

Role title	Head of Catering and Housekeeping	Grade	
Reports to	Quality and Governance Director	Location	National role, with travel across England, Scotland and Wales
Job family	Quality and Governance	Hours	40
Role Purpose			
The Head of Catering and Housekeeping is a senior strategic leadership role within the Quality and Governance Directorate, responsible for defining, leading and assuring the Group's approach to catering, nutrition, dining experience, housekeeping and domestic standards across all homes. Reporting to the Quality and Governance Director, the postholder provides professional leadership, strategic direction and expert oversight to ensure residents experience high-quality meals, safe nutrition and hydration support, and a clean, comfortable and dignified living environment. This is a visible, influential and relationship-led leadership role, combining strategy, assurance, improvement, operational support and professional practice development. The postholder will set Group-wide standards, lead the development of policy, frameworks and improvement plans, use data and intelligence to identify risk and variation, and work collaboratively with operational, quality, estates, procurement, learning and development, and home leadership teams to embed consistent, sustainable improvements. The role will provide leadership to a network of catering and housekeeping champions across the regions, building capability, sharing best practice and ensuring catering and housekeeping are recognised as central to resident wellbeing, dignity and quality of life.			
Main Activities			
Duties and Responsibilities			
Strategy, Leadership & Governance - Lead the development and delivery of a Group-wide catering and housekeeping strategy that supports resident wellbeing, dignity, safety, nutritional outcomes, regulatory compliance and a consistently high-quality home environment. - Provide strategic and professional leadership for catering, nutrition, dining experience, housekeeping and domestic services across all homes, setting clear expectations and ensuring standards are understood, embedded and sustained. - Develop and maintain Group-wide policies, standards, frameworks and audit tools for catering and housekeeping, ensuring these reflect regulatory requirements, best practice, resident feedback and organisational priorities. - Use quality intelligence, audit findings, resident and family feedback, inspection outcomes, complaints, incidents and performance data to identify themes, variation, emerging risks and opportunities for improvement across catering and housekeeping services. - Provide expert advice and constructive challenge to senior operational and quality leaders, ensuring catering and housekeeping risks are escalated appropriately and addressed through clear improvement plans. - Lead strategic collaboration with operational leadership, procurement, estates, learning and development, quality assurance, quality improvement and clinical governance teams to ensure catering and housekeeping are aligned with wider organisational priorities and resident experience ambitions. - Represent catering and housekeeping within relevant governance forums, contributing insight, assurance, risk updates and improvement recommendations to support informed decision-making at senior level. Catering & Nutrition Standards - Lead the development and continuous improvement of catering and nutrition standards across the Group, ensuring all homes deliver high-quality, nutritious, varied, and appealing meals that meet the dietary needs, preferences, and cultural backgrounds of residents. - Ensure all homes meet regulatory and best practice requirements for nutrition and hydration, including the requirements of the relevant regulatory frameworks — CQC (England), CIW (Wales), and Care Inspectorate (Scotland) — and the NICE guideline on nutrition support in adults. - Work with Home Managers and catering teams to develop menus that are nutritionally balanced, seasonally varied, visually attractive, and genuinely enjoyable for residents, ensuring that resident choice, preferences, and feedback are central to menu planning.			

- Ensure robust processes are in place in all homes for the identification, recording, and management of residents' specific dietary needs, including therapeutic diets, modified texture and modified fluid diets, food allergies and intolerances, cultural and religious dietary requirements, and nutritional supplementation.
- Lead the Group's implementation and ongoing compliance with the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) framework across all homes, ensuring catering teams are trained and competent in the preparation, presentation, labelling and testing of all IDDSI texture levels and fluid consistencies, including the routine testing of texture-modified meals and thickened fluids to confirm they meet residents' assessed requirements and are safe, appropriate and enjoyable for people with dysphagia or complex swallowing needs.
- Develop and maintain Group-wide nutritionally balanced menu frameworks, ensuring menus across all homes meet the recommended daily nutritional requirements for older adults, are reviewed and updated regularly, and provide genuine variety, choice, and culinary quality that enhances residents' dining experience and supports their health and wellbeing.
- Oversee the Group's approach to nutritional screening and monitoring, ensuring all homes use evidence-based tools such as MUST (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool) consistently and that outcomes inform care planning and referrals to dietetic services where needed.
- Ensure the presentation, temperature, and service of meals across all homes reflects the standard residents deserve, supporting catering teams to take genuine pride in the food they provide and the difference it makes to residents' daily lives.

