



Head of Clinical Services

Applicant Information & Recruitment Pack

Welcome

Thank you for expressing your interest in the role of Head of Clinical Services at Derwentside Hospice Care Foundation, or as it is more fondly known, Willow Burn Hospice.



At Willow Burn, we are proud to serve the people of Derwentside through our range of holistic day care, in-patient services and family support and bereavement counselling. We aim to relieve physical and emotional distress and control symptoms whilst providing care, comfort and compassion at the end of life.

Our Trustees, staff and volunteers are all committed to making Willow Burn's work highly effective in responding to the needs and wants of our communities.

At the heart of our work are our clinical services. Our current Head of Clinical Services is taking up another position within the charity and we're looking for someone to take the service forward in 2026 and beyond.

Please read the information in this pack and if you'd like an informal discussion about the role, you can arrange this through Julie Crisp on 01207 529 224 or jcrisp@willowburnhospice.org.uk

We look forward to receiving your application.

Warmest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Barker'.

David Barker MBE
Chief Executive - Willow Burn Hospice

Job Description & Person Specification

Job Title:	Head of Clinical Services
Department:	Clinical Services
Responsible to:	Chief Executive
Salary:	£52,000
Hours:	37.5 hrs per week
Location:	Willow Burn Hospice, Lanchester, County Durham

Key Responsibilities

The Head of Clinical Services will be responsible for:

- Being a member of the Senior Management Team and provide clinical leadership and clear lines of accountability for all teams caring for patients, carers and families at Willow Burn Hospice.
- Ensuring a high standard of quality care is provided to patients, carers and families by providing advice, direction, management and responsibility for all clinical and support teams and ensuring effective governance.
- Being the regulated CQC Registered Manager.
- Being the Controlled Drugs Accountable Officer.
- Being the designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Actively ensuring that the voice and needs of patients, carers and families are at the heart of all our service delivery and improvement/development activity.
- Having a number of direct reports – All clinical staff in collaboration with Designated Deputy. This currently covers Helen McArdle in patient wing, Sir Tom Cowie Day Services and Family support.

Specific Tasks & Duties:

- Work with the Board, Chief Executive and other Senior Managers to develop strategy, business plans and policies for the hospice

that support the provision of the highest quality and standards of care for patients, carers and families.

- Plan, deliver and develop clinical services and roles ensuring an alignment with national and local strategies and a fit with the Willow Burn Hospice's strategic direction.
- Collaborate with other service providers, statutory and voluntary bodies to develop a coordinated and holistic approach which ensures person centred and seamless care provision.
- Support and further develop a culture of continuous improvement which is supported by research, education and training, effective evaluation, service user feedback and evidence based outcomes/impacts to help ensure and maintain clinical excellence.
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of external bodies including ICBs, Trusts, GPs, community bodies and other local hospices. Represent the hospice at related meetings.
- Take the lead in the organisation's CQC compliance and clinical governance ensuring the hospice is compliant with relevant regulations and standards and has effective systems and processes in place (i.e. audits, risk management, etc.) to ensure services that are delivered are safe, caring, responsive, effective and well led.
- Ensure services are fit for purpose in terms of digital technology eg SystmOne patient records are accurate and timely.
- Take responsibility for the production of quarterly commissioning reports, monthly service reports, service analysis data and other documents as required. Ensure targets, objectives and other KPIs are monitored and achieved and we meet our obligations in relation to commissioning arrangements.
- Ensure the clinical workforce have the required skills and experience to deliver care that is safe, caring, responsive and effective. Ensure professional development and support strategies and plans are in place to support the achievement of the hospice's strategic goals and objectives and the individual patient's and external partner's needs.

- Act as a resource for professional advice across the organisation whilst promoting access to other sources of advice locally and nationally.
- Be responsible for the appointment, management, support, motivation, appraisal and development of direct reports. Lead and manage staff in an empowering, positive and consultative style to ensure they fully contribute to the developments and achievements of the hospice.
- Work with the Board, Chief Executive and Senior Management Team in assessing business risk and continuity, setting annual budgets and monitoring and managing these throughout the year.
- Maintain high professional standards and keep abreast of relevant professional issues and developments.
- Ensure compliance with corporate policies and procedures, including but not limited to health and safety, information governance, safeguarding and infection control.
- Oversee the Work Duty Rota, the production and delivery of which is the responsibility of the Deputy Head of Clinical Services.
- Undertake any other duties as requested by the Chief Executive commensurate with the grade of this post.

