

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Job Description

1. Job Details

Job title	Healthcare Science Associate (Molecular Hot Lab)
Pay band	4
Directorate	Integrated Laboratory Medicine
Ward/Dept Base	Cross discipline (Blood Sciences & Microbiology)
Hospital site	RVI & Freeman

Essential Requirements

- NVQ4, or Foundation Degree in Laboratory and Associated Technical Activities, or IBMS certificate of Achievement portfolio or equivalent level of experience
- Experience as a Healthcare Science Assistant (HCSA)
- Basic computer and keyboard skills
- Organised and methodical
- Ability to work under pressure and prioritise work
- Good communication skills
- Knowledge and understanding of the role of biomedical science in the diagnosis and treatment of disease
- Understanding of basic scientific techniques
- Ability to accurately follow protocol and instructions

Desirable Requirements

- Career aspirations in the NHS
- Basic knowledge and understanding of laboratory health and safety

2. Job Purpose

- A Healthcare Science Associate is part of a clinical support team whose purpose is to provide timely and accurate high quality scientific information that will assist service users from the hospital and community, in the establishment of a clinical diagnosis and monitoring of patient treatment.
- The Healthcare Science Associate will use practical skills to carry out tasks associated with the pre-analytical preparation of specimens as well as direct analysis of samples for a limited range of tests using rapid molecular techniques, blood sciences platforms and some culture based investigations.
- Specimen reception: To deal with the reception, sorting and labelling of patient specimens, identifying inadequate and mislabelled specimens and ensuring urgent samples are prioritised.
- To ensure correct and timely transfer of microbiology and virology samples between testing sites.
- Data entry, preparing specimens for analysis, including booking in-patient and specimen details, storing, retrieving and disposing of specimens.

- To analyse a limited range of patient samples to detect microbial pathogens such as SARS-COV-2, Influenza A Virus, Strep A and MRSA in line with departmental SOPs.
- To provide contingency support to ED-Runner service if capacity allows
- To load/unload blood culture bottles from automated blood culture system and ensure positive bottles are transported appropriately.
- To learn new tasks appropriate to role of healthcare science associates as scope of role expands to meet the needs of service delivery
- Operate, maintain and basic trouble shoot departmental analysers, in line with departmental SOPs.
- To undertake simple analytical procedures under guidance, maintain and operate laboratory equipment in accordance with departmental SOPs.
- To manually transcribe and record laboratory data, input to and manipulation of the laboratory computer system and derivation of worksheets
- To receive requests for information by telephone and respond appropriately.
- To prepare and reconstitute reagents and control materials and other processes as required, recording stock levels, maintenance of instruments and equipment, and keeping appropriate records both manually and electronic.
- To manage the day to day Quality Assurance for rapid testing provision by conducting, monitoring and resulting tests on appropriate schemes.
- To support in the management of Point of Care Testing (POCT) devices across the Trust, including training, audit and quality control.
- To work in compliance with local health and safety rules to ensure a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and visitors. To adhere to department and Trust Health and Safety policies (including COSHH, Risk assessments and Standard Operating Procedures) and to report any non-compliances to a senior member of staff.
- Supporting in the training of new members of HCSA staff.
- The post holder will be required to support provision of 24/7 Hot Lab service by working evening shifts, weekend shifts and night shifts once trained on a rotational basis.

The post holder will be required to work in microbiology at the Freeman site on a rotational basis.

3. Dimensions

- The post holder will work as part of a team and carry out varied tasks including specimen reception, labelling, registration, pre-analytical preparation and processing, analysing a limited range of tests and data manipulation using the department networked computer system.
- They will perform laboratory tests, operate equipment and analysers, and record some laboratory results and dispose of waste following departmental procedures. They will respond to telephone enquiries and give out test results as appropriate.

4. Organisational Arrangements:

For operational queries reports to: Site Operational Manager

For technical queries reports to: Microbiology & Virology Advanced Biomedical Scientist

Professionally accountable to: Site Lab Manager

5. Knowledge Training and Experience

- See essential requirements
- The post holder will participate in Continuous Professional Development and work towards gaining further knowledge through certificate level training and short courses.
- To participate in on going work based training to maintain competence with departmental protocols and procedures.

6. Skills

Communication and Relationships

- To provide a first point of contact for enquiries for users of the service, to communicate laboratory results to Medical, Nursing and other healthcare staff over the telephone and to take and convey messages accurately.
- To direct enquiries as appropriate to a senior member of staff in accordance with department protocols
- The post holder will be required to communicate with all grades of staff within the department on matters relating to the processing and culturing of samples.
- Input patient demographics and tests requested into the Laboratory computer system to enable Microbiology and Blood Sciences reports to be produced.
- The post holder will be expected to communicate to Biomedical Scientists regarding operational and technical issues in their section

Analytical and Judgemental

- The post holder will be required to solve day-to-day problems such as mislabelled or lost samples, and analyser faults.
- The post holder will be required to work under the supervision of qualified staff and follow departmental standard operating procedures and policies.
- To deal with the reception, sorting and labelling of patient specimens, identifying inadequate and mislabelled specimens and ensuring urgent samples are prioritised.
- To solve basic sample related problems (mislabelled or missing specimens) and refer to a senior member of staff if necessary.
- To operate and assist with maintenance of highly complex laboratory equipment
- To analyse limited range of laboratory tests supported by a qualified BMS.

