



# Senior Medical Writer Recruitment Pack

November 2021

## The Role of Senior Medical Writer

This is an exciting opportunity for you to make a real difference to the lives of people affected by lymphoma using your writing expertise. Reporting to the Publications Manager, you will be a key member of the Charity's small but busy Publications team.

You will have an analytical approach to work and the ability to make the complex subject of lymphoma understandable to people who have had a lymphoma diagnosis, their family and friends. You will be responsible for writing and creating medical information in various formats including print, online and video format. Our information is evidence-based and reflects current practice and this is achieved as material is reviewed by medical experts for accuracy and by lay reviewers to ensure accessibility.

Lymphoma Action's head office is in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Due to COVID-19 the majority of our staff are currently working from home. Whilst this role is permanently home-based, the post-holder will be required to visit the office around twice a year. The role also requires a reliable, high-speed broadband connection at home.

➤ **Further details about the role can be found in the Job Description and Person Specification.**

## Why work for Lymphoma Action?

- Our values and behaviours mean we have a great working culture that focuses on what we are here to do but also on being creative, supportive and having the right environment to be effective.
- We are an established and successful national charity that has supported our staff to work effectively, flexibly and safely during COVID-19, whilst focusing also on their wellbeing.
- We have the infrastructure and processes to enable effective remote working and will provide you with the means to work from home.
- We offer a generous Employee Benefits package, which includes leave enhancements above statutory requirements and a life assurance scheme.
- In addition to eight UK public holidays, you will receive 25 days' annual leave, rising by 1 day for each year's service up to a maximum of 30 days (for full-time staff; pro rata for part-time staff).
- You will be auto-enrolled in the Charity's workplace pension scheme (unless you choose to opt out). Lymphoma Action will contribute a sum equal to 5% of your salary per annum and you are required to make a 3% minimum employee contribution in addition to the employer contribution. You may also make further or additional employee contributions.

## Job Description and Person Specification

Job title:	<b>Senior Medical Writer</b>
Responsible to:	Publications Manager
Duration:	Permanent
Location:	Home based, with occasional visits to head office in Aylesbury
Working hours:	Part-time (25-30 hours per week)
Salary:	FTE £30,000 per annum (calculated on a pro-rata basis as £21,42 for a 25-hour working week or £25,714 for a 30-hour working week)

### **Purpose of the role**

This key member of our Publications team is responsible for our medically-based publications, including web, print and multimedia materials. The role includes scoping and producing new information about lymphoma for lay and health professional audiences, and reviewing and updating existing information to ensure it is evidence-based, reliable, up-to-date and of a very high editorial standard.

### **Key internal and external relationships**

- Colleagues in the Publications team
- Chief Executive
- Director of Services and colleagues in the Services, Communications and Fundraising teams
- Medical advisers and other professional reviewers, such as clinical nurse specialists
- Lay reviewers

### **Main duties**

#### **Lymphoma Action information**

- To carry out literature reviews and searches, research and produce the first draft of new and updated medical information about lymphoma in preparation for professional and lay review. This includes planning/commissioning any medical illustrations, sourcing images and developing any other resources to make the information as user-friendly and accessible as possible.
- To liaise with expert reviewers to ensure the information produced is up-to-date, accurate and reliable.
- To evaluate expert and lay reviewer comments and take appropriate action.
- To have a key role in driving forward improvement in our information about lymphoma including making our information more widely accessible to diverse audiences through our Health Inequalities work.
- To edit and proof-read materials, as necessary.
- To act as in-house lymphoma expert for colleagues through reviewing and analysing draft documents or resources, in-house articles, responding to requests from pharmaceutical companies for expert input and insight, and through advising on the clinical or healthcare practice implications of particular projects.