Housekeeping & Domestic Standards

- Lead the development and continuous improvement of Healthcare Ireland's housekeeping and domestic standards across the Group, ensuring all homes maintain a clean, fresh, comfortable, and homely environment that residents and their families can feel genuinely proud of.
- Ensure all homes meet regulatory and best practice requirements for cleanliness, hygiene, and infection prevention and control as they relate to the domestic environment, working closely with the Quality & Governance Directorate's clinical governance function to ensure housekeeping teams understand and consistently apply IPC standards including correct use of colour-coded cleaning equipment, appropriate selection and dilution of cleaning agents, cleaning frequencies for high-touch surfaces, isolation cleaning protocols, and outbreak management procedures.
- Develop and maintain Group-wide housekeeping standards, cleaning schedules, and audit frameworks that provide a clear benchmark for Home Managers and domestic teams, and that align with the environmental standards expected by CQC, CIW, and the Care Inspectorate.
- Support Home Managers to manage their domestic services effectively, including staffing, rota management, laundry services, waste management, and the procurement and appropriate use of cleaning products and equipment.
- Ensure that the presentation of homes — including communal areas, residents' rooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and outdoor spaces — reflects the values of dignity, comfort, and homeliness that are central to Healthcare Ireland's vision for resident experience.

Regional Chef & Housekeeping Network

- Identify, develop, and support a network of senior chefs across the regions who act as local catering champions within their homes, providing peer-to-peer induction support, on-the-job guidance, and day-to-day mentoring to new and developing chefs within their home and, where appropriate, across neighbouring homes in the area.
- Identify, develop, and support a parallel network of senior housekeeping staff across the regions who act as local domestic services champions, supporting the induction, training, and ongoing development of new and developing housekeeping and domestic staff within their homes, including in the correct application of IPC standards in the domestic environment.
- Provide the chef and housekeeping champion networks with the training, materials, resources, and ongoing support they need to fulfil their local champion role effectively, including IDDSI training, nutritional standards guidance, food safety updates, IPC refreshers, and cleaning standards frameworks.
- Maintain regular contact with the chef and housekeeping champion networks, providing ongoing support, answering queries, sharing updates on standards and best practice, and ensuring the networks remain active, motivated, and effective in their local development roles.
- Use the networks as a mechanism for identifying and spreading outstanding catering and housekeeping practice across the Group, gathering examples of innovation, resident-centred approaches, and excellent dining experiences from homes and sharing these across the portfolio to raise standards and inspire wider adoption.

Quality Assurance Visits & Audits

- Conduct regular quality assurance visits to homes across the portfolio, assessing catering and housekeeping standards against the Group's quality framework and the relevant regulatory inspection criteria, and providing Home Managers with a clear, honest, and constructive assessment of their position.
- Use a structured audit approach during visits, covering menu quality and nutritional content, food safety and hygiene compliance, meal service quality and presentation, nutritional screening and monitoring processes, domestic cleanliness standards, IPC compliance in the domestic environment, laundry management, and waste management.
- Produce clear, actionable visit reports for Home Managers, Area Directors, Regional Directors and the Quality and Governance Director following each visit, summarising findings, highlighting areas of strong practice, and setting out specific improvement recommendations with agreed timescales.
- Follow up on improvement actions agreed during previous visits, reviewing progress and providing additional support or guidance to homes where improvements are not being achieved at the expected pace.
- Work closely with the Quality Assurance Lead and Quality Improvement Leads to ensure catering and housekeeping standards are integrated within the Group's wider quality audit and improvement activity, and that a consistent and joined-up quality picture is maintained across the portfolio.

