

## Introduction

The following job description statements have been written by the MS Trust team, making use of [Agenda for Change](#) criteria for job evaluation in the NHS as the starting point, and drawing on examples from real-world band 6 and band 7 job descriptions in use in NHS Trusts for MS nurse posts.

Throughout the document, for consistency we have used the title 'MS nurse' to refer to band 6 posts, and 'MS specialist nurse' for band 7 positions. However, in practice there are band 6 posts within the NHS today with the title 'MS specialist nurse', along with others with the title 'MS support nurse', 'MS Therapies nurse' or 'MS nurse'<sup>1</sup>.

Megan Roberts, Health Professionals Programme Manager, MS Trust ([megan.roberts@mstrust.org.uk](mailto:megan.roberts@mstrust.org.uk))

---

<sup>1</sup> Mynors G, Bowen A, Doncaster D. [MS Specialist Nursing in the UK 2016: report on progress towards equitable provision](#). Letchworth: MS Trust, 2016.

<b>Overview</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
A band 6 MS nurse has a detailed knowledge and understanding of the care and management of people with MS and their families.	A band 7 MS specialist nurse has highly specialist knowledge and understanding of the needs of people living with MS from diagnosis to end of life.
Band 6 MS nurses are developing their clinical expertise and acumen, enabling them to deliver and coordinate complex care in routine circumstances to ensure that the needs of the person with MS are best served. They will work autonomously with their own assigned caseload.	They will have highly developed clinical expertise and acumen enabling them to plan, deliver and coordinate complex care in routine and non-routine circumstances to ensure that the needs of the person with MS are best served. They will work autonomously with their own caseload.
Band 6 MS nurses will contribute to and implement service improvement and changes in practice and will participate in multi-professional meetings, acting as patient advocate and representing nursing views.	Band 7 MS specialist nurses will instigate, implement and evaluate service improvement and changes in practice in response to feedback from patient experience, research evidence and service level data, and clinical and management requirements. They lead service level engagement with managers and instigate and lead multi-professional meetings, acting as patient advocate and representing nursing views.
They will deliver education and self-management courses to people with MS and patient groups, as well as the specialist education and training to other professionals involved in the care of people with MS. They will contribute to the supervision of non-specialist health	They will design and deliver education and self-management courses to people with MS and patient groups and the specialist education and training to other professionals involved in the care of people with MS.

<p>professionals and healthcare workers, and support patient and public involvement within the sphere of practice.</p>	<p>They will supervise the clinical practice of band 6 MSSNs and other health professionals e.g. AHPs, and take responsibility for embedding patient and public involvement within their sphere of practice.</p>
--	--

<b>I. Communication and relationship skills</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
<p>Provides and receives complex, sensitive and potentially distressing information</p>	<p>Provides and receives highly complex, sensitive and potentially distressing information</p>
<p>Overcomes barriers to understanding; for example due to stress or poor cognition, and demonstrates empathy and reassurance</p>	<p>Overcomes barriers to understanding; for example due to stress or poor cognition, and demonstrates empathy and reassurance</p>
<p>Communicates openly and appropriately with patients and carers in situations of a highly distressing or sensitive nature, such as discussions with the person with MS and their family around end of life care</p>	<p>Communicates openly and appropriately with patients and carers in situations of a highly distressing or sensitive nature, such as discussions with the person with MS and their family around end of life care</p>
	<p>Is able to communicate and debate professional issues and findings in own and others' research with experts and non-experts in MS</p>

<p>Takes professional responsibility for communicating effectively with team members and colleagues and contributes to ensuring effective communication between all service providers across the care pathway.</p>	<p>Takes professional responsibility for communicating effectively with team members and colleagues and develops systems and leads meetings to facilitate effective communication within the team</p>
--	---

<b>2. Qualifications, experience and CPD</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Registered General Nurse	Registered General Nurse
Evidence of regular and relevant continuing professional development e.g. MS Nurse PRO	A relevant Masters qualification or evidence of Masters level learning and related professional development, for example MSSN exam, registered mentor, evidence of involvement in research leading to publications or posters, regular attendance at MS specialist learning events.
An undergraduate degree in nursing and/or experience of working in a nursing role with skills which are transferable to the role of MS nurse, for example as an infusion nurse, neurology or community nurse.	An undergraduate degree in nursing and/or a minimum of five years' experience of working in a relevant nursing role and willingness to work towards a Masters degree.
Takes personal responsibility for life-long learning and personal development through clinical supervision, appraisal and actively engages with the learning and development opportunities accessible to MS Nurses. Is willing to undertake the MS nursing international certificate examination.	Is a qualified non-medical prescriber or can demonstrate willingness to undertake this qualification.
	<b>Band 7 (not previously held an MSSN post)</b>
	A relevant Masters qualification or evidence of masters level learning (i.e. MS Nurse Pro, non-medical prescribing, registered mentor, evidence of involvement

