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| UNLOCKING POTENTIAL  TRANSFORMING LIVES |  | Description: Description: http://dc1-hv-intranet1/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SPS-refreshed-logo-November-2013.jpg |
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| JOB DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION | | |

## Job Description

## Background

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government. There are currently seventeen operational prisons located across Scotland: sixteen directly operated by SPS and one operated by private sector operators under contract to SPS. We directly employ around 4,600 staff.

We are responsible for those who are committed to our care by the Courts and are accountable to Scottish Ministers. Our operating context is dynamic, demand-led, and extremely complex. Prisons are small communities, which operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This means we must be agile to be able to respond to competing demands whilst maintaining our longer-term strategic direction.

**SPS Organisational Values**

* **Belief**: We believe that people can change.
* **Respect**: We are inclusive, respecting the needs, rights, and voices of everyone equitably.
* **Integrity**: We have high ethical, moral and professional standards.
* **Openness**: We work with others to achieve the best outcomes.
* **Compassion**: We care about people and believe that positive relationships are a critical enabler for change
* **Humility**: We cannot do this on our own, we recognize that we need to work with and learn from others.
* **Innovation:** We continually find ways to improve the delivery of prison services in Scotland.

The SPS recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination. We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and we particularly welcome applications from people with disabilities, people of colour and from the LGBTI+ community who are currently under-represented in SPS.

## Introduction

A Death in Prison Learning, Audit & Review (DIPLAR) is the SPS process for reviewing all deaths in custody and provides a system for recording any learning and identified actions.

A DIPLAR must be held following a death in prison custody or when an individual in our care dies in hospital or any other location external to the prison.

Exceptions: No DIPLAR is required when individuals die in police custody or while on HDC.

The SPS requires the services of a skilled and experienced individual to carry out the role to support the SPS and their obligations regarding Death in Prison Learning Audit and Reviews (DIPLARs).

The aim of a DIPLAR is to learn from the incident, consider the circumstances and the immediate actions taken. The process also focuses on how the incident affected staff, other people in custody, the person’s family and the Establishment as a whole.

The Establishments Governor appoints a DIPLAR Co-ordinator following a death in custody to co-ordinate the meeting, comply with timescales, support completion of the DIPLAR paperwork and monitor local actions identified for completion. They will need to have completed a DIPLAR Induction session which is provided by the SPS HQ DIPLAR Caseworker. The DIPLAR process should be completed within 20 weeks of the date of death.

All communications with SPS HQ Health and the Independent Chair throughout the DIPLAR process must be via email using [HQDIPLAR@prisons.gov.scot](mailto:HQDIPLAR@prisons.gov.scot).

Families will be given the opportunity to raise questions for discussion at the DIPLAR. These will be recorded on the DIPLAR template. At the conclusion of the DIPLAR arrangements will be made to provide feedback to the deceased’s family, where requested.

NHS colleagues are key contributors within any DIPLAR and will be responsible for any health related actions identified during the DIPLAR.

NHS Boards are committed to delivering care that is safe, effective and person centred. They may carry out their own reviews following events that have resulted in unexpected death or harm, including deaths in prison custody. These are known as Significant Adverse Event Reviews (SAERs) and are focused on analysing factors that have contributed to the circumstances of the adverse event. SPS are not directly involved in this process.

All deaths in prison custody may be subject to a Fatal Accident Inquiry (FAI) under the Inquiries into the Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths etc. (Scotland) Act 2016. It is therefore prudent for SPS and NHS to identify areas for improvement and potential learning in advance of any court hearing. The final DIPLAR documentation will be submitted to SPS solicitors and Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) to support any FAI.

## The Role of the DIPLAR Chair

To enable SPS to independently review all deaths in custody ensuring an inclusive and compassionate leadership to provide appropriate challenge and support establishments in completing their reviews.

SPS has ensured an Independent Chair for all deaths in custody since 23 January 2025 and are seeking to formalise through the appointment of up to 3 individuals to undertake this role.

Supported by the HQ DIPLAR Caseworker the chair will be responsible for the structure of the meeting in managing discussions and in summarising the outcome of the review in line with the DIPLAR Guidance.

## Person Specification

Deaths in custody are difficult and traumatic for all those concerned. It is important that we review the circumstances in a compassionate and trauma informed way to support those involved. It is important to ensure that those who attend the meetings feel able to contribute and that there is a shared learning and agreement on any actions identified. This is a review not an investigation and is not to apportion blame.

What skills are we looking for?

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| **Criteria** | **Essential/Desirable?** |
| Create a safe space to encourage open and transparent discussion and reflection | Essential |
| Ability to chair complex and difficult conversations | Essential |
| Attention to details | Essential |
| Critically analyse the information provided and summarise the action points and learning | Essential |
| Possess a range of technical and professional competencies required to deliver the Services | Essential |
| Have a successful track record of delivering similar services in health and/or social care | Essential |
| Diversity & Inclusion  Understanding of diversity and inclusion as business-critical issues in a modern society | Essential |
| Political Agility  Ability to exercise political agility and understand the environment within which the SPS operates ad engages with Scottish Government, the wider justice sector, the voluntary and community sector, NHS and other public services and other stakeholders | Essential |

If this challenging and dynamic role excites you and you believe you have the values, skills and experience, we look forward to hearing from you.

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