Planning and Organisational

- To manage and prioritise assigned tasks within timescales determined by a senior member of staff
- Prioritises urgent work.

Physical Dexterity

- Keyboard skills needed to use the department computer system for the input and recording of patient results, and derivation of work lists.
- Good hand/eye co-ordination needed for pipetting and sample manipulation, instrument operation including microscopy.

7. Key Result Areas

Patient / Client Care

- Prepares specimens for analysis and carries out initial screening of laboratory tests, carrying out further appropriate testing based on the results as required.
- To work under supervision, to provide a patient focused service in the Microbiology and Blood Sciences laboratories.
- To communicate results directly to clinical staff, departmental medical team or infection prevention and control team who will transmit this to clinical staff on the wards.
- To assist with the operation of expensive laboratory and POCT equipment (see knowledge, training and education).
- Customer care skills

Policy and Service Development

- Follows policies prepared by others, comments on and makes suggestions for improvements.
- Implements policies within their area of work.

Financial and Physical Resources

- To ensure that adequate consumable stocks and reagents are maintained in immediate working areas and to report low levels to a senior member of staff.
- To assist with the operation of expensive laboratory equipment (see knowledge, training and education).
- To undertake maintenance, basic trouble shooting, and decontamination of equipment.
- To report any faults and non-compliances to a senior member of staff.

Human Resources

- The post holder is required to assist in the training of new members of staff.
- Undertake and assist with induction and training of new staff appropriate to role
- To provide a positive and professional role model for less experienced members of staff.

Information Resources

- To use the department computer system for the input and recording of patient data results, enquiries for results and for the derivation of laboratory work sheets.
- Required to check patient identification data using Cerner Millennium and Summary care Record and make amendments to the laboratory computer system according to departmental SOPs.
- Comply with Trust policies on Data Protection, Confidentiality, data storage and disposal.

Research and Development

- May be required to provide technical support (in accordance with duties already outlined) in research and development as required by the department and the Trust (frequency varies, but averages once a year for a short duration).

8. Freedom to Act

- Follows defined procedures and policies under supervision. All non-compliances and anomalies to be reported to a senior member of staff.

- Can use discretion to reject samples that do not conform to analysis requirements (e.g., unlabelled, incorrectly filled, wrong type of specimen etc.)
- To comply with legal, mandatory and national requirements as directed.
- The post holder complies with all department and Trust protocols and policies related to clinical governance.

9. Effort & Environment

Physical

- Occasional requirement to move heavy laboratory reagents and consumables (20 kg up to 3 times per week).
- Occasional requirement to move heavy laboratory reagents from hospital central stores to the laboratory using a hand push trolley (up to 150kg load).
- Tasks may require degrees of repetitive movement for prolonged periods of time (pipetting, entering results in computer). Usually daily, all day, for periods of up to 1 hour continuously.
- Requirement to sit or stand at bench for periods of up to 2 hours continuously
- Tasks may require degrees of repetitive movement for prolonged periods of time (registration of patient data into laboratory computer, reception and labelling of specimens and processing samples, pipetting, entering results in computer). Usually daily, all day, for periods of up to 1 hour continuously.

Mental

- Registration of patient data, specimen processing and user enquiries requires multitasking ability with moderate periods of concentration.
- Work may be interrupted to answer telephones, deal with requests from medical, nursing or senior laboratory staff.
- The post holder will have to deal with large volumes of work and occasional staff shortages, which can lead to pressure.

Emotional

- Occasional indirect exposure to distressing information about patients

Working Conditions

- Daily prolonged exposure to contained and uncontained infectious materials and body fluids.
- Will be required to use chemicals and reagents for which compliance with Department and Trust Health and Safety and COSHH regulations are necessary.
- Prolonged exposure to background noise from analysers and equipment which is within Health and Safety limits

Updated: January 2024

Signed:
(Post holder)

Date:

Signed:
(Directorate Manager or equivalent)

Date:

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Person Specification

JOB TITLE: Healthcare Science Associate

BAND: 4

DIRECTORATE: Integrated Laboratory Medicine

<u>REQUIREMENT</u>	<u>ESSENTIAL</u> Requirements necessary for safe and effective performance of the job	<u>DESIRABLE</u> Where available, elements that contribute to improved/immediate performance in the job	<u>ASSESSMENT</u>
Qualifications & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NVQ4, or Foundation Degree in Laboratory and Associated Technical Activities, or IBMS certificate of Achievement portfolio or equivalent level experience 		
Knowledge & Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience as a Healthcare Science Assistant (HCSA) Knowledge and understanding of the role of biomedical science in the diagnosis and treatment of disease Understanding of basic scientific techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge / interest in Biomedical Sciences 	
Skills & Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic computer and keyboard skills Organised and methodical Ability to work under pressure and prioritise work Ability to accurately follow protocol and instructions Good communication skills 		
Values / Behavioural / Attitudes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career aspirations in the NHS 	
Core Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment to Trust Values and Core Behaviors Take personal responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage with the Trust's Climate Emergency Strategy and Sustainable Healthcare in Newcastle (SHINE) initiatives; assist in embedding our sustainability values into everyday practice; and help ensure such practice is applied consistently by you and your colleagues 		

CANDIDATE:

REFERENCE NO:

SIGNED BY:

DATE:

DESIGNATION: