

Freedom of Information Request	FOI 22-595	9 th January 2022
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Having seen your vacancy (Reference number: 040-PST118-1122) advertised on NHS Jobs we are aware that you are currently in the process of recruiting to a Chaplaincy / Spiritual Care post.

The Network for Pastoral, Spiritual and Religious Care in Health (network-health.org.uk) works with the NHS and other Chaplaincy bodies to promote equality and diversity in high quality spiritual care.

As such are interested when an employer selects to restrict a vacancy on the grounds of religion or belief -one of the characteristics protected in law. As I am sure you are aware Chaplaincy Guidelines also make it clear that posts should only be restricted where there is a genuine operational requirement to do so.

In order to help us to understand the specific circumstances in your organisation that led it to restrict the post, please can you send me a copy of your Equality Impact Assessment regarding restricting the post. If none was done, please state this.

I can confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed for this role. However, I have provided below some further information and background to the post.

For the past year the chaplaincy department in the Health Board has been reviewing and considering how the service will evolve and develop to best meet the future challenges and opportunities.

The department has been carrying two vacancies for some time which has placed huge pressure on the remaining three members of the team, particularly covering evening, night and weekend on-call, on top of the routine 9 - 5pm work schedule.

Whilst the department has been keen to develop new projects that support the wellbeing agenda of the Health Board, the specific requirements of the role of the chaplain has been a significant driver to recruit. Attempts to recruit ad-hoc bank staff to specifically cover on-call has proved unsuccessful and therefore finding substantive staff who had the appropriate qualification and skills to fulfil this specific area of work, additionally to the broad range of other duties outlined in the job description was determined to be the best route.

A statement has been included in the job description and person specification which indicates that the Health Board are looking to recruit a person who is duly

authorised by their faith or belief community rather than from any one particular group.

A candidate must hold the relevant accreditation, licence or authority of their faith or belief community and be in good standing and able/authorised to perform the duties required of a chaplain. Please note that the denomination, faith or belief group is recognised by one of the national governing bodies who provide oversight of Healthcare Chaplains.