member of the Information Governance (IG) Department which is made up of the Head of Information Governance, IG Manager, Deputy IG Manager, IG Officers and IG Administrators/SAR.

The IG Department is responsible for the management and coordination of the Trusts compliance with the FOI Act, Data Protection Act and Access to Health Records Act, national requirements, legal and statutory obligations.

The primary aim of the role is to provide support to the IG Manager by coordinating requests received under the FOI Act and ensuring responses are provided in line with the requirements of the Act.

Responsibilities will include communicating with individuals who have submitted requests, liaising with senior members of staff and meeting deadlines in line with the Act.

Support the IG Manager in providing an IG support service to the Trust and to

contribute to the work required to enable the Trust to achieve national requirements and legal & statutory obligations.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Data Protection (DPA) & Freedom of Information (FOI):**

* Provide appropriate support to ensure operational processes are followed when requests for information under the Data Protection Act and the FOI Act are received
* Liaise with staff across the Trust to ensure legal deadlines are met.
* Work as part of the IG team to ensure information exempt from disclosure is protected as required by law.
* Provide support to ensure requests for information sharing are processed as required to enable an informed decision to be made.
* Assist the IG Manager in identifying where exemptions may apply and where the Public Interest Test needs to be applied
* Assisting those who are contributing to requests for information to ensure the information that is provided meets the requirements of the Act.
* Build working relations with other NHS Trusts and neighbouring public organisations to ensure a consistent countywide approach to blanket FOI requests and to identify lessons learnt.
* Maintain electronic and paper filing systems in relation to FOI and ensuring disclosure of requests are available for uploading to the Trusts public website.
* To identify trends in information requests and establish whether information requested could be more readily available in the future.
* Constant reviewing of current systems and processes for maintaining compliance with the FOI Act and making recommendations on ways in which these could be improved to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
* Compile statistical reports on the numbers of requests received, the time taken to respond to them and their level of complexity.
* Developing and maintaining extensive knowledge of the FOI Act and changes in legislation
* To provide ad-hoc support to the Access to Health Records Team to ensure legal deadlines are met
* Any other duties as required by the IG Manager

**GENERAL:**

To comply at all times with any regulations issued by the Trust, especially those governing Health and Safety at work and to ensure that any defects which may affect safety at work are brought to the attention of the appropriate manager.

This job description reflects the present requirements and objectives of the post. As the duties of the post change and develop the job description will be reviewed and will be subject to amendment, in consultation with the post holder.

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Professional healthcare staff are responsible for complying with the relevant standards set by their regulatory or professional bodies (for example the GMC’s Good Medical Practice, and for nurses and midwives, the NMC’s Code of Professional Conduct). A breach of such standards may lead to action by NHS bodies independent of any taken by the regulatory or professional body concerned. It would be investigated fairly, and appropriate steps taken to prevent a recurrence and address any wider causes.

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS:

All employees and volunteers working within the Trust have a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE:**

*(This includes Patient Confidentiality, IT Security, Data Protection and Freedom of Information)*

You are required to respect the confidentiality of all patients, carers and staff, by not sharing any information (including data) obtained during the course of your duties. You have an obligation to report any non compliance through the Trusts Incident Reporting process.

All staff **MUST** comply with the legal obligations and statutory requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, the Trusts IT Security and Information Governance Policies, Codes of Conduct and Best Practice Guidelines. These are available on the staff Intranet site.

**INFECTION CONTROL:**

You are required to comply with the Trust’s strategy regarding infection control, as set out in the document “Principles and Responsibilities for Delivering No Avoidable Infections”, a copy of which is available on the intranet.

**DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS**

**(Note for recruiting managers: CRB Will Only Be Undertaken in circumstances where risk assessment has determined that there is a need - If in doubt please speak to your HR Representative. IT IS UNLAWFUL TO UNDERTAKE CRB CHECKS IN ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. )**

A risk assessment has indicated that a Criminal Records Bureau “Disclosure” is both proportionate and relevant to this position. Any person who is conditionally offered this post will be required to undertake a criminal records check in this respect.

The Trust guarantees that this information will be seen only by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

The Trust ensures that an open and measured discussion will take place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to this position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to a withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the subject of that Disclosure before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position or circumstances and background of your offence.

Please be aware that the Trust has a Policy containing a more detailed Code Of Practice that meets the standards specified by the Criminal Records Bureau relating to the fair use of criminal record information and the appointment of persons having a criminal record. A copy of The Luton & Dunstable Hospital NHS Foundation Trust’s Code can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

**Note:** Failure by an applicant to provide accurate and truthful information is considered to be a serious matter. Where it is found that a person has recklessly provided inaccurate information or withheld information relevant to their position, this may disqualify them from appointment. It may also result in dismissal or disciplinary action and referral to the appropriate professional registration body.

If you would like to discuss what effect any criminal record or fitness to practise proceeding might have on your application, you may telephone the Recruitment Team Leader in the Human Resources Department on 01582 497241, in confidence, for advice.