

## LCA Guidance: key features for a CNS job description (band 7)

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### Introduction and purpose

It is acknowledged (NCAT 2010) that the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) role contributes significantly to cancer care and has potential to affect patient experience at key stages of the cancer care pathway (1).

Within cancer care the roles undertaken by CNSs are many and varied. Whilst the standard job description for these roles will reflect the key components of specialist practice, namely clinical expertise, management, research and education, the LCA Lead Cancer Nurses Group is keen to ensure that there is better clarity of the knowledge, skills and experience required to undertake the CNS role in practice. The aim is to produce a reference document which outlines the key requirements of a Band 7 CNS role in cancer care. It is anticipated that this may be utilised to adapt existing job descriptions through the appropriate HR processes.

The reference document will include:

- An overview of the role and scope of practice. This will include identification of the key stages in the cancer pathway when the CNS has potential to influence direct patient care
- Identification of the key components of specialist practice and illustration of the requirements of the CNS role in the practice setting.
- Personal specification for the CNS role

These recommendations have been based on the Macmillan Cancer Support Minimum Core Job Description for a Band 7 Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialist 2011. Working in partnership with Skills for Health, Macmillan has developed a Nationally Transferable Role (NTR) for Macmillan CNSs which outlines the competence required to fulfill the role. The NTR is an important step towards establishing consistency within the role across the UK and setting a benchmark standard, which will benefit patients, commissioners, employers and employees.

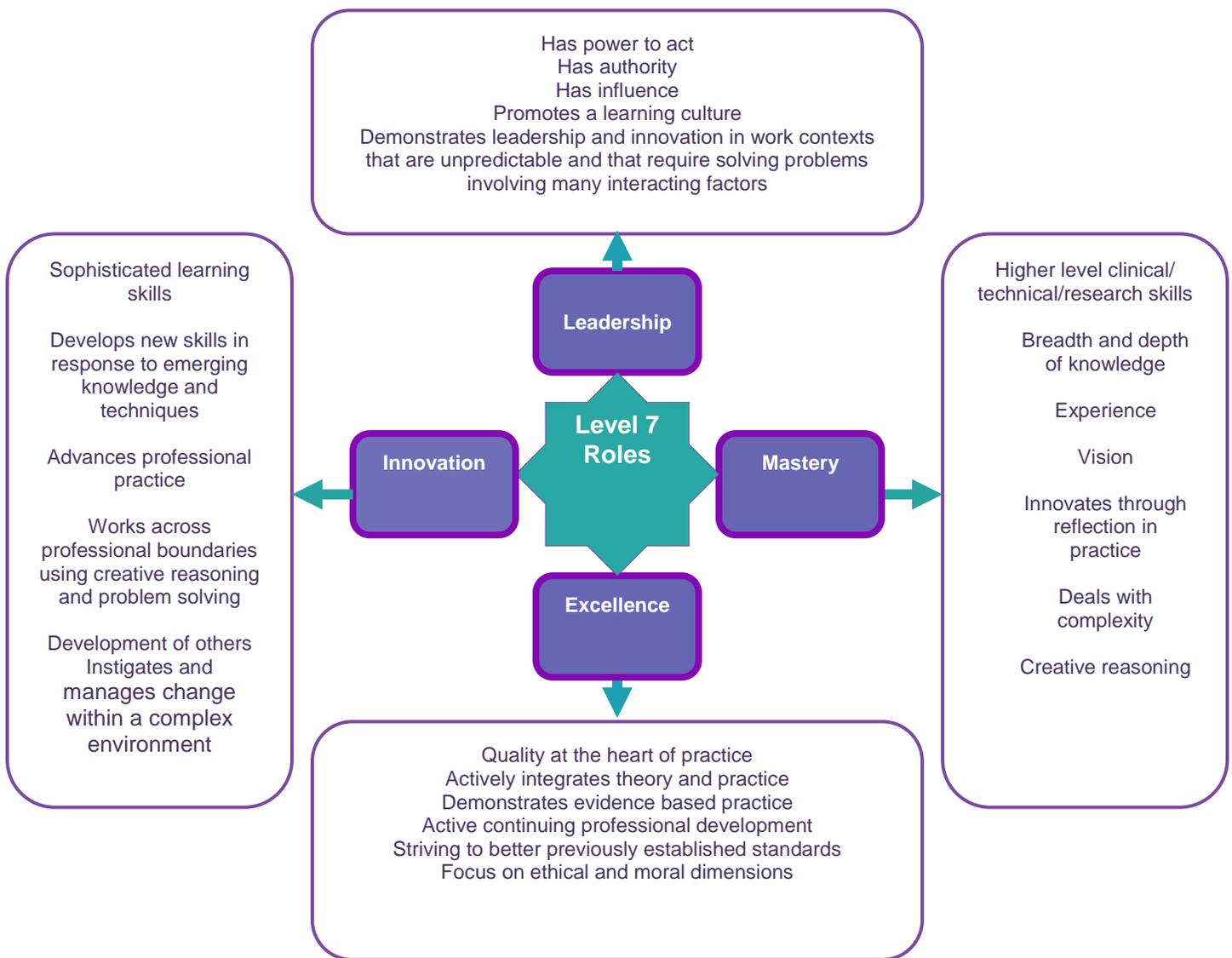
*If the post you are recruiting to is a Macmillan Cancer Support post, please contact the area Macmillan Development Manager (MDM) to agree advert and job description.*

