



DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH AND  
CHILDREN  
AN ROINN  
SLÁINTE AGUS CÉIM

Quality and Fairness  
A Health Policy

Circular 65/2002

12th December 2002

Chief Executive Officer  
Each Health Board/ERHA

Each Public Voluntary Hospital  
outside ERHA

Each Mental Handicap Agency  
outside ERHA

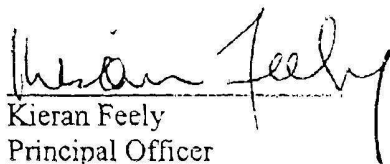
**Re: Nursing Support Service Managers**

I am directed by the Minister for Health and Children to refer to the agreement reached between employers and unions representing nurses in relation to Support Staff Supervisors.

Arising from this agreement, Support Staff Supervisors should now be retitled Nursing Support Service Managers. The grading for this post will be CNM3 and payment of this rate for those in the substantive post on 10th June 2002 will be effective from 1st October 2001.

Your non-capital allocation will be adjusted to take account of appropriate costs. In this context, please submit detailed costings to the Nursing Policy Division as soon as possible.

Any queries in relation to this matter should be addressed to the Health Service Employers Agency, at (01) 6626966.

  
Kieran Feely  
Principal Officer  
Nursing Policy Division

cc: Mr Brendan Mulligan, Health Service Employers Agency

Hawkins House Dublin 2  
Teach Harcán Baile Átha Cliath 2  
Telephone (01) 635 4000 VPNI12  
Fax (01) 635 4001  
Email: info@health.ie  
Website: <http://www.doh.ie>

**Report of a  
Job Evaluation Exercise  
On the grade of**

**Nursing Staff Support Supervisor**

Conducted by Join Evaluation Team:

Jenny Hogan, Nurse Advisor, Department of Health

Sean Mc Hugh, Independent Consultant

10<sup>th</sup> June 2002

---

## Background

The report on the Effective Utilisation of Professional skills of Nurses and Midwives recommends that a Co-ordinator of Education and training of Health Care Assistants will assume responsibility for the overall co-ordination and delivery of the practical and theoretical training required for the pilot programme. It was envisaged in the report that the co-ordinator will be a nurse or midwife with a background in education.

In order to address the concerns of the Nursing Staff Support Supervisors, discussions took place between the HSEA and the Unions and representatives of the Nursing Staff Support Supervisors. The outcome of these discussions was a commitment given to examine the role of the Nursing Staff Support Supervisors.

It was agreed that a two-person team, Ms. Jenny Hogan and Mr. Sean Mc Hugh, (one nominee from management and one from the staff side) would carry out an evaluation of the role.

## Terms of Reference

- To carry out an evaluation of the role, responsibilities, duties, accountability and functions of the Nursing Staff Support Supervisors, for the training of Health Care Assistants.
- To make recommendations on a uniform approach with regard to a job description, and grading of the Nursing Staff Support Supervisors.

## Methodology for Evaluation Process

	Activity	Date
Step 1	Agreement of all parties to process	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2002
Step 2	Each post-holder fills out and returns questionnaire	20 <sup>th</sup> May 2002
Step 3	Evaluation Team meet with each post-holder in agreed pilot sites	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2002
Step 4	Evaluation Team meet with Directors of Nursing in agreed pilot sites	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2002
Step 5	Post is compared with grade description	
Step 6	Post is placed in appropriate grade	
Step 7	Issue of Final Report	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2002

## Agreed Pilot Sites

The following pilot sites were agreed as the locations from which post-holders and Directors of Nursing would be interviewed as part of the process:

Tallaght Hospital, Dublin  
Beaumont Hospital, Dublin  
University College Hospital Galway  
Daughters of Charity, Navan Road  
Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary, Moore Abbey  
St Mary's Hospital, Phoenix Park  
Mercy Hospital, Cork

## Job Evaluation Exercise

The job evaluation scheme for this exercise is based on the Job Classification approach.

Job Classification is generally used where there is a grading structure already established and the requirement is to place a particular grade or job within that structure.

At the commencement of the process a set of grade descriptions are drawn up. These are contained in **sections 7.20, 7.29, 7.41, and 7.45** of the Report of The Commission on Nursing.