Training & Practice Development

- Design and deliver training and practice development sessions for catering and domestic staff across the Group, covering food safety and hygiene, nutritional awareness, modified texture diets, allergen management, meal service standards, cleaning techniques and schedules, infection prevention and control in the domestic environment, and resident-centred catering and housekeeping practice.
- Provide on-the-job coaching to catering and domestic staff during home visits, working alongside teams in kitchens and domestic areas to demonstrate best practice, give constructive feedback, and build skills and confidence in a practical, hands-on way.
- Work with the Head of Training and Practice Development to ensure catering and housekeeping training is integrated within the Group's broader training framework, and that mandatory food safety and hygiene training requirements are met consistently across the portfolio.
- Support Home Managers to induct new catering and domestic staff effectively, providing guidance on role-specific induction content and ensuring new team members are competent, confident, and compliant before working unsupervised.

Food Safety & Regulatory Compliance

- Ensure all homes meet their obligations under food safety legislation, including the Food Safety Act 1990, the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006, and associated guidance, across all three jurisdictions in which the Group operates.
- Ensure all homes maintain appropriate food safety management systems, including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans, temperature monitoring records, and allergen management documentation, and that these are consistently implemented and well-maintained.
- Monitor and report on food hygiene ratings across the portfolio, working with Home Managers to address any concerns identified by local environmental health officers and supporting homes to achieve and maintain the highest possible ratings.
- Stay current with changes to food safety legislation, nutritional guidance, and best practice in care home catering, ensuring the Group's standards, frameworks, and training remain up to date and compliant.

Procurement, Suppliers & Cost Management

- Work with the Finance and IT Directorate and Procurement Manager to ensure the Group's food procurement arrangements deliver value for money without compromising the quality, nutritional content, or variety of the food provided to residents.
- Provide expert input into the specification of catering and housekeeping supply contracts, ensuring quality standards and product requirements are clearly defined and that supplier performance is monitored against agreed standards.
- Support Home Managers to manage catering and domestic budgets effectively, providing guidance on cost-efficient menu planning, portion control, and procurement practices that maintain quality whilst minimising waste.
- Identify opportunities to improve the quality or cost-effectiveness of catering and housekeeping across the Group, making recommendations to the Quality and Governance Director and Finance and IT

Director on procurement, supply, or operational changes that would deliver better outcomes for residents and the Group.

Resident Experience & Engagement

- Champion the resident voice in all aspects of catering and housekeeping, ensuring that residents' preferences, feedback, and choices are genuinely central to how food and domestic services are designed and delivered across the Group.
- Support Home Managers to develop effective mechanisms for gathering and acting on resident and family feedback about food and the home environment, including resident meetings, surveys, and informal conversations, ensuring feedback leads to visible and meaningful improvements.
- Promote a culture across catering and domestic teams in which residents are treated with genuine dignity and respect, and in which the quality of the food and the cleanliness of the home are understood as fundamental contributions to residents' quality of life, not just operational tasks.

Reporting & Corporate Contribution

- Provide regular reports to the Quality and Governance Director on catering and housekeeping standards across the portfolio, including audit outcomes, food hygiene ratings, training compliance, and any significant risks or concerns identified during home visits.
- Contribute catering and housekeeping intelligence to the Group's quality reporting to the Managing Director, Executive Leadership Team, and Board, ensuring these services are appropriately represented within the Group's overall quality and compliance picture.
- Work collaboratively across the Quality and Governance Directorate and with the Estates Director on matters where catering, housekeeping, and estates responsibilities intersect, including kitchen equipment, laundry facilities, and the physical environment of the home.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and therefore it is important that you are able to recognise the signs which may indicate possible abuse, harm or neglect in its different forms and know what to do if there are any concerns. All colleagues are required to attend safeguarding training appropriate to their role and to undertake additional training in associated areas. You also have the ability to seek appropriate advice and report concerns, including escalation if action is not taken.