	<p>in research leading to publications or posters) and willing to work towards a Masters qualification.</p>
	<p>Previously in a senior nursing role in another specialist or generalist area with skills that are transferable to MS specialist nursing (e.g. hospice, district, continence nursing).</p>
	<p>Takes personal responsibility for life-long learning and personal development through clinical supervision, appraisal and actively engages with the learning and development opportunities accessible to MS Specialist Nurses and willing to undertake the MS nursing International certification examination</p>
	<p>Is a qualified non-medical prescriber or can demonstrate willingness to undertake this qualification.</p>

<b>3. Analytical and judgement skills</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Puts quality at the heart of practice by delivering evidence based, individualised and personalised care through holistic needs assessment, care planning and evaluation of all care interventions.	Puts quality at the heart of practice by delivering evidence based, individualised and personalised care through holistic needs assessment, care planning and evaluation of all care interventions.
Develops clinical, technical and research skills through breadth and depth of knowledge.	Demonstrates high level clinical, technical and research skills through breadth and depth of knowledge applied in all aspects of the role.
Develops and uses clinical expertise, clinical acumen, creative reasoning and experience to advance care and identify and meet complex care needs.	Develops and uses high level clinical expertise, clinical acumen, creative reasoning and experience to advance care and identify and meet complex care needs.
Supports the implementation and monitoring of adherence to relevant clinical guidelines.	Leads on the implementation and monitoring of adherence to relevant clinical guidelines – e.g. the development of DMD protocols.

<b>4. Planning and organisational skills</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Plans and delivers work within their assigned caseload with minimal supervision. Effectively manages their own diary autonomously.	Plans and delivers work autonomously. Effectively manages their own diary autonomously.
Contributes to implementation of service redesign in response to feedback from patient experience, research evidence, service level data and clinical and management requirements.	Leads on development and implementation of service redesign and develops and changes practice in response to feedback from patient experience, research evidence, service level data and clinical and management requirements.

<b>5. Clinical procedural skills</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Independently undertakes objective measures of patient function such as assessments of cognition, upper limb function or walking. Competently reviews and interprets data generated through these assessments and modifies care plan appropriately in discussion with the person with MS and other team members as required.	Independently conducts neurological examinations and objective measures of patient function such as assessments of cognition, upper limb function or walking. Competently reviews and interprets data generated through these assessments and revises the care plan in conjunction with the person with MS accordingly.

<p>Provides training and support to people with MS who need to self-inject their medication.</p>	<p>Provides training to other healthcare professionals and training and support to people with MS who need to self-inject their medication.</p>
	<p>Applies advance practitioner skills relevant to the working context e.g. refilling and titrating doses of baclofen pumps.</p>
<p>Assesses patients with acutely deteriorating symptoms and diagnoses relapses in routine circumstances. Ensures timely and appropriate treatment is offered.</p>	<p>Assesses patients with acutely deteriorating symptoms and diagnoses relapses in routine and non-routine circumstances using high level assessment and consultation skills and ensures timely and appropriate treatment is offered.</p>

<b>6. Responsibility for patient / client care</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Plans care in partnership with the person with MS, actively facilitating their choice and involvement in decision making. Coordinates the input of other services.	Plans care in partnership with the person with MS, actively facilitating their choice and involvement in decision making. Plans and coordinates the input of other services to ensure complex needs of the person with MS are fully met.
Promotes self-management, undertaking risk stratification to determine those who can self-manage aspects of their MS following education, those who will need guided support to self-manage and those who will require more intensive face to face support.	Facilitates self-management, undertaking risk stratification to determine those who can self-manage aspects of their MS following education, those who will need guided support to self-manage and those who will require more intensive face to face support.
Coordinates programmes of care with other health and social care professionals and makes appropriate referrals to other professionals.	Coordinates programmes of care with other health and social care professionals and makes appropriate referrals to other professionals.
Delivers MS education and self-management courses to people with MS and patient groups.	Designs and delivers education and self-management courses to people with MS and patient groups.