The existing grades are as follows:

Director of Nursing (Band 1-5)  
Assistant Director of Nursing (Band 1)  
Assistant Director of Nursing (Band 2-5)  
Clinical Nurse Manager 3  
Clinical Nurse Manager 2

The Job(s) to be evaluated are then compared with these under a specific set of factors. These factors are:

Decisions  
Supervision/Leadership  
Accountability  
Communications  
Knowledge & Skills

---

## **Definitions and Levels**

### **Decisions**

***The extent under which the job holder is expected to make decisions and/or contribute to the making of decisions having regard to:***

- ***Intricacy of Decisions***
- ***Discretion***

***The extent to which the jobholder has the freedom and opportunity to take or contribute to decisions.***

### **Level Definitions**

- I. Routine work where tasks are defined clearly. Choice of action is limited to routine matters.
- II. Decisions on routine or minor matters where there is limited scope for exercising initiative within specific limits
- III. Decisions on some non-routine matters where established policy exists. Judgement and initiative exercised under broad supervision and direction. Assists in contributing to decision making at a higher level.
- IV. Jobholder frequently exercises judgement and initiative on more complex matters within policy and procedures. Work will be generally self directed and under general guidance only. Contributes to decision making at a higher level.
- V. Jobholder exercises a high degree of responsibility, judgement and initiative. Decisions frequently made without clear policy or precedent. Creative thinking often required in order to reach decisions. Often responsible for drawing up policy and procedures and deploying resources in an accountable fashion.

### **Supervision/Leadership**

***The extent to which the jobholder is directly responsible for the direction training and organisation of staff having regard to grades and numbers of staff. The extent to which the jobholder must provide leadership in the course of her/his work.***

#### **Level Definitions**

- I. No supervisory responsibility
- II. Provision of advice and guidance to junior staff
- III. Supervisory responsibility involving training of new staff, allocation and checking of work
- IV. Substantial responsibility for the direction and supervision of staff at various levels. Involvement in all aspects of selection recruitment and discipline of staff.
- V. Overall responsibility for a significant area within the organisation. Responsibility for monitoring overall performance, standards & practice within substantial work area.

### **Accountability**

***A measure of the effects that could reasonably result from failure by the jobholder to exercise due care or discretion in carrying out the job.***

#### **Level Definitions**

- I. Minimal effects which can easily be rectified

- 
- II. Errors are easily detected and cause some disruption within the work unit
  - III. Errors would have considerable short-term effects within the work unit and would require immediate attention
  - IV. Errors may not easily be detected and would have a serious effect within the unit and may cause repercussions in a broader area.
  - V. Errors would be very serious in terms of loss of resources and damage to the workings of the unit. The overall organisation would be damaged and the error would be difficult to rectify.

### **Communications**

***The extent to which the job holder is required to communicate in the course of his/her work with persons or groups inside and outside the organisation having regard to the purpose, level, and frequency of the most significant communications.***

### **Level Definitions**

- I. Communications are limited to routine matters within jobholder's own area of work
- II. Communications are limited largely to routine matters inside and outside work area but not at a senior level
- III. Regular non-routine communications at various levels inside and outside the work area involving interpretation of information on occasions



- 
- IV. Communications of a more complex nature both inside and outside the organisation, occasionally at the highest level
  - V. Frequent communication at a very high level inside and outside the organisation where a high level of skill is required.

### **Knowledge and Skills**

***The knowledge and skills that are required to carry out the job effectively.***

### **Level Definitions**

- I. Basic levels of skills required where a satisfactory standard can be achieved after a number of weeks
- II. Routine skills required with perhaps a limited qualification. Additional training may be required
- III. Work of a more advanced nature involving non-routine work where relevant experience of at least one year is required
- IV. Professional proficiency required involving the application and understanding of advanced practices, procedures, concepts or principles. Significant experience required including managerial experience
- V. High level of specialised knowledge across professional and managerial fields. Several years experience at a high level required

**Note: Jobs are examined under the above factors and the job as a whole is compared with the grade definitions. The post is then assigned to the appropriate grade from among the grades described.**

---

## **Feedback Sessions**

As outlined in the methodology, the evaluation team met with a random sample of Staff Support Supervisors, Healthcare Assistants and Directors of Nursing from the pilot sites and from non - pilot sites. This allowed for a broad overview of the position relating to the development of these posts. The following is a reflection of those meetings.

### **Staff Support Supervisors**

Five out of seven of the random selection of Staff Support Supervisors was able to attend. Each Staff Support Supervisor has been asked to fill in a questionnaire (see Appendix I) that had been sent to them prior to the interview. The aim of the interview was to go through the questionnaire in more detail and tease out anything that the Staff Support Supervisors felt had not been identified or reflected in the questionnaire and also to give the Staff Support Supervisors the opportunity to articulate or add anything that they felt was relevant to the development of the role.

On the whole all of the Staff Support Supervisors felt the questionnaire was a fair and equitable method of capturing the essence of what their job entailed.

During the course of the interviews it became apparent that two distinct types of Staff Support Supervisor were emerging. The first role that emerged was that of the already established Staff Support Supervisor who has been in post for a number of years with the remit of recruiting, orientating, educating and managing healthcare assistants, these posts were usually established in the larger teaching hospitals, although this was not always the case. Those hospitals that had no Staff Support Supervisor applied to the Department of Health and Children for a co-ordinator at CNM 2 level to roll out the pilot programme. This second post was created for the sole purpose of

---

establishing and co-ordinating the pilot programme for the training of healthcare assistants, the role was created in September 2001 and usually the person filling it was seconded from their substantive post, they are now back in their substantive posts pending evaluation of the course by the University of Ulster.

For the purposes of this evaluation and in line with the terms of reference, the focus for evaluation will be on the role of the substantive Staff Support Supervisor. An overview of this role is set out below.

### **Healthcare Assistants**

A representative group of the Healthcare Assistants met with the evaluation team, the aim was to examine their perceptions of the role and function of the Staff Support Supervisors. As with the Staff Support Supervisors it became apparent that there were two roles emerging. The Healthcare Assistants confirmed that the Staff Support Supervisors were the crucial link in their recruitment, training, orientation and management. Only in one organisation did the Clinical Nurse Manager roster the Healthcare Assistant on the ward off duty.

### **Directors of Nursing**

The Directors were invited to give their views on the role of the Staff Support Supervisors with a view to re-grading. What emerged from this session was the diversity across sites of the role of the Staff Support Supervisor. Role clarification and function very much depended on the structure of nursing management already in place. For example, some assistant directors had responsibility for the rostering and payment of the HCA's in addition to their normal duties, but in other areas the Staff Support Supervisor did this. In

some areas the Staff Support Supervisors had total responsibility for the HCA's including a teaching commitment. This session demonstrated to the evaluation team that the Directors described a very specific job remit which was in line with what the Staff Support Supervisors had outlined for us. Again the clarification of the role fell into two distinct areas.

### **Overview of the role of Nursing Staff Support Supervisor**

The main purpose of the role as described by post-holders is to effectively manage and co-ordinate Healthcare Assistants to ensure that they provide nursing support services to the highest standard. Additionally, a primary element of the role involves the integration of these staff within wards.

The main aspects of the jobs are:

- **Administration**
  - Rostering
  - Salaries
  - Mentoring staff
  - Monitoring leave, absenteeism, etc.
- **Human Resource Management**
  - Recruitment and Selection
  - Industrial Relations
- **Support to Clinical Nurse Managers and Assistant Directors of Nursing with regard to the effectiveness of Healthcare Assistants.**
- **Education**
  - Induction of new staff
  - Organisation of N.C.V.A. programme
  - Ongoing in-service training

## Job Evaluation Outcome

The following chart gives the evaluators' independent assessment of levels under each of the five factors.

Factor	Level	Reference
Decisions	Level IV	Note 1
Supervision/Leadership	Level IV	Note 2
Accountability	Level III	Note 3
Knowledge & Skills	Level III	Note 4
Communications	Level IV	Note 5

- Note 1** "Jobholder frequently exercises judgement and initiative on more complex matters within policy and procedures. Work will be generally self-directed and under general guidance only. Contributes to decision making at a higher level."
- Note 2** "Substantial responsibility for the direction and supervision of staff at various levels. Involvement in all aspects of selection recruitment and discipline of staff."
- Note 3** "Errors would have considerable short-term effects within the work unit and would require immediate attention."
- Note 4** "Regular non-routine communications at various levels inside and outside the work area involving interpretation of information on occasions."
- Note 5** "High level of specialised knowledge across professional and managerial fields. Several years experience at a high level required"

## Conclusion

- Job Evaluation is a 'snap shot' of certain factors or characteristics of a job or grade at a given time. At the time of evaluation it is clear that this grade is continuing to develop. Indeed similar jobs within the grade are at different stages of development. The course evaluation is not as yet completed.
- It is necessary as part of this exercise, and in line with the terms of reference, to evaluate the grade based on a uniform description of the job.
- For the purposes of this exercise we have used the Description set out in the overview of the role of Staff Support Supervisor above.
- We examined the role under the agreed factors and compared the job as a whole with the grade definitions contained in sections 7.20, 7.29, 7.41, and 7.45 of the Report of The Commission on Nursing for the following grades:

Director of Nursing (Band 1-5)

Assistant Director of Nursing (Band 1)

Assistant Director of Nursing (Band 2-5)

Clinical Nurse Manager 3

Clinical Nurse Manager 2

- As a result we conclude that the appropriate grade to assign the Job being evaluated is Clinical Nurse Manager 3.

## **Recommendations**

- We recommend that the Job Title for this position should be **Nursing Support Service Manager**.
- We recommend that the grading level for this position should be at **Clinical Nurse Manager 3** level.
- We recommend that a uniform approach with regard to Job Descriptions is desirable and that in future they should be based on the broad overview of the role set out in this report.

**Jenny Hogan**

**Sean Mc Hugh**

**10<sup>th</sup> June 2002**