Other

- Undertake any other duties as appropriate within the postholder's competence and general level of responsibility of the post, as required by the Chief Executive.

The job description reflects the immediate requirements and objectives of the post. It is not an exhaustive list of duties but gives a general indication of the level of work undertaking, which may vary in detail in the light of changing demands and priorities. Substantive changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

Why work with us

Willow Burn Hospice is an inspiring, friendly and rewarding place to work and from your first day with us you will be truly making a difference in Derwentside. Other benefits of working at Willow Burn Hospice include:

- Competitive holiday entitlement
- Free car parking
- 20% off in The Willows Café
- 10% staff discount at the Willow Burn Hospice Charity Shops
- 24/7 access to an employee assistance programme
- Training and development opportunities

Person Specification:

- Commitment to the ethos of the organisation and to treasuring lives in our community.
- Excellent managerial and interpersonal skills, with the ability to lead, manage and motivate staff.
- Commitment to team working and participating in collective decision making.
- Excellent clinical skills with a real passion for delivering person centred care of the highest standard.
- Able to deal with rapid pace of change, high workload and demanding deadlines and targets
- Friendly and engaging, able to relate well and credibly to all levels of staff and stakeholders, understanding their differing needs
- Excellent communication and presentation skills
- Practical administrative and organisational skills, with high levels of accuracy and attention to detail, and a well-developed capacity for problem solving, time management and determining priorities
- Enthusiasm, energy and initiative, with a “can do” attitude and commitment to delivering continuous improvement and innovation
- Strong commitment to maintaining high ethical standards.
- Flexible approach to hours at work and a willingness to work some evenings and weekends to support the delivery of activities and initiatives.

Experience & Qualifications:

Essential

- Registered General Nurse. Qualification to degree or equivalent level
- Experience of working in a palliative care setting

- A minimum of three experience in a senior leadership or management position
- Strategy development with knowledge and understanding of the financial and operational impact of decisions and proposals
- Service improvement, practice development and change management.
- Workforce planning, development and management
- Clinical governance and patient safety
- Highly developed IT skills including MS products and relevant clinical software eg SystemOne
- An understanding of and commitment to the hospice movement
Able to travel independently to meet the needs of the role

Desirable

- Leadership or Management qualification
- Qualification in palliative and end of life care
- Teaching Qualification
- Nurse Independent Prescriber

A word from the outgoing Head of Clinical Services:

Dear Candidate

As I prepare to leave my role as Head of Clinical Services at Willow Burn Hospice, I do so with immense pride. It has been a true privilege to be part of an organisation that genuinely sits at the heart of the community.



Willow Burn is more than a hospice, it is a place of compassion, care and dignity, where patients and their relatives are empowered to make the choices that matter to them.

You will be joining a committed and professional clinical team who live the values of the hospice every day. Their dedication and empathy, accompanied by passion and good humour, makes Willow Burn a truly special place to work and lead. That is why I have chosen to stay as part of the team as a nurse, as I work towards my retirement.

I am very proud of what we have achieved together and confident that the hospice is in a strong position to continue delivering outstanding care. I wish you every success in this rewarding role.

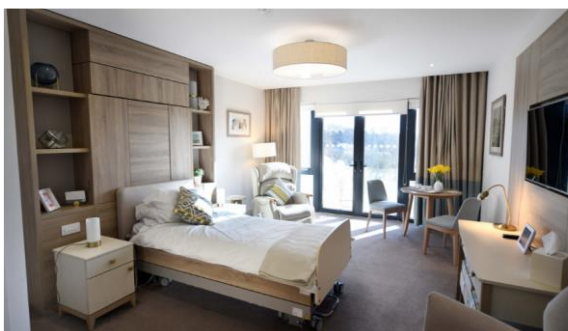
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Carol Hagri
Head of Clinical Services




Willow Burn Hospice

Willow Burn Hospice opened in 1989 as a result of the work of two remarkable women, Irene Mortimer and Valerie Davison, who identified a gap in provision in the largely rural area of Derwentside. With the support of the Secretary of State for Health and funding from Macmillan, Irene and Valerie set up Derwentside Hospice Care Foundation. At that time the charity was a Day Hospice Service for North Durham. Over the years the charity has become fondly known as Willow Burn Hospice.