### Clinical Nurse Specialist – Cancer Care

#### Overview

The Clinical Nurse Specialist will be expected to demonstrate a higher level of practice in both her/his direct care of patients and in her/his ability to plan and develop services to support cancer care. Through the key skills of leadership, innovation, mastery and clinical expertise s/he will facilitate and deliver care which is patient centred, safe, and effective (see figure below).

The CNS is a core member within the multidisciplinary care team (MDT) and through demonstration of these higher level skills s/he will work collaboratively with clinicians and service managers to promote, develop, review and redesign services which are responsive and relevant to patient's needs.



**Scope of Practice**

Understanding the nature and the breadth of the cancer care pathway, and the potential for the CNS to influence care at key stages within this, is fundamental to appreciation of the role of the CNS.

The cancer care pathway is made up of a number of key phases to include diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, monitoring/follow up, progressive disease and end of life. The pathway is not linear and, depending on the nature of their disease, the patient may move from one part to the other and back again.

The recent Cancer Reform Strategy (2) has highlighted a need for improved focus of care across the whole breadth of the cancer pathway and in particular at promotion of early diagnosis as well as rehabilitation and survivorship. The National Cancer Survivorship Initiative (NCSI) has identified a number of drivers for change to influence cancer survivorship (3). Both commissioners and healthcare providers are being supported to undertake actions to review how routine follow up is delivered in an attempt to drive improvements in cancer survivorship outcomes

The Clinical Nurse Specialist will review the cancer patient pathway to determine the key stages where s/he will have interventions to influence patient care. The CNS will evidence the nature of assessment and care planning which takes place at these stages. Particular attention is relevant to stages when the patient may be transferred between the cancer unit and cancer centre. In addition to this, key interventions may be required when a patient transfers from secondary to primary care.

The key components of the CNS role to be adapted into existing job description templates will be illustrated under the categories: clinical excellence; mastery; innovation; and leadership.

### **Clinical Excellence**

- Places quality at the heart of practice by delivering evidence based individualised care, through holistic needs assessment, planning and evaluation of care.
- Acts as a Keyworker for a clinical caseload incorporates the responsibilities of the key worker role, working to coordinate care and provide easy access for ongoing support for patients.
- Uses advanced communication skills in all aspects of patient assessment, care and support.
- Assesses people's information needs and provides relevant information to meet those needs.
- Enables people to access, identify, appraise and interpret information, to determine their own future.
- Provides clinical expertise, specialist advice and support across service boundaries.
- Leads the nursing contribution to service development, ensuring the pursuit of excellence in care.
- Is able to influence the patient care pathway, refers to other professionals, and sign-post patients to other agencies as appropriate.
- Promotes the service and clinical excellence by publishing and presenting innovations, audit and research locally and nationally.
- Influences and participates in development of policy and clinical guidelines internally and externally.
- Actively integrates theory and practice.
- In conjunction with the clinical team, undertakes risk stratification for patients having cancer follow up. Promotes self-management through education and guided support.

### **Mastery**

- Demonstrates high level clinical, technical and research skills through breadth and depth of knowledge.
- Uses creative reasoning, experience and vision to advance care and influence patient outcomes.
- Demonstrates continuous evaluation of practice and make changes where appropriate.
- Takes personal responsibility for life-long learning and personal development through clinical supervision, appraisal and Knowledge and Skills Framework and actively engages with learning and development opportunities

### **Innovation**

- Develops new skills in response to emerging knowledge and techniques.
- Works across professional boundaries using creative reasoning and problem-solving to facilitate new ways of working to influence improvements in the patient care pathway.

