

JOB DESCRIPTION

Head Chef – Priory Hospital



Function	Healthcare Catering Services
Job Title	Head Chef
Location	Priory Hospital Bristol
Reporting To	Karen Dilloway - Catering Manager
Additional Reporting Line	Peter Smith – Regional Operations Manager
Environment	Mental Health, Eating Disorder & Private Patient Services
Operational Structure	Two Kitchen Operations with Front of House Support

1. Purpose of the Role

To lead and manage the kitchen operations across Priory Hospital, ensuring the delivery of high-quality, freshly prepared meals for Mental Health, Eating Disorder, and Private Patients.

The Head Chef is responsible for maintaining exceptional culinary standards, operational efficiency, and healthcare compliance across two separate kitchens while supporting the overall catering strategy led by the Catering Manager.

The role will ensure all food is prepared and presented to restaurant-quality standards, particularly within Private Patient dining services, while maintaining strict dietary, allergen, food safety, and healthcare compliance requirements.

2. Key Dimensions of the Role

Area	Details
Services Provided	Patient Dining, Staff Dining, Hospitality & Private Dining
Food Production	Fresh food prepared and cooked on site
Kitchen Structure	Two Separate Operational Kitchