

# IRIS Advocate-Educator Job Description and Person Specification

## Job description

**Position Title:** IRIS Advocate Educator within NHS Practitioner Health

**Hours:** Full time (37.5 hours per week)

**Contract:** 12 months fixed term contract

**Location:** National, remote (with occasional travel)

**Salary:** £36,363 (2025 NJC scale points 23–25)

**Reports to:** NHS Practitioner Health Safeguarding Leads and IRISi (the post holder will be employed by IRISi and seconded to Practitioner Health to deliver the work associated with this role.)

This role will be positioned within NHS Practitioner Health and delivered in partnership with IRISi as part of the 'IRIS-PH' research project, led by University of Bristol.

NHS Practitioner Health is a national confidential service for doctors, dentists, and health and care professionals experiencing mental health and addiction difficulties that may affect their ability to work safely or return to work. The service aims to:

- Improve mental health and social functioning
- Support return to work or retraining
- Reduce risk to patients and the public
- Reduce regulatory involvement

Practitioner Health provides online and telephone support, virtual assessment, treatment, therapeutic interventions, and ongoing case management. The service is designed as a psychologically safe, confidential environment for health and care professionals.

Practitioner Health patients come from diverse backgrounds, with approximately 6000 registrations per year. Of these, 80% present with common mental health concerns and around 20% with complex mental health and/or substance misuse issues. A proportion are involved in regulatory processes.

## A. Aims of the position

The IRIS Advocate Educator will play a critical role in developing and delivering the **IRIS-Practitioner Health (IRIS-PH) pilot programme**. The post holder will support

NHS Practitioner Health staff in identifying, responding to, and supporting patients experiencing domestic abuse and provide advocacy to patients. The role therefore combines specialist advocacy, training, consultancy, and service development functions.

The post holder will:

- Promote and embed the IRIS programme within Practitioner Health.
- Adapt training materials and programme elements in response to interim findings and feedback across the pilot.
- Deliver high-quality training, consultancy, and peer support to Practitioner Health staff.
- Build and maintain effective relationships with Practitioner Health clinical, therapeutic, and safeguarding teams.
- Establish and maintain strong partnerships with domestic abuse organisations nationally, as well as connections with national bodies that support or provide guidance to health and care professionals (e.g., Royal Colleges).
- Provide trauma-informed, needs-led advocacy, risk assessment and initial support to patients disclosing recent and non-recent domestic abuse.
- Provide support to Practitioner Health staff disclosing recent and non-recent domestic abuse.
- Support the development of safe, effective referral pathways and safeguarding responses.
- Contribute to monitoring, evaluation, and research activity linked to the IRIS-PH research project.

## **B. Specific areas of responsibility**

### **1. Service Development and Programme Delivery**

- Encourage engagement with the IRIS programme across Practitioner Health teams.
- Establish and maintain clear referral pathways for disclosures, including patients who are referred by their clinician or self-refer.
- Review and contribute to improvements in Practitioner Health domestic abuse-related website content.
- Develop and maintain a national resource and referral pathway library to support signposting into local and specialist services.
- Identify gaps in service provision for health and care professionals experiencing domestic abuse and contribute to the development of improved support options.

### **2. Training, Education, and Consultancy for Staff**

- Plan, organise, and deliver regular domestic abuse training sessions for new and existing Practitioner Health staff--both clinical and non-clinical

- Adapt and maintain training materials and resources.
- Provide specialist consultancy and case-based advice to Practitioner Health staff and teams, including support with complex cases.
- Promote best practice in asking about domestic abuse, responding to disclosures, risk assessment, recording, and referral.
- Facilitate reflective practice discussions and peer support spaces for Practitioner Health staff.
- Attend and contribute to relevant conferences and network meetings to raise awareness and share learning.

### **3. Triage, Advocacy, and Support for Patients**

- Provide trauma-informed, needs-led advocacy and support to patients accessing Practitioner Health who are being or have been subjected to domestic abuse.
- Provide support to Practitioner Health staff disclosing recent and non-recent domestic abuse.
- Deliver initial triage/needs assessment including, time-limited emotional support, risk assessment, safety planning, and support planning.
- Support patients to understand their rights and options relating to safety, housing, legal remedies, and welfare benefits.
- Use recognised risk assessment tools and escalate risk appropriately, including referral to MARAC and liaison with Practitioner Health Safeguarding Leads.
- Provide feedback and case updates to referring clinicians/therapists in line with consent and confidentiality requirements.
- Ensure appropriate onward referral for male survivors, recognising differing needs and service pathways.

