**Grade VII – Press Officer**

**HSE Communications and Public Affairs**

**Job Specification & Terms and Conditions**

**One year temporary contract – working a 5/7 week**

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| **Job Title and Grade** | Grade VII– Senior Press Officer  Grade Code – 0582  One year temporary contract –. |
| **Campaign Reference** | NCD0325 – Senior Press Officer |
| **Closing Date** | **5th February 2025 @ 5.00pm** |
| **Proposed Interview Date (s)** | Candidates may be called at short notice for interview |
| **Taking up Appointment** | A start date will be indicated at job offer stage. |
| **Organisational Area** | Communications Division |
| **Location of Posts** | HSE Office, Cornmarket, Dublin 8 – currently working remotely and agreeing to the HSE Blended Working Policy.  A panel will be created for Grade VII Press Officer in the Communications and Public Affairs Division, from which permanent and specified purpose vacancies of full or part time duration may be filled. |
| **Informal Enquiries** | Informal enquiries in respect of post to  Ciara NiRuairc, Head of Press & Media – [ciara.niruairc@hse.ie](mailto:ciara.niruairc@hse.ie)  Mary Gleeson, Deputy Head of Press and Media – [mary.gleeson1@hse.ie](mailto:mary.gleeson1@hse.ie) |
| **Details of Service** | The HSE is Ireland’s public health and social care service, providing or funding health services in homes, communities, hospitals and specialist services all over the country. Everyone living in Ireland uses a HSE service at least once each year, and we have a budget of €26.9bn billion in 2025. The health service has over 140,000 staff and is the largest employer in the country.    The HSE is currently working to deal with multiple challenges including the reduction of waiting times for care and the evolution and expansion of health and social care services. We are working to implement changes and improvements to our health service and its structures, in line with the Sláintecare programme. Communications plays a key role in this work and the HSE Communications and Public Affairs team is critical to its delivery  The senior press officer will be working as part of a busy press office where they will be responsible for the coordination and management of HSE news stories. They will be working across various divisions, along with senior communications managers to tell the HSE story.  They will manage and lead a team of press officers and devise new ways of working with regional and national teams. |
| **Reporting Relationship** | The post holder will report to the Deputy Head of Press. |
| **Key Working Relationships** | The key working relationships are the Communications & Public Affairs team along with staff and managers across a range of HSE services |
| **Purpose of the Post** | The Senior Press Officer, will be joining one of the country’s busiest and most demanding press offices and will be central to telling the HSE story. They will lead a team of press officers, with responsibility for news coverage on important public health awareness campaigns, signposting people to new services and aligning our work to the strategic objectives of the organisation.  They will participate in the coordination, planning and management of campaigns, initiatives and research projects. This will include organising photocalls, media briefings with journalists and preparing spokespeople for public awareness campaigns.  And most importantly they will be across important issues that impact our patients, clients and services users, help understand what has happened and explain what we are doing to address it.  This is an incredibility exciting time in the HSE with the establishment of the new Health Regions. This will provide senior press officers with the opportunities for continuous professional development and to upskill in key areas. They will also help guide and develop their team, making business cases for areas of improvement and development within the Press Office. |
| **Principal Duties and Responsibilities** | **Principle Duties**   * Senior press officer in one of the busiest press offices in the country * Coordinating the publication of HSE stories – including developing packages for producers and journalists * Bring new and innovative ways of working to the HSE Press Office, that will enhance our ability to share new service developments for patients and service users * Handling press queries and responses and approving same * Media management – preparation of statements, arrange and attend briefings, press conferences and onsite media activity, photocalls as required, arrange media interviews * Providing communications advice and support at national level * Provision of media relations advisory service to internal clients * To assist the Press Office team in the co-ordination of emergency management * Management of proactive and reactive media relations * Liaise with relevant bodies, key stakeholders and external agencies as required * Contribute to the evaluation of campaign and initiatives * General upkeep of administration tasks * Line management of press officers * Work with other HSE communication teams, including Programmes & Campaigns, Digital/Social, Internal, Public Affairs and regional teams to identify from a communications perspective, the links and synergies that may exist across the division and to work to ensure a seamless approach to integrated communications activity for the organisation.   **General**   * 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 etcand comply with associated HSE protocols for implementing and maintaining these standards as appropriate to the role. * To 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 Description 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 him/her from time to time and to contribute to the development of the post while in office.** |
| **Eligibility Criteria**  **Qualifications and/ or experience** | **This campaign is confined to staff who are currently employed by the HSE, TUSLA, other statutory health agencies\*, or a body which provides services on behalf of the HSE under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004 as per Workplace Relations Commission agreement -161867**  ***\* A list of ‘other statutory health agencies’ can be found:***<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/9c9c03-bodies-under-the-aegis-of-the-department-of-health/?referrer=http://www.health.gov.ie/about-us/agencies-health-bodies/>.  Eligible applicants will be those who on the closing date for the competition:  (a) Have satisfactory experience in an office under the HSE, TUSLA, other statutory health agencies, or a body which provides services on behalf of the HSE under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004 at a level not lower than that of Grade IV (or equivalent)  and  Have not less than two years satisfactory experience either in that office or in an office at a level not lower than that of Clerical Officer in the HSE, TUSLA, other statutory health agencies, or a body which provides services on behalf of the HSE under Section 38 of the Health Act 2004  and  (b) Candidates must possess the requisite knowledge and ability, including a high standard of suitability, 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** | **Extensive experience in a press office or similarly dynamic, high-pressure, media-driven environment**, demonstrating the ability to operate effectively under tight deadlines and manage complex communications challenges.  **Proven expertise in project management**, including planning, coordinating, and delivering large-scale, high-impact communications initiatives that align with organizational goals and drive measurable outcomes.  **Demonstrated ability to manage a diverse range of internal stakeholders**, balancing competing priorities and expectations while maintaining a collaborative and solution-oriented approach to achieve shared objectives.  **Significant experience handling media engagements and responding to high-profile media inquiries**, showcasing strong judgment, agility, and the ability to protect and enhance organizational reputation.  **Comprehensive experience across multiple areas of communications**, including media relations, corporate communications, public relations, public information campaigns, and digital media strategies. This includes a track record of crafting and delivering effective messaging for a variety of audiences across multiple platforms. |
| **Skills, competencies and/or knowledge** | **Professional Knowledge & Experience**  Demonstrate:   * Knowledge of the role of the Communications and Public Affairs Division, the broader health service structure and its relationship with external agencies * An understanding of the media and political environment, with a keen interest in and knowledge of health related issues. * Knowledge and experience in relation to dealing with complex media operations and project management * Experience and proven ability in writing for public consumption * Good understanding of the political system   **Planning & Organising**  Demonstrate:   * The ability to successfully manage a range of different projects and work activities concurrently, utilising computer technology effectively and assigning work to others as appropriate to meet strict deadlines * The ability to proactively identify areas for improvement and to develop practical solutions for their implementation * The ability to embrace change and adapt local work practices accordingly by finding practical ways to make policies work, ensuring the team knows how to action changes * The ability to use resources effectively, challenging processes to improve efficiencies where appropriate   **Evaluating Information and Decision Making:**  Demonstrate:   * Excellent analytical, problem solving and decision making skills * The ability to quickly grasp and understand complex issues and the impact on service delivery * The ability to evaluate complex information from a variety of sources and make effective decisions * The ability to confidently explain the rationale behind decisions when faced with opposition * Initiative in the resolution of complex issues   **Building and Maintaining Relationships including Teamwork & Leadership Skills**  Demonstrate:   * The ability to build and maintain relationships with colleagues and other stakeholders and to achieve results through collaborative working * The ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a dynamic team and multi stakeholder environment * The ability to lead the team by example, coaching and supporting individuals as required. * Flexibility, adaptability and openness to working effectively in a changing environment   **Communication & Interpersonal Skills**  Demonstrate:   * Effective verbal communication skills, delivering complex information clearly, concisely and confidently * Excellent written communications skills and the capacity to prepare briefing materials that are relevant, timely, concise and targeted at the appropriate audience. * Excellent communication and interpersonal skills in order to deal effectively with a wide range of stakeholders.   **Commitment to a Quality Service**  Demonstrate:   * Evidence of practicing and promoting a strong focus on delivering high quality customer service for internal and external customers * Commitment to developing own knowledge and expertise * Evidence of setting high standards of performance for self and others, ensuring accurate attention to detail and consistent adherence to procedures and current standards within area of responsibility |
| **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.  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 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.  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 description may be reviewed.  This job description 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. | |

