NHS Security Info

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NHS Security Officer - Job Evaluation and Banding

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This brief by Jim O'Dwyer, Senior Consultant at AEGIS Protective Services, provides a focus on Job Evaluation and banding for a Healthcare Security Officer role.

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A case for reviewing the Banding for a Healthcare Security Officer role

If you are familiar with what's expected of Healthcare Security Officers and what they actually have to do at work then, like me, you're probably astonished their job is only graded as Band 3 or even Band 2!

I can only imagine that these low evaluations are based on outdated assumptions of the role and under-recognition of actual responsibilities because, when I completed the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme process for a Healthcare Security Officer role, the result clearly aligned with Band 4 criteria.

Take a look.

NHS Security Officer – Job Responsibilities:

Operational Security

- Undertake security patrols across Trust premises.
- Respond promptly to security incidents, including aggression, theft, trespass, violence, and absconding.
- Make independent, on-the-spot decisions to resolve potentially dangerous situations.
- Support and lead in physical interventions as required, using approved control techniques.
- Use communication systems (e.g. radios, body cams, CCTV) to coordinate effective response.

Judgement & Risk Management

- Exercise judgment in high-risk scenarios, balancing safety, patient rights, and operational policies.
- Independently assess whether incidents require escalation to police or safeguarding services.

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- Provide accurate, timely incident reports and evidence for investigations.

Freedom to Act

- Work without direct supervision during patrols and incident responses.
- Apply Trust policies while making autonomous decisions under pressure.
- Make real-time interventions when delay would result in harm or escalation.

Patient & Public Interaction

- Engage respectfully with distressed, confused, aggressive, or vulnerable individuals.
- Protect and support staff and patients in crisis situations (e.g., mental health episodes, physical attacks).
- Uphold patient dignity and human rights, including during restraint or removal.

Team Support & Mentoring

- Provide informal guidance and support to new security officers.
- Participate in team briefings, reflective debriefs, and contribute to service development.

Key Points supporting Band 4 grade

1. Judgement and Analytical Skills (Factor 3) – Target Level 3

Security Officers regularly:

- Independently assess and respond to high-risk incidents.
- Make judgments with immediate implications for patient/staff safety, including decisions about physical restraint, detainment, or escalation to police.

These actions reflect the need to analyse complex situations and act without prior instruction, which meets the Level 3 threshold.

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2. Freedom to Act (Factor 12) – Target Level 3

While Security Officers are nominally under clinical supervision, operational reality requires them to act independently, often as first responders.

Clinical staff are not always able or trained to direct security actions during violent or escalating incidents.

The resulting autonomy reflects Level 3: broad occupational guidance with freedom to act.

3. Knowledge, Training and Experience (Factor 2) – Target Level 4

Healthcare Security Officers are trained in:

- Conflict Resolution, De-escalation skills, Physical Intervention and Restraint
- Relevant legal powers, Common Law Trespass and Breach of the Peace, Criminal Law, Powers of Arrest and detention, Human Rights Act, Mental Health Act and Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Awareness, Dementia Awareness, Recognition of Mental ill health and Learning disability, Understanding Self-Harm and Clinically Related Challenging Behaviour (CRCB)
- Implementation of NHS Trust Policies on Alcohol and other prohibited items, Search Policy, Smoke Free policy, Vaping Policy, Video and Photography Policy, Nuisance and disorderly behaviour policy, Violence at Work Policy, Bed-Watch Policy, Use of Force Policy.

These skills go beyond basic security and involve specialist knowledge relevant to healthcare.

4. Responsibility for Patient Care (Factor 6) – Target Level 2/3

Security Officers directly contribute to safeguarding and care by preventing harm, managing violent patients, and reducing risk of absconding.

They are involved in direct interventions that can impact care outcomes, patient rights, and clinical safety.

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Conclusion

A Band 4 grade is appropriate based on the reality that NHS Security Officers:

- Make complex, autonomous decisions under pressure
- Regularly face physical and emotional risks
- Require specialist training and use advanced judgment
- Support and protect patients in a capacity that extends beyond routine security work.

NHS Security Officers are trusted professionals, often acting alone in high-risk situations. Band 4 is not a promotion, it's a necessary correction and the sooner the better!

More Info

I hope you find the info above useful. If you would like to discuss any aspect of Healthcare Security, please don't hesitate to contact me:

Jim O'Dwyer

Senior Consultant

AEGIS Protective Services

E: info@aegisprotectiveservices.co.uk

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