

## General Practice based social prescribing link workers (MIDAS trial) job description

<b>Job Title:</b>	General Practice based social prescribing link worker
<b>Study:</b>	Medicines and Social Prescribing to aDdress pAtient priorities in multimorbidity (MIDAS): A multi-arm definitive cluster randomised trial in Irish general practice
<b>Location:</b>	General practices around Ireland
<b>Salary:</b>	Sessional payments (€54 per session, plus 8% holiday pay and employer PRSI)
<b>Hours:</b>	Two sessions per week (6 hours)
<b>Duration:</b>	Up to 6 months
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Professor Susan Smith (Principal Investigator), Dr Farah Tahsin (Trial Manager) & Dr Eanna Kenny (Postdoctoral Researcher)
<b>Project website:</b>	<a href="https://primarycaretrials.ie/midas-2/">https://primarycaretrials.ie/midas-2/</a>

### Background

Link worker programmes have been piloted in the United Kingdom and pilots are starting in Ireland. These programmes have been shown to improve mental health scores, but there is limited evidence to show whether they improve people's physical health or reduces healthcare costs. Link workers are community workers, who are not health care or social care professionals, who have a detailed knowledge of local community resources and have some training in behaviour change techniques. Patients with complex health and social problems referred by their general practitioner (GP) meet with links worker to collaboratively work on a plan to help improve their health. From our previous exploratory work, this may include for example joining a walking group or the library, support with issues around housing, completing complex forms, or accessing healthcare services such as screening.

The MIDAS study is a cluster randomised controlled trial funded by the Health Research Board and is a collaboration between Trinity College Dublin (TCD), the University of Galway, the Health Research Board (HRB) Primary Care Clinical Trials Network Ireland, and the Irish College of General Practitioners. This trial will evaluate whether a link worker intervention can improve health outcomes for people living with multiple chronic conditions attending general practices across Ireland.

### The role

The link worker's role will be to support patients participating in the MIDAS trial in each GP practice over a 6-month period and also to work with other patients in the practice based on practice requirements. The link workers will keep information on how often they met with participants and what services they referred people to. This role would be well suited to existing community workers or link workers interested in additional sessions. Specifically, the duties will include:

## *Responsibilities*

- Contact and meet face to face in general practices with people referred by GPs
- Agree a plan to address each person's individual health and wellbeing goals, whether they are psychosocial or more practical such as welfare entitlements
- Negotiate and support access for patients to community-based services and activities that will support them to live well. At times, it might be necessary to sensitively challenge service providers for the benefit of the patient
- Build effective pathways to support and help patients to navigate complex existing pathways
- Work autonomously to manage workload and appointments
- Maintain accurate records throughout the intervention period
- Assist in data collection to monitor the implementation of the trial intervention and deliver reports in an agreed format as requested by the programme management team
- Map out local resources, develop relationships with community organisations and compile a resource booklet for the practice
- Update the practice on progress and available resources in their community via regular practice meetings
- Update the referring GP on patient progress.

## *Selection criteria*

The successful candidate will be expected to have the following:

### Essential:

- Inclusive values
- Knowledge and experience of working with people who are experiencing complex social and emotional circumstances. For example, people who have social, emotional, and mental health issues, live in complex life circumstances, experience chronic pain, drug and alcohol misuse, or homelessness
- Strong understanding of the role of community and social factors in living well
- Proven and highly effective interpersonal and communication skills in working with people on a 1:1 basis and with organisations
- Experience in influencing, negotiation, and motivational skills to engage patients and enable them to take up a wide range of community services and activities
- Excellent networking and information management skills
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team and on own initiative
- IT skills in word processing, spreadsheets, email, and the internet
- An ability and willingness to travel extensively within the local community and wider area



Medicines and social  
prescribing to address  
patient priorities in  
multimorbidity



Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin



HEALTH RESEARCH BOARD  
Primary Care CTNI  
CLINICAL TRIALS NETWORK IRELAND



OÉ Gaillimh  
NUI Galway

Desirable:

- Experience working in primary care
- Educated to degree level or equivalent within a relevant field, e.g., community education, public health, social care, addiction, mental health, with a minimum of two year's post qualification experience
- Relevant post graduate experience or qualification in topics such as health behaviour change or motivational interviewing

*To apply please submit an expression of interest and an up-to-date CV to Dr Eanna Kenny (Postdoctoral Researcher) at [ekenny@tcd.ie](mailto:ekenny@tcd.ie). For further information or queries please feel free to get in contact on the email above.*

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