



St. Francis Hospice

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPIST – CLINICAL SPECIALIST**

**PERMANENT CONTRACT**

**WTE 0.5**

**Job Reference: 2026 – 034**

**Issue Date: April**



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## **1. JOB PURPOSE**

The purpose of this post is to provide clinical leadership and advanced specialist Speech & Language Therapy (SLT) services to patients with life-limiting illness, including complex communication and swallowing disorders, in line with best practice and organisational priorities.

The Clinical Specialist Speech and Language Therapist will lead the development of the SLT service within St. Francis Hospice Dublin, working as part of an interdisciplinary team to optimise communication, swallowing function and quality of life for patients across inpatient, outpatient and community settings.

The role includes clinical leadership, service development, education and research, aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives.

## **2. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The position reports to and is accountable to the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals or other designated officer in all matters relating to the job.

## **3. KEY DIMENSIONS**

Direct reporting to the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals.

Key internal relationships that will influence the success of the role: Members of the multi-disciplinary team and Hospice management team.

Key external relationships that will influence the success of the role: HSE, hospitals, community services, IASLT, AIHPC, government agencies, auditors and other relevant national and international organisations/institutions.

## **4. OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

**Contractual Hours:** 17.5 hours per week

**Hours of work:** The post holder will work 17.5 hours per week. The distribution of hours across the week will be agreed on appointment, with flexibility in line with service needs.

Starting and finishing times may vary in accordance with service requirements and will be agreed with the line manager.

**Location:** This position is across both sites: Raheny & Blanchardstown. In the interest of patient care and changing needs, candidates are required to be completely flexible and to carry out duties in any department or location of the Hospice or associated locations when required by their line manager.



## St. Francis Hospice

As St. Francis Hospice Dublin is an expanding service, the demands for services can change, and it will be necessary to meet these changes through the organisation. In such circumstances, it may be necessary to review the work location for this post. On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Leadership Team reserves the right to change the terms and conditions as necessary. However, notification will be given of any such changes.

**Garda Vetting:** The successful candidate will be required to satisfactorily complete the Garda Vetting process prior to a formal job offer being made.



## 5. **SALARY SCALES, ANNUAL LEAVE & PENSION SCHEME**

**Salary Scale:** Department of Health - Consolidated Salary Scale (1<sup>st</sup> February 2026) – in line with SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST, CLINICAL SPECIALIST

3025	SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST, CLINICAL SPECIALIST	1/2/26	9	71,405	72,783	74,199	75,607	77,014	78,495	80,056	81,612	82,860
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**Annual Leave:** 29 days per annum (pro-rata).

### **Pension Scheme:**

Your post, position, or office is pensionable for the purpose of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (the "SPSPS")



## 6. THE PERSON: QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE & COMPETENCIES

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be registered as a Speech and Language Therapist by the Speech and Language Therapists Registration Board, CORU.</li> <li>• Practitioners must maintain annual registration with CORU.</li> <li>• Successful completion of a Feeding/Eating/Drinking/Swallowing (FEDS)/Dysphagia education/training programme recognised by the Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate training/research in Palliative Care</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have at least five years full-time (or an aggregate of five years full-time) relevant post-qualification adult clinical Speech and Language Therapy experience, of which four years full-time (or an aggregate of four years) post-registration qualification clinical experience must be in oncology or palliative care.</li> <li>• Clinical experience in the management of feeding, eating, drinking and swallowing disorders</li> <li>• Depth and breadth of experience of management of swallowing and communication in three of the following: persons with head and neck cancer, persons with non-head and neck cancer, persons with progressive neurological conditions, persons with chronic respiratory conditions.</li> <li>• Have experience of interdisciplinary team working</li> <li>• Leadership, organisational, communication and decision-making skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience in clinical Speech &amp; Language Therapy in an adult acute hospital or specialist palliative care setting.</li> <li>• Experience working with Alternative/Augmentative Communication (AAC)</li> <li>• Experience working with persons with tracheostomy</li> <li>• Development of clinical standards and protocols.</li> <li>• Clinical audit and evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full clean driving license.</li> <li>• Evidence of continuing professional development relevant to the role</li> </ul>	



## **CORE COMPETENCIES**

### **Quality Service**

- Model a servant leadership style that supports and empowers the MDT, while actively fostering collaboration, respect, and inclusion across all disciplines.
- The post holder will demonstrate competence in line with the HSE Clinical Specialist Competency Framework
- Provide education and training to MDT staff; support student education; contribute to interdisciplinary skill development.
- Strong use of initiative.
- Demonstrates an ability to evaluate, audit and review practice.
- Provides a flexible service that is responsive to the needs of the patient.
- Identifies and prioritises the requirements of change within own service area, bearing in mind the departmental impact.
- Utilises research and best practice to work.