Actively participates in multi-professional meetings, acting as a patient advocate and representing nursing views.	Instigates and leads multi-professional meetings, acting as a patient advocate and representing nursing views.
Liases effectively with relatives and carers.	Liases effectively with relatives and carers.

<b>7. Policy and service development</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Supports and contributes to the development and promotion of the MS service ensuring the delivery of high quality, cost-effective care.	Leads the development and promotion of the MS service ensuring the delivery of high quality, cost-effective care.
Contributes to policy development, clinical guidelines, protocols and pathways in the context of national guidelines, research and recommended best practice.	Develops and leads the implementation of policy, clinical guidelines, protocols and pathways that contribute to the safety and effectiveness of the MS service in the context of national guidelines, research and recommended best practice.
	Engages with managers to promote and develop the MS service  Leads on the development and implementation of integrated care pathways and SLAs with other services that input into the care of people with MS.

Evaluates own practice and feeds into service review processes.	Evaluates own and others' practice and initiates regular service review process.
Supports policy and service development through joint working with other health and social care teams in own organisation and in other health providers.	Designs and leads the delivery of policy and service development through joint working with other health and social care teams in own organisation and in other health providers.
Contributes to service development initiatives.	Initiates, delivers and evaluates service development initiatives.
Supports patient and public involvement within the sphere of practice.	Embeds patient and public involvement within the sphere of practice.

<b>8. Responsibility for financial and physical resources</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Utilises the employer organisation's resources efficiently and effectively.	Responsible for ensuring that the MSSN service utilises the employer organisation's resources efficiently and effectively.  Ensures that activity need to facilitate the MSSN role is delivered by individuals the most appropriate role working at the most appropriate level rather than the MSSN.

Ensures equipment used in clinical assessments and training is safe and fit for purpose.	Ensures equipment used in clinical assessments and training is safe and fit for purpose.
Oversees supply of DMD medications ensuring home care delivery companies are notified promptly if supply to someone with MS needs to start, change or stop, where relevant to role. Liaises with pharmacy where appropriate.	Oversees supply of DMD medications ensuring home care delivery companies are notified promptly if supply to someone with MS needs to start, change or stop, where relevant to role. Liaises with pharmacy where appropriate.

<b>9. Education and supervision</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Provides clinical expertise, specialist advice and support to other professionals involved in the care of people with MS.	Provides high level clinical expertise, specialist advice and support to other professionals involved in the care of people with MS.
Contributes to the delivery of specialist education and training to other professionals involved in the care of people with MS.	Designs and leads the delivery of specialist education and training to other professionals involved in the care of people with MS.
Contributes to the supervision of non-specialist health professionals and healthcare workers.	Supervises the clinical practice of band 6 MS nurses and other health professionals, e.g. AHPs.
Provides mentorship to novice MS nurses.	Provides mentorship to MS nurses working in other regions of the UK.

<b>10. Information resources</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Accurately and diligently records and updates patient records and service level data.	Accurately and diligently records and updates patient records and service level data.

<b>11. Research and development, audit and evaluation</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Participates in data collection and recruitment for research projects and clinical trials in line with research protocols.	Leads on and participates in data collection and recruitment for research projects and clinical trials in line with research protocols.
Participates in quantitative and qualitative data collection of the MS nurse service in order to provide evidence of productivity, outcomes and quality for audit and evaluation.	Initiates and implements quantitative and qualitative data collection of the MS nurse service in order to provide evidence of productivity, outcomes and quality for audit and evaluation.

<p>Promotes the service and clinical excellence by contributing to publications, audit and research.</p>	<p>Promotes the service and clinical excellence by publishing and presenting innovations, audit and research locally and nationally.</p>
--	--

<b>12. Freedom to act</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Autonomous practitioner responsible for managing whole episodes of patient care with minimal supervision.	Autonomous practitioner responsible for managing whole episodes of patient care.
	Lead specialist for the whole or a specific aspect of the MS specialist nurse service.

<b>13. Maintaining own health and physical wellbeing</b>	
<b>Band 6 MS Nurse</b>	<b>Band 7 MS Specialist Nurse</b>
Takes steps to ensure own mental and physical wellbeing is maintained.	Takes steps to ensure own mental and physical wellbeing is maintained.
Takes responsibility for their own and the collective health and safety of the MS nurse team	Takes responsibility for their own and the collective health and safety of the MS nurse team.