- To draft news articles for Lymphoma Action’s magazine, *Lymphoma Matters*.
- To work with the Director of Services to draft and submit responses to lymphoma related health technology assessments for NICE and SMC on behalf of Lymphoma Action.
- To keep our COVID-19 web pages and information up-to-date so that people affected by lymphoma can easily find reliable and relevant information as a vulnerable group during the pandemic.
- To support the marketing and promotion of Lymphoma Action’s publications, including the TrialsLink service, by providing necessary information and insight to the marketing and communications team.

### **Lymphoma Action TrialsLink (clinical trials database)**

- To oversee the running of the Lymphoma TrialsLink clinical trials service, ensuring the information is clear, up-to-date and accurate, and that all eligible trials open in the UK are listed (as far as is feasible).
- To provide monthly management information on Lymphoma TrialsLink.

### **General**

- To keep up-to-date with developments and learning in the field of lymphoma and cancer-related information and support.
- To have a flexible approach to working hours, as required including providing cover for other team members, as and when necessary and appropriate.
- To meet with the relevant line manager for the purpose of regular supervision and quarterly performance review.
- To participate in staff training, organisation/team meetings and external events, such as conferences, as required.
- To comply with the organisation’s health and safety, confidentiality, data protection and other policies.
- To promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices.
- To fulfil any other duties deemed appropriate by the Publications Manager or relevant line manager, subject to time and commensurate with level of responsibility and salary.

## **Person Specification**

It is not expected that the successful candidate will necessarily have experience/competency in all the areas highlighted. We are committed to helping individuals develop professionally and personally, and your application is encouraged.

Education, experience and knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree level, possibly in medicine, nursing or other relevant sciences.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working in an editorial or publishing environment.</li> </ul>

- Experience of producing medical information for a lay audience.
- Experience of managing information or editorial projects.

Skills and abilities
• Ability to communicate complex medical information to lay audiences.
• Meticulous approach, accuracy and attention to detail.
• Ability to work independently and without supervision.
• Good administrative and organisational skills with the ability to prioritise tasks, manage workload under pressure and work to deadlines.
• Excellent communication skills.
• Good computer skills (e.g. Microsoft Office suite of programs, etc).

Qualities
• Commitment to achieving the highest standards in information for people with lymphoma and health professional audiences.
• Willingness to take expert advice on board, as well as share own knowledge and skills.
• Willingness to accept Plain English editing of their work by non-medical editors.
• Commitment to helping people affected by lymphoma.
• Understanding of the value of good information and support services.

*\* The job may involve occasional travel throughout the UK for the purpose of attending medical conferences, and/or medical information-related events or training. Some travel to the organisation’s head office in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, will also be required. Occasionally, there may be the need to work at weekends or during anti-social hours, for which notice and time off in lieu will be given.*

*\*\* Home-based roles are dependent upon location and access to fast and reliable broadband services.*

## Personal Competencies

Lymphoma Action works to a clear set of values in everything it does and this reflects the following behaviours we look for in all our staff.

### Focused

- You focus on goals and on the best outcomes for our beneficiaries
- You are strategic and make good decisions and don’t just focus on short-term needs
- You work in a flexible way, responding to new insights that will help increase our impact

### Empowering

- You inspire people, celebrate success and acknowledge the efforts of others

- You support people to take on tasks and be confident in their decisions
- You respect the decisions of others and are resilient in the face of change

### Trusted

- You are empathetic and show compassion, but respect professional boundaries
- You do what you say you're going to do and take responsibility for your decisions
- You are open and honest with yourself and others

### Innovative

- You are curious, open to new ideas and don't miss opportunities
- You make time for reflection, creativity and learning and encourage others to do the same
- You are willing to try new things and you learn quickly from your experiences

### Collaborative

- You are inclusive, treat everyone as an equal and embrace diversity
- You listen well, communicate openly and share your skills and knowledge with others
- You believe in the value of relationships and understanding differing perspectives/feelings.

## How to apply for this role

If you are interested in joining Lymphoma Action as our Senior Medical Writer, please read the Job Description thoroughly, including the *selection criteria* listed in the Person Specification.