The service expanded in 1991 to include in-patient services and we opened the Sir Tom Cowie Health and Wellbeing Centre as a new home for our day services provision. In 2014, following very generous support from Helen McArdle CBE, we proudly opened a brand new six-bed hospice, which is widely recognised for the high quality of its design, built to reflect the comfort of being at home.



Our Mission Vision & Values

 <p>Mission</p>	<p>To deliver hospice care of the highest standard to our patients and those important to them – now and in the future.</p>
 <p>Vision</p>	<p>We are part of a community which treasures lives and where everyone is supported to live well and die well.</p>
 <p>Values</p>	<p>Caring: We put care, compassion and dignity at the heart of everything we do. Aspiring: We are passionate about delivering services of the highest standard. Responsible: We are a responsible organisation that people can trust. Empowering: We support and enable people to make the choices that matter to them.</p>

Our Services

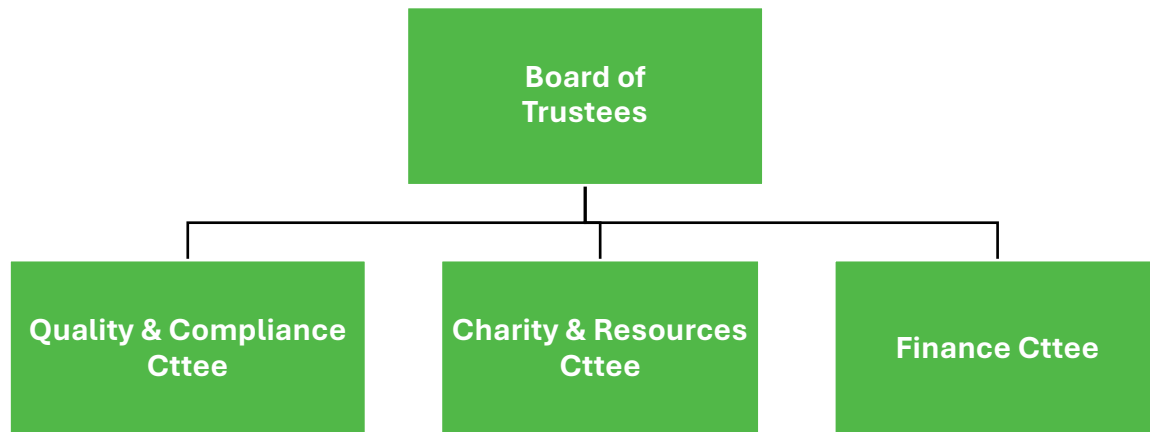
We address an acute need for palliative care in the north of County Durham, an area of 240,000 residents known as Derwentside. We have six in-patient beds, a health and wellbeing centre for day services and a family support service (which includes information, advice, support and bereavement counselling). We also offer complimentary therapies.

Our work impacts the community in several ways:

- Reducing pain and suffering at end of life
- Reducing hospital admissions and extending independence for those with a palliative diagnosis living at home
- Improving long-term mental health outcomes for both patients and surviving family members, including children and teens.