### **Continuous Learning and Development**

- Seeks to expand duties and responsibilities for progression.
- Active participation in CPD activities.
- Seeks learning opportunities based on their own identified learning needs.
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of organisational policies and procedures.
- Provides constructive feedback to staff.
- Mentor staff/students as appropriate.

### **Organisational Knowledge**

- Informed on health service trends both nationally and internationally.
- Can identify the services that differentiate SFHD from other healthcare facilities.
- Understands the function of the different departments and promotes a multidisciplinary approach.
- Awareness of national health strategies relevant to one's job and grade.
- Proficient in the use of IT systems to access organisational systems.
- To utilise developments in information technology for both patient care and administrative support in line with the overall service.

### **Planning and Organising**

- Demonstrates an ability to manage and develop self and others in a busy working environment.
- Excellent time management skills.
- Anticipates problems and issues and takes preventative action to address these.
- Delegates effectively to ensure objectives are achieved.
- Sets realistic timeframes.
- Prepares by ensuring adequate resources are available.
- Ensures resources are utilised effectively and efficiently.



## **Professionalism**

- Demonstrates a proven ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders across clinical and non-clinical services, fostering strong interdisciplinary teamwork to deliver integrated, high-quality outcomes.
- Demonstrates the ability to work under pressure.
- Awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses.
- Is receptive to, and acts promptly on feedback.
- Demonstrates resilience by not taking things personally and striving for a successful outcome.
- Demonstrates flexibility and openness to change.
- Integrity.

## **Communication**

- Demonstrate sufficient command of the English language (both verbal and written) to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the role effectively.
- Expresses ideas clearly and logically, supported by the appropriate evidence to persuade others.
- Information sharing in an open and timely manner, ensuring to keep relevant people informed.
- Delivers presentations to groups with confidence and credibility.
- Ability to facilitate two-way communication between conflicting parties.
- Effectively communicates new initiatives and ideas to ensure successful implementation.

## **Innovation**

- Embraces change by being flexible and enthusiastic about new ideas.
- Strives to continually improve own processes and service area.
- Puts forward proposals and develops strategic implementation plans to introduce new and improved ways of operating.

## **Team Player**

- Proactively develops and nurtures workplace relationships.
- Establishes teams and manages the process.
- Understands and tolerates different needs and viewpoints.
- Utilises team strengths and attributes in achieving goals.
- Engages input from all team members.
- Facilitates and manages team meetings to establish a shared sense of purpose and unity.
- Involves the team in decisions that may affect them.
- Ensures everyone is aware of each other's roles on the team.

## **Leadership**

- Embraces organisational change initiatives.
- Ability to encourage, inspire and support others to deliver.
- Approachable and available for advice and support.

## **Problem Solving and Decision Making**

- Acts quickly to address urgent matters.
- Anticipates problems and issues and takes preventative action to address them.
- Ability to make decisions in challenging situations.



- Accurately anticipates likely consequences of actions and decisions.

## **7. OUTLINE OF JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The clinical areas in St. Francis Hospice Dublin include the Inpatient Units, Outpatient & Day Service and Community Palliative Care service. The Clinical specialist speech and language therapist will rotate through each area as directed by the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals.

The Clinical specialist speech and language therapist will work as a member of the Multi-Disciplinary team, providing high-quality Speech and Language Therapy services to patients in assigned areas in accordance with professional standards of practice.