***Please note that your application will need to evidence how you have gained the particular skills and experience we are looking for.***

As an inclusive organisation committed to equal opportunities we welcome applications from all sections of society. We also encourage applications that will help increase the diversity of our workforce, welcoming applications from those with disabilities and from minority groups and from different backgrounds and experiences.

Please complete the **job application form** and return it to ([jobs@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:jobs@lymphoma-action.org.uk)). Please ensure it is in Word format, not pdf.

We also ask applicants to complete an **equality and diversity monitoring form**, which will be kept separately from the application form.

### ***The recruitment timetable***

Closing date for applications: **Tuesday 4 January 2022, 12 noon**

Interviews to be held: **Wednesday 12 January 2022  
(via Microsoft Teams video-conference)**

If you have any queries about the application process or about the role, please contact Non Kinchin-Smith, HR Officer [jobs@lymphoma-action.org.uk](mailto:jobs@lymphoma-action.org.uk)

# About Lymphoma Action

## Introduction

Lymphoma Action is based in Aylesbury and currently employs 31 staff and over 300 volunteers. We are a national charity that provides high quality patient information, advice and support to people affected by lymphoma. We also work with and support the healthcare practitioners who treat and support lymphoma patients. In addition, we engage in policy and lobbying work at government level and within the NHS with the aim of improving the patient journey and experience of people affected by lymphoma.

Our strategy for 2020-25 sets out our organisational goals and our priorities going forward. Whilst COVID-19 has impacted on many areas of our work and activities (specifically face-to-face events, peer support activities and fundraising activities), our mission and long-term strategy still stand true. In fact, our work during the pandemic has only served to strengthen our purpose and show why the need for lymphoma information and support is greater than ever.

## What is lymphoma?

Lymphoma is a cancer of the lymphatic system, which is part of the immune system. It is the fifth most common cancer in the UK with more than 19,500 people diagnosed every year, including diagnoses of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL) (which is a form of lymphoma, despite its name).

While the majority of people diagnosed with lymphoma will be over the age of 55, lymphoma is also the most prevalent cancer among teenagers and young adults aged under 30. Approximately 125,000 people are living with lymphoma and CLL in the UK.

While lymphoma shares some similarities with other types of cancer, there are important aspects where it differs and that give a different slant to the charity's work:

- For most cases of lymphoma, there is no known cause. Therefore, positive health promotion messages will have little impact. In this sense, it's a great "unknown" and "unknowable" disease.
- Lymphoma concerns a part of the body that few people know or understand – the lymphatic system. This makes it even harder to cope with and explain to other people.
- For some forms of lymphoma, particularly indolent or low-grade forms, the initial treatment will be "no treatment", in the form of active monitoring or "watch and wait", whereby people with a diagnosis, but no troublesome symptoms, will see their specialist for regular check-ups and only begin treatment if problematic symptoms develop. This runs counter to mainstream cancer messaging which concentrates on spotting and understanding the signs and symptoms of cancer, leading to earlier diagnosis and speedy treatment, with, in many cases, a direct link to vastly improved outcomes.
- Many forms of lymphoma are chronic cancers – while the majority of other cancers, particularly solid tumour ones, will be treated with curative intent, many forms of lymphoma are not curable, but they are eminently manageable as long-term diseases. As such, many

people will live with lymphoma for a long time, with a number of relapses. It may well be that they outlive their cancer, but die from some other cause. This presents a whole range of additional issues for lymphoma patients and their families, including those around psychological support for coping with a long-term incurable cancer and a different approach to survivorship support.

- In contrast, some forms of lymphoma are aggressive and, if not treated quickly and effectively, will become terminal. Yet, at the same time, many of these aggressive forms are the ones that can be treated most successfully and have the potential to be cured. All this adds further to the complexity and difficulty in understanding lymphoma as a disease and cancer.
- Age is an important factor in cancer diagnosis, treatment and survival generally. It is particularly important in lymphoma because of the two peaks of incidence – one in younger people under the age of 30 and the other in older people, particularly over the age of 55.

