

Job Description

Section 1 – Description

Job Title: Policy and Public Affairs Officer, Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP)

Location: Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (RCPE), 11 Queen Street, Edinburgh

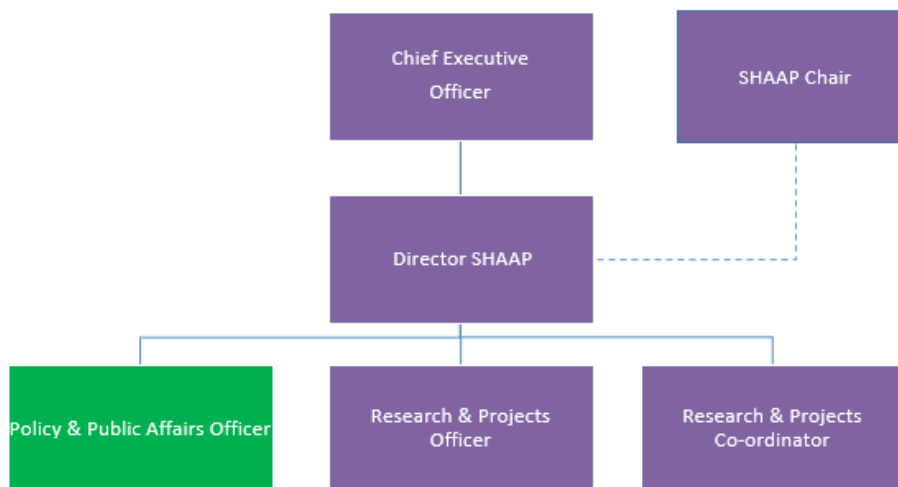
Reports to: Director, SHAAP

Date: July 2024

Section 2 – Job Purpose

The Policy and Public Affairs Officer supports development and delivery of SHAAP policy and advocacy activities. The post holder does this through identifying and analysing relevant policy, responding to consultations, and helping to develop evidence-based policy positions, with oversight from the SHAAP Director. The post holder is also responsible for monitoring policy and political activity, identifying and pursuing opportunities for political influencing and advocacy, and proactively with the media to help raise the profile of SHAAP's work and make the case for reducing harms from alcohol

Section 3 – SHAAP Organisational Chart



Section 4 – Dimensions

- Support the SHAAP Director in developing and delivering campaigns across a range of alcohol - related policy issues (2 – 3 per year approx.).
- Respond to government consultations and produce policy briefings and reports for external and internal stakeholders. (2 per month approx.)
- Co-ordinate responses to external policy developments. (variable)
- Liaise with Director and Steering Group members regarding the development of policy positions. (4 per year, for consideration at Steering Group meetings)
- Monitor policy and political developments and proactively identify opportunities for expanding SHAAP's political influence.
- In conjunction with the Director, work with journalists to ensure an evidence-based approach to reducing alcohol harms is represented in the media.

- Work in coordinated manner with Director, Research and Projects Officer and Research and Projects Co-ordinator.
- Where needed, provide administrative support to SHAAP Steering Group.
- Represent SHAAP at relevant stakeholder meetings where agreed with the SHAAP Director.

Section 5 – Main Responsibilities and Role

- Monitor relevant policy and political activities and pro-actively pursue opportunities for extending SHAAP's influence with MSPs in the Scottish Parliament.
- Liaise with Director and Steering Group members regarding the development of policy positions and with Research and Projects Officer on research to inform these.
- Research and draft topic-specific briefing papers in line with SHAAP policy objectives and support the development of evidence-based policy positions.
- Advise the SHAAP Director on media and policy activity on alcohol and opportunities for pro-active media and policy engagement.
- Be the first point of contact for media and press enquiries.
- Brief the SHAAP Director, Chair and Steering Group members prior to media appearances.
- Develop and maintain relationships with relevant colleagues at partner organisations and RCPE and member colleges to facilitate the sharing of research and policy information and intelligence and to advocate for and promote SHAAP campaign and policy positions.
- Work with the SHAAP Director and Steering Group and external agencies to produce SHAAP publications, information and promotional materials.
- Support and, where agreed with the Director, lead on SHAAP media activities, including cultivating relationships with media outlets, producing media briefings and securing uptake of stories about SHAAP's work and policy positions.
- Co-ordinate with the Research and Projects Officer on the production of content for the SHAAP website, social media and other channels.
- Develop – with input from the wider team – communications' strategies for specific projects and pieces of work and then lead on delivery.
- Co-ordinate, research and draft SHAAP's responses to external policy consultations, including liaising with appropriate stakeholders on evidence and expertise to underpin SHAAP responses.
- Assist the SHAAP Director and Steering Group in the preparation of business plans and project proposals, including research proposals to further SHAAP's advocacy work.
- Organise events specific to policy and public affairs work.
- Ensure office systems and ways of working within the team are maintained effectively.
- Undertake relevant professional training activities as agreed with the SHAAP Director.