**Grade VII – Press Officer**

**Communications & Public Affairs Division**

**Terms and Conditions of Employment**

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| **Tenure** | The current vacancy is one year temporary contract  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 Appointment) Act 2004 and Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Amendment Act 2013. |
| **Remuneration** | The salary scale for the post (as at 01/03/2024) is :-   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 79,847 | 80,564 | 83,715 | 86,878 | 90,018 | 93,170 | 96,305 |   Salary Scales are updated periodically and the most up to date versions can be found here: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/hr-circulars/final-1-march-2023-salary-scales.pdf> |
| **Working Week** | HSE Circular 003-2009 “Matching Working Patterns to Service Needs (Extended Working Day / Week Arrangements); Framework for Implementation of Clause 30.4 of Towards 2016” applies. Under the terms of this circular, all new entrants and staff appointed to promotional posts from Dec 16th 2008 will be required to work agreed roster / on call arrangements as advised by their line manager. Contracted hours of work are liable to change between the hours of 8am-8pm over seven days to meet the requirements for extended day services in accordance with the terms of the Framework Agreement (Implementation of Clause 30.4 of Towards 2016). |
| **Annual Leave** | The annual leave associated with the post will be confirmed at job offer 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 |
| **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. |
| **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. |
| **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/H&S web-pages [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See link on health and safety web-pages to latest Incident Management Policy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)