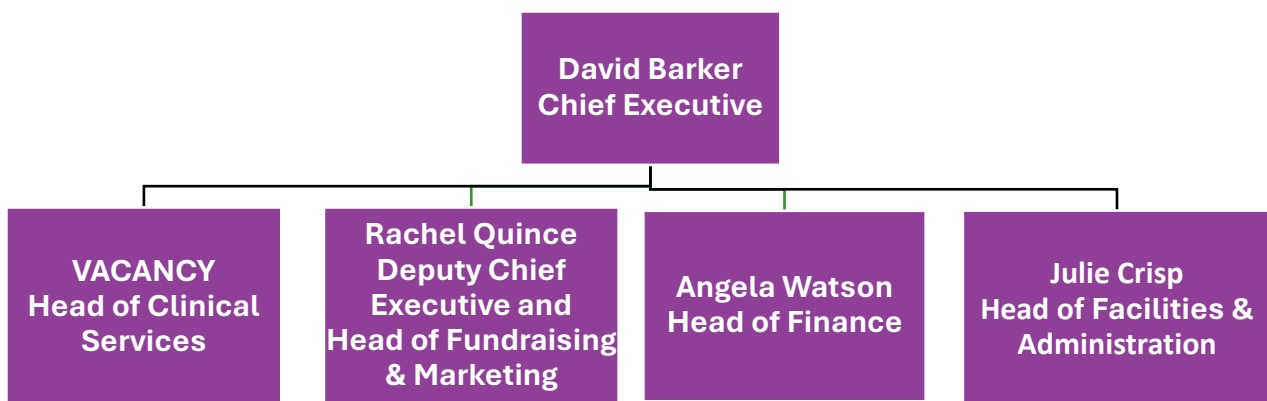
Governance Structure

The charity has a main Board of Trustees and three sub committees -



There are four scheduled meetings per annum for each group. In addition, there is an Annual AGM (to coincide with one of the Trustee meetings) and a Remuneration Committee meets annually to determine salary increases.

Senior Management Team



David Barker MBE MBA – Chief Executive

As Chief Executive at Willow Burn Hospice, David's role is that of Senior Officer. He gives leadership to the teams of staff and volunteers, drives financial sustainability and is responsible for the effective operational management of the hospice.

David's previous roles include senior leadership of Springboard, Disability North and Percy Hedley Foundation. He is a former Vice Chair of Voluntary Organisation Network North East (VONNE) and co-founder of Difference, a north east disability rights charity.

He is a graduate of The Open University with a BSc in Social Sciences and Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA). In 2000 David was awarded an MBE for his work in the voluntary sector.

Rachel Quince – Deputy Chief Executive & Head of Fundraising and Marketing

Rachel has worked in health and social care for over 18 years and is passionate about helping people to find the services they need at a time when they need them the most. After eight years of marketing management in the private care sector, she joined the charitable sector to head up the income generation and marketing teams at Age UK Northumberland and now Willow Burn Hospice.

As Deputy Chief Executive & Head of Fundraising and Marketing Rachel oversees and develops all of the marketing and income streams at Willow Burn and helps individuals, communities and businesses make a difference in County Durham.

Angela Watson – Head of Finance

After 20 years of experience in the private sector providing auditing and accounting services to organisations varying in size from sole traders to limited companies, Angela was keen to make a move to the charitable sector and has now been with Willow Burn for over 6 years.

Angela is responsible for the overall management of the finance function at Willow Burn. Her role is to support the Trustees and the Senior Management Team by supplying them with timely and appropriate financial information.

Julie Crisp – Head of Facilities & Administration

Julie has previously held the role of Office Manager at Willow Burn and is a

vital part of the hospice team. As well as managing all of the administration at the hospice, she is instrumental in the recruitment of both staff and our valuable volunteers.

She also has responsibility for the facilities here at the Hospice. Julie has worked in the health and social care private sector for over 20 years in various roles.

How To Apply

Please complete the application form available on our website.

Shortlisting will be carried out by the recruitment panel which has members of the Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team. We'll ask for references from shortlisted candidates at a later stage.

Please let us know if you need any reasonable adjustments to apply for this role and if shortlisted, attend for interview.

There will be an opportunity to visit the hospice for an informal tour on 21 October 2025. There is also the option to have an informal discussion with our Chief Executive about the role. To arrange either of these please contact Julie Crisp on jcrisp@willowburnhospice.org.uk

The deadline for applications is 4pm on 31 October 2025.

**Interviews are scheduled to take place on
Friday 7 November 2025.**

Please submit your application at the earliest opportunity. Please return completed applications to jcrisp@willowburnhospice.org.uk