Section 6 – Planning and Organising

Planning timescales can vary, for example, organising projects, campaigns or events over several months to co-ordinating consultation responses with tight deadlines or dealing with media enquiries/events on a daily basis. The post-holder will need to:

- Organise own workload.
- Ensure effective communication with the SHAAP Director, Research and Projects Officers, Steering Group, other RCPE colleagues and external stakeholders.
- Co-ordinate responses to external consultations and ensure approved responses are submitted within deadlines.
- Organise and produce policy and media briefing papers, often at short notice.
- Co-ordinate and prepare responses to media enquiries and interviews, with sign-off from the Director.
- Work with wider team to ensure any communications outputs are shared on the website, via social media or other channels.

Section 7 – Decision Making

- Plan workload to ensure effective monitoring of external developments (research, policy, etc.).
- Prioritise own workload.
- Recognise when input from others is needed, while respecting others' workloads.
- Assess urgency of need to brief Director and SHAAP Steering Group re: external developments.
- Set and achieve deadlines for all tasks, including responses to policy consultations and production of briefing papers and reports.
- Contribute to decisions regarding the introduction of improved and effective office systems.
- Recognise when to refer matters to Director or Chair outwith Director's core hours.
- Assess levels of confidentiality of different areas of work.

Section 8 – Internal and External Relationships

Internal

SHAAP Director

SHAAP Research and Projects Officer

SHAAP/SARN Research and Projects Co-ordinator

Chair of SHAAP Steering Group

SHAAP Steering Group

Colleagues in RCPE departments

Policy and Communications colleagues in member colleges

External

MSPs, MPs, political party representatives, and their researchers/staff

Journalists and media organisations

Civil servants

Voluntary and public sector staff

Clinicians

Academics and researchers

Members of the public

Policy and public affairs colleagues in partner organisations

Section 9 – Person Specification: Knowledge, Experience, Skills Required

Essential

- Educated to degree level, ideally with a relevant postgraduate qualification.
- Relevant professional experience.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Excellent IT skills and experience.
- Highly-organised; able to self-manage and work as part of a team.
- Demonstrable knowledge of Scottish politics: systems, parties and context.
- Demonstrable ability to advise on, help develop and communicate SHAAP policy positions.
- Demonstrable ability to build, maintain and utilise relationships with different groups of stakeholders, both internal and external.
- Demonstrable persuasive influencer.
- Well experienced in researching and drafting briefings, and/or policy papers and/or consultation responses.
- Ability to analyse critically and present research findings for a range of stakeholders.
- Ability to represent SHAAP at internal and external meetings, seminars and conferences.
- Demonstrable competence in using a range of communications channels for maximum impact to support advocacy.

Desirable

- Demonstrable knowledge of public health issues.
- Experience of organising events.
- Experience of leading on media activity.
- Knowledge of alcohol policy in Scotland.

Section 10 – Job Context and Special Features

- SHAAP provides the authoritative medical and clinical voice on the need to reduce the impact of alcohol-related harm on the health and wellbeing of people in Scotland and the evidence-based approaches to achieve this.
- SHAAP is advised by a Steering Group made up of members of the Medical Royal Colleges in Scotland, the Faculty of Public Health in Scotland and invited experts.
- SHAAP works in partnership with a range of organisations in Scotland and beyond. Key partners include Alcohol Focus Scotland, the British Medical Association (BMA), the Scottish Alcohol Research Network (SARN), the Scottish Recovery Consortium, the Alcohol Health Alliance, the Institute of Alcohol Studies, Eurocare, The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and the World Health Organization (Europe).
- The College holds the employing contracts for staff and acts as banker for SHAAP.

The post of Policy and Public Affairs Officer is the key role in providing support to the Director and SHAAP Steering Group Members. The postholder provides SHAAP's eyes and ears with regard to external policy, media and research developments, thus ensuring that SHAAP is ideally placed to maximise the potential for, and does not miss any opportunities for, progressing its policy - influencing agenda.

As with many small voluntary sector organisations, staff can find themselves undertaking a wide range of duties ranging from professional tasks to undertaking administrative work in support of the organisation.

This job description will be updated and amended from time to time in accordance with the requirements of the job and the changing needs of the College.