The role of the Clinical specialist speech and language therapist includes, but is not limited to:

### **Professional / Clinical**

- Provide advanced assessment, diagnosis and management of complex communication and swallowing disorders in specialist palliative care
- Lead high-risk clinical decision-making, including dysphagia management and communication support in complex clinical situations
- Act as a clinical expert resource within the multidisciplinary team
- Manage a specialist caseload, applying advanced clinical reasoning and evidence-based practice
- Promote a holistic, person-centred approach within an interdisciplinary model of care
- Ensure high standards of clinical documentation and governance
- Identify service needs and contribute to ongoing development of the SLT service
- Participate in audit, outcome measurement and quality improvement initiatives
- Be responsible for a patient caseload, applying expert clinical knowledge, reasoning and skills in assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of treatment programmes for patients within SFHD.
- Seeks additional support from colleagues and line manager when required.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of contemporary Speech and Language Therapy evidence-based practice in this clinical area and promote and demonstrate best practice at all times.
- Demonstrate an ability to read, analyse and interpret medical information and sort through extraneous detail to identify pertinent information to guide clinical reasoning.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and modify accordingly where the evidence base is incomplete.
- Promote the delivery of a holistic, patient-centred approach, which encompasses a multi-professional perspective.
- Display awareness & appreciation of the service users & the ability to empathise with & treat others with dignity & respect.
- Communicate and work in co-operation with MDT members in providing an integrated quality Palliative Care service.
- Communicate effectively and coordinate interventions with other members of the multidisciplinary team to ensure an optimum service is provided for all patients.



- Communicate oral and written information in a clear, concise and well-structured manner appropriate to the content and the target audience.
- Professionally manage communications.
- Ensure the quality of documentation of all assessments, treatment plans, progress notes, reports, and discharge summaries is in accordance with local service and professional standards.
- Seek advice and assistance with any assigned duties in line with principles of evidence-based practice and clinical governance, recognising when it is appropriate to refer decisions to a higher level of authority or include colleagues in the decision-making process.
- Be able to identify potential difficulties and formulate solutions.
- Adhere to the ethical, legal and professional requirements that inform safe and ethical Speech and Language Therapy practice.
- Identify and prioritise the requirements of the Palliative Care Speech and Language Therapy service within a constantly changing environment.
- Balance clinical demands with other responsibilities (e.g. departmental and organisational responsibilities, CPD, service development, administration and managerial demands) through effective time management and organisational skills.
- Optimise appropriate resources (e.g. manpower, equipment, physical equipment) within own area to achieve effective outcomes.
- Understand and promote the role of the Palliative Care Speech and Language Therapy service within SFHD.
- Promote the profile of palliative care Speech and Language Therapy locally, nationally and internationally
- Engage in professional supervision and participate in individual performance management.
- Identify and communicate service development needs and changes clearly and comprehensively to all relevant stakeholders.
- Co-ordinate the collection and analysis of statistical information and participate in service audits as per service guidelines.
- Provide service delivery reports as required, e.g. service plan, board reports, annual report, and ensure that there are appropriate systems in place to gather relevant information
- Manage own work-life balance.
- Contribute professional expertise to wider organisational initiatives/committees/steering groups at local, national and international levels.
- Develop and promote quality standards of work and cooperate with quality assurance programmes.
- Operate within the scope of practice of the Speech and Language Therapist's Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics Bye-Law 2019 and the Framework for Registration Boards Continuing Professional Development Standard and Requirements (CORÚ 2013).
- Carry out any other such duties appropriate to the post as may be assigned by the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals in the designated area, including representing the Speech and Language Therapy department on SFH committees and initiatives.



## **Management / Leadership / Service Development**

- Lead SLT service development; develop clinical pathways and protocols; contribute to strategic planning; advise on service needs and resource planning.
- Represent the Speech and Language Therapy department on organisational projects and working groups as required.
- Represent the professional interests of Speech and Language Therapy at organisational and national levels as required.
- Act as a positive and supportive team leader with strong leadership skills.
- Drive change and promote and encourage others when implementing change.
- Develop and implement new service initiatives or quality improvements in collaboration with the MDT and the wider organisation.
- Identify and avail of opportunities to assist/contribute to strategic planning.