Kindness the HC-One Way

To help us understand how we need to show up to provide the kindest possible care, we have identified 5 Qualities. These are the qualities we know we can coach, support, and develop in ourselves and each other so we can support those we care for to live their best life.

We are CURIOUS: We ask questions, look for clues, and seek to understand.

We are COMPASSIONATE: We try to walk in the shoes of others to understand how we can best support them.

We are CREATIVE: We use imagination to make things happen yet remain practical.

We are COURAGEOUS: We support people to live the life they want without shying away from managing the risks that go with that.

We can be COUNTED ON: We always look for ways to be there and support those in need.

Qualifications and Skills Required

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and Knowledge	• Level 4 or above food safety qualification, nutrition qualification, IDDSI trainer qualification, hospitality management qualification, or facilities management qualification. • Strong knowledge of catering, nutrition, hydration, food safety, allergen management, IDDSI requirements and modified texture diets within a care, healthcare or regulated environment. • Strong understanding of housekeeping, domestic standards, cleaning schedules, laundry, waste management and infection prevention and control requirements within residential or care settings. • Knowledge of regulatory expectations relating to catering, nutrition, hydration, cleanliness, dignity	• Knowledge of CQC, Care Inspectorate Scotland and Care Inspectorate Wales regulatory frameworks and inspection approaches.

	and the care home environment across England, Scotland and Wales.	
Skills	• Strong strategic leadership skills, with the ability to set direction, develop standards, influence practice and drive improvement across multiple sites. • Able to interpret audit findings, resident feedback, inspection outcomes, complaints and performance data to identify risk, variation, themes and improvement priorities. • Excellent communication and influencing skills, with the ability to engage chefs, housekeeping teams, Home Managers, operational leaders and senior stakeholders. • Confident producing clear reports, briefings, standards, guidance and improvement recommendations for a range of audiences. • Excellent organisational skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities, national travel, complex improvement activity and sensitive information.	• Experience using digital care, audit, reporting or business intelligence systems to support oversight, assurance and improvement.
Experience	• Significant experience leading catering, hospitality, housekeeping, domestic services, facilities or resident experience functions within a care, healthcare, hospitality or regulated multi-site environment. • Experience developing and implementing standards, policies, audit tools, training materials or improvement frameworks that improve quality, safety and consistency. • Experience conducting quality assurance visits, audits or reviews and providing clear, constructive feedback that supports improvement and risk reduction. • Experience coaching, training or developing catering, housekeeping or operational teams to improve practice and sustain standards. • Experience working collaboratively with operational leaders, quality teams, procurement, estates, training and central support functions.	• Experience working across a national or multi-region care home, healthcare, hospitality or facilities management organisation. • Experience engaging with environmental health officers, regulators, external suppliers or specialist nutrition and dietetic professionals.
Personal Attributes	• Resident-focused, with a strong commitment to dignity, choice, comfort, nutrition, hydration, cleanliness and the quality of everyday life in care homes. • Visible, credible and approachable leader who builds trust with frontline teams and senior stakeholders. • Constructively challenging and solutions-focused, able to address poor standards while supporting teams to improve. • Collaborative and relationship-led, with the confidence to work across functions and influence change without direct line management authority. • Committed to continuous improvement, kindness, professional standards and evidence-informed decision-making.	• Passionate about food quality, hospitality, homeliness and creating positive dining and living experiences for older people.
Financial Accountabilities		Headcount Responsibility
Risk Accountabilities		

N/A	N/A	Direct: 2 Indirect: N/A
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Special Features

This is a national strategic leadership role with responsibility for shaping, influencing and assuring catering, nutrition, dining experience, housekeeping and domestic standards across homes in England, Scotland and Wales. The postholder will be required to work across organisational boundaries, engaging with senior operational, quality, procurement, estates, learning and development, and home leadership teams to set direction, drive consistency, support improvement and provide constructive challenge where standards require strengthening.

Confidentiality

You may not disclose any information of a confidential nature relating to the employer or in respect of which the employer has an obligation of confidence to any third party other than where you are obliged to disclose such information in the proper course of your employment or as required by law.