- Instigates and manages change within a complex environment. Is able to evaluate the impact of change and any impact on the patient care pathway.
- Influences the training and development of others (MDT, nursing roles, etc.), in particular supports generic staff to care for patients with cancer.
- Promotes patient and public experience feedback through local initiatives to drive innovation and change.

### **Leadership**

- Promotes a culture that supports patient centred care and patient empowerment.
- Acts as a role model demonstrating high standards of care and providing clinical leadership to others.
- Provides specialist education and training to other professionals involved in patient care.
- Leads the development, management and promotion of the specialist nursing service ensuring the delivery of high quality, cost-effective care.
- Embeds patient and public involvement within the sphere of practice.
- Collates and interprets quantitative and qualitative data to provide evidence of productivity, outcomes and quality. Is able to utilise data to support business cases and reports as appropriate.
- Contributes to the identification of service goals and appreciates how these link with performance targets and quality indicators.
- Supports the implementation and monitoring of adherence to relevant site specific clinical guidelines for cancer nursing practice. Works collaboratively with the clinical lead for the service and contributes to the identification of service objectives, annual report and annual work plan for the service.
- Actively participates in multiprofessional meetings, acting as the patient advocate and representing nursing views.
- Makes sure that people affected by cancer are aware that they are interacting with a senior healthcare professional and have access to the range of cancer resources and services available to them (financial, information, support, etc.)
- Actively engages with the cancer management team, the London Cancer Alliance and other partners as appropriate to continuously raise the profile of cancer nursing and promote patient centred services for patients affected by cancer.

## MINIMUM PERSON SPECIFICATION: BAND 7 CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST

	<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>	<b>EVIDENCE</b>
<b>EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered General Nurse</li> <li>• First level degree in related subject</li> <li>• Evidence of Masters level learning or prepared to work towards</li> <li>• Post-basic qualification in cancer/palliative care or relevant subject</li> <li>• Evidence of continued professional development</li> <li>• Level 2 psychological skills training as per recognised course or working towards</li> <li>• Advanced Communications Skills Training or working towards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research qualification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application form, CV</li> <li>• NMC PIN check</li> <li>• Professional Portfolio</li> </ul>
<b>RELEVANT EXPERIENCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant post registration experience, at Band 6 or above, in cancer or palliative care</li> <li>• Experience of teaching</li> <li>• In-depth specialist experience</li> <li>• Leadership and management experience</li> <li>• Able to conduct reflective practice and participates in clinical supervision facilitated by a level 3 / 4 practitioner</li> <li>• Experience of multi-professional working</li> <li>• Evidence of advanced communications skills</li> <li>• Ability to lead and influence change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience of working as a clinical nurse specialist</li> <li>• Experience of audit and research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview, References</li> <li>• Application form</li> </ul>

	<b>ESSENTIAL</b>	<b>DESIRABLE</b>	<b>EVIDENCE</b>
<b>SKILLS AND ABILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT literate</li> <li>• Teaching/assessment and presentation skills</li> <li>• Organisation and negotiation skills</li> <li>• Effective communication</li> <li>• Leadership and motivational skills</li> <li>• Ability to motivate self and others</li> <li>• Ability to work autonomously and as part of a team</li> <li>• Flexible attitude to working</li> <li>• Exemplar written communication skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Computer Driving Licence or equivalent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview, References</li> <li>• Application form</li> <li>• Presentation</li> </ul>
<b>PERSONAL CAPABILITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diplomatic</li> <li>• Calm and objective</li> <li>• Assertive, confident, yet approachable</li> <li>• Personally and professionally mature</li> <li>• Recognition of own limitations</li> <li>• Demonstrates enthusiasm</li> <li>• Able to travel between sites</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>
<b>EFFORT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to deal with complex and difficult emotional situations</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> </ul>

### References

1. Excellence in Cancer Nursing: The Contribution of the Clinical Nurse Specialist  
<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Documents/AboutUs/Commissioners/ExcellenceinCancerCaretheContributionoftheClinicalNurseSpecialist.pdf>
2. Improving Outcomes: A Strategy for Cancer January 2011  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/135516/dh\\_123394.pdf.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/135516/dh_123394.pdf.pdf)
3. Living With and Beyond Cancer: Taking Action to Improve Outcomes  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-with-and-beyond-cancer-taking-action-to-improve-outcomes>

Date for review: January 2015