## What we do

### Goals

We work to five overarching goals as set out in our strategy for 2020-2025:

- ❖ Create the highest quality information so that people can understand their lymphoma
- ❖ Be a voice for people affected by lymphoma in order to influence the decisions that affect them and raise awareness of lymphoma
- ❖ Ensure that people affected by lymphoma can access the treatment and care that they need
- ❖ Ensure that people feel supported with and beyond lymphoma by others who understand what they are going through
- ❖ Have the most effective resources so that we are sustainable and can deliver impactful services.

### Values

Our values underpin everything we do:

- ❖ Focused – we are dedicated to the needs of those affected by lymphoma
- ❖ Empowering – we build confidence to make change happen
- ❖ Trusted – we use our expertise to deliver quality services
- ❖ Innovative – we look to a better future for people affected by lymphoma
- ❖ Collaborative – we are inclusive and value our partnerships

Our services and activities can be broadly grouped as follows:

- **Information and publishing** – including high-quality information leaflets and publications (including Lymphoma Matters magazine), supplemented by a programme of webinars, podcasts and videos.
- **Lymphoma TrialsLink** – an online clinical trials database and information service.



- **Helpline** – open five days a week and providing much-needed emotional support. We receive more than 2,000 enquiries a year via telephone, email and live chat service on our website.
- **Support groups** – we operate a network of (now online) support groups across the UK. We also run a closed Facebook group with over 1,600 members.
- **Buddy Service** – we have a team of trained buddies whom we link with people who need additional support or who want to speak with someone who has shared similar experiences.
- **Live Your Life** – our award-winning survivorship and education programme, which we are currently running in digital format.
- **Events** – traditionally we run national and regional events for people affected by lymphoma although these are also being run digitally during the pandemic.
- **Healthcare education and training** – we run online training events and conferences for, and provide information to, healthcare practitioners working in the field of lymphoma. This includes GPs, nurses, specialist trainees and consultants.
- **Website** – [www.lymphoma-action.org.uk](http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk) offering a range of information and support with over 2 million visitors a year.

To find out more about Lymphoma Action and our work, please visit our website:

[www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/about-us](http://www.lymphoma-action.org.uk/about-us)

Lymphoma is a blood cancer and as such, people with lymphoma, were classified as ‘extremely vulnerable’ to COVID-19 at the outset of the Coronavirus pandemic. This led to an increased demand for information and support and an increase in the number of people who came to our helpline services. It has meant that we have had to adapt many of our activities in order to provide this support digitally, e.g. through moving our Support Groups online and delivering some of our events digitally.

Our role throughout the pandemic has been to support people as much as possible, providing them with emotional support, high quality information on COVID-19 and ‘shielding’ and practical support to reduce anxiety and concern such as through our ‘Distance aware’ campaign. You can find more information on how we have responded to COVID-19 on our website.

## How we work

The Charity’s work and strategic objectives are overseen by the Board of Trustees, which meets four times a year with the day-to-day operation of the organisation led by **Ropinder Gill, Chief Executive**, and a Senior Management Team comprising:

- Dallas Pounds, Director of Services
- Jim Howson, Director of Finance
- Karen Rabjohn, Director of Fundraising and Communications

An Operational Managers Group also works across the organisation, to support the implementation of strategy, development of operational plans and internal communications. The group is made up of representatives from publications, volunteering and regional development, marketing & communications, education and support services and fundraising.

Financially, we are dependent on our fundraising work, with the vast majority of our funding coming from individual donors and some grant-making trusts and organisations.

To find out more about what Lymphoma Action does, please have a look at our website: <https://lymphoma-action.org.uk/about-us>

For our recent achievements, please read our [2020 annual report and accounts](#) and [2020 impact report](#).



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