## **Education and Development**

- Provide education and training to MDT staff; support student education; contribute to interdisciplinary skill development.
- Participate in mandatory training programmes.
- Take responsibility for and keep up to date with Speech and Language Therapy practice by participating in continuing professional development, including in-service training, attending and presenting at conferences/ courses relevant to practice, contributing to research, clinical audit, etc., as agreed by the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals.
- Tailoring own CPD to match service needs.
- Remain informed of developments and trends in Speech and Language Therapy practice by study of current literature, networking with relevant expert groups and colleagues nationally and internationally and sharing this information within the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals and developing & enhancing clinical standards within SFHD.
- Monitor and keep up to date with developments in SFHD, The Irish Association of Speech & Language Therapists (IASLT) and Irish and global healthcare and apply the same to practice as appropriate to facilitate advanced professional practice.
- Participate in educational presentations for clients, colleagues, students and external groups as required.
- Engage in support /supervision.
- Engage in performance management with the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals.
- Plan, deliver and evaluate education, training and health promotion activities to meet service needs within the department and the organisation.
- Deliver effective education, training and support to ensure the successful implementation of new initiatives.

## **Research and Development**

- Lead and participate in research, audit and quality improvement; disseminate findings and support evidence-based practice.
- Understand the principles of research and research methodology which underpin an analytical approach to clinical practice.



- Lead, facilitate and/or participate in research projects relevant to palliative care Speech and Language Therapy with the aim of publishing within the field in peer-recognised journals/periodicals.
- Lead the dissemination of the findings both locally and in the wider health care arena at professional and national conferences, etc.
- Contribute to the development of guidelines and evidence-based practice through research.
- Contribute to the development of the Speech and Language Therapy Department in SFHD through research.
- Contribute to the design and implementation of quality improvement mechanisms at both practice and organisational levels.
- Participate in collaborative interdisciplinary research.

### **Administrative**

- Actively participate in the improvement and development of Speech and Language Therapy services by liaising with the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals.
- Accurately record and analyse statistics for organisational and legal purposes.
- Initiate and participate in audits as directed by the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals.
- Represent the department at meetings and conferences as designated.
- Assist in ensuring that the Speech and Language Therapy service makes the most efficient and effective use of developments in ICT.
- Promote a culture that values diversity and respect in the workplace.
- Keep up to date with organisational developments within the Irish Health Service.

### **Health and Safety**

- Develop and monitor implementation of agreed policies, procedures and safe professional practice by adhering to relevant legislation, regulations and standards.
- Ensure the safety of self and others, and the maintenance of safe environments and equipment used in the Speech and Language Therapy Department in accordance with legislation.
- Assess and manage risk in their assigned area of responsibility.
- Take appropriate, timely action to manage any incidents or near misses within their assigned area.
- Report immediately any accidents or incidents involving patients, staff, students or members of the public to the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals or nominee.
- Be responsible for the safe and competent use of all treatment and assistive equipment by both clients and staff under their supervision.
- Comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.
- Comply with relevant Health and Safety responsibilities relevant to their area as outlined in SFHD policies, protocols and procedures.
- Take reasonable care to protect her / his own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by her/ his acts or omissions at work.
- Instruct assigned staff /students in safe working practices.
- To be aware of the policy in relation to fire prevention and the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire in the building.



## **General**

- Comply with the Mission Statement, Ethos and Values of St. Francis Hospice Dublin.
- Ensuring compliance with Health and Safety procedures in relation to all Hospice activities.
- Contribute to and comply fully with the St. Francis Hospice Dublin Safety Statement, including safe working practice as laid down by the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and any other relevant legislation.
- Comply with the St. Francis Hospice Dublin policies relating to confidentiality and ensure confidentiality in all matters of information obtained during the course of employment.
- Adhere to the Policies & Procedures of St. Francis Hospice Dublin at all times.
- Actively engage in continuous personal development and learning.
- Present and act professionally at all times.

Carrying out such duties appropriate to the office as may be assigned by the Head of Health and Social Care Professionals or other designated officer in all matters relating to the job.

The successful candidate will be required to update their knowledge and skills to fit the changing requirements of the post. Therefore, this Job Description is an outline of the current broad areas of responsibility and accountability and should not be regarded as a comprehensive listing. It will be reviewed and updated in line with future needs. The successful candidate will be required to maintain, enhance and develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to respond to a changing situation.

<b>Signature of Job Holder:</b>	<b>Signature of Line Manager or Designated Officer:</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>	<b>Job Title:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Date:</b>