### **4. Safeguarding, Governance, and Partnership Working**

- Liaise closely with the Practitioner Health safeguarding leads in line with internal safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Review and contribute to domestic abuse safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure alignment with best practice. Ensure these are followed for all domestic abuse cases identified and supported.
- Attend safeguarding multidisciplinary team (MDT) meetings, forums, and case reviews as required; attend MARAC virtually where appropriate or provide case updates.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with external domestic abuse and specialist agencies.

### **5. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research**

- Maintain accurate, confidential records of all referrals and casework in line with Practitioner Health information governance arrangements.

- Collect and collate data relating to the IRIS-PH pilot programme and research project.
- Provide monitoring reports (e.g. quarterly, annual) as requested by IRISi, Practitioner Health, and governance groups.

## C. General responsibilities

- Attend meetings to steer the IRIS-PH pilot programme and relevant Practitioner Health governance and safeguarding meetings.
- Engage with the national IRISi Network and participate in IRISi's events.
- Support national awareness-raising activities and resource-building relating to health and care professionals' experiences of domestic abuse and IRIS-PH pilot programme (e.g. through publications, social media, podcasts, external events and meetings).
- Demonstrate commitment to anti-oppressive practice and actively challenge sexism, racism, and other forms of discrimination.

This job description is intended to outline the main duties of the post and may evolve as the programme develops.

## Person specification

### Knowledge

- In depth knowledge and understanding of the issues facing health and care professionals who have been subjected to domestic abuse with specific knowledge of barriers faced and the effects on health and employment.
- Knowledge and understanding of the help-seeking behaviours of health and care professionals, many of whom will have been reluctant to contact the service due to concerns about confidentiality and professional implications.
- Understanding of confidentiality, safeguarding, and regulatory considerations for health and care professionals disclosing domestic abuse.
- Understanding of trauma, trauma symptoms, and trauma-informed practice.
- Knowledge of the impact of domestic abuse on mental health, addiction, and professional functioning.
- Knowledge of relevant legislation, rights, and options for survivors of domestic abuse.
- An understanding of the impact of multiple, intersecting oppressions (e.g. sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism, etc) and the consequent barriers for some survivors of domestic abuse to accessing services.
- Knowledge of training methods, service evaluation, and audit.

## **Experience**

- Minimum of two years' experience working within the domestic abuse sector.
- Experience of providing advocacy, risk assessment, safety planning, and needs-led support to survivors of domestic abuse.
- Experience of supporting survivors with complex and multiple needs.
- Experience of developing training materials and delivering training to professionals.
- Experience of building and maintaining effective multi-agency partnerships.

## **Skills and Abilities**

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including report writing and presentation.
- Strong facilitation and group-work skills.
- Ability to communicate sensitively with distressed individuals and maintain professional boundaries.
- Ability to manage competing priorities and work under pressure.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team.
- Strong organisational and IT skills, including Microsoft Office and database systems.

## **Attitudes, Values, and Ethos**

- Commitment to trauma-informed, patient-centred and non-judgmental practice.
- Commitment to feminist and anti-oppressive principles.
- Understanding of and commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Willingness to reflect on practice and engage in continuous professional development.

## **Education, Qualifications, and Training**

- Degree-level education or equivalent relevant professional qualification (desirable).
- Training in domestic abuse, sexual violence, or gender based violence.

## **Other Requirements**

- Willingness to work flexibly, including occasional evenings or weekends.
- Ability to travel to regional and national meetings as required.

## **Additional Information:**

This role is subject to enhanced DBS clearance due to the nature of the work. The successful candidate will adhere to NHS Practitioner Health's policies on safeguarding, confidentiality, and professional standards.

**Genuine occupational requirement:**

The post holder must be female. Due to the specific requirements of this role, this post is exempt under the Equality Act 2010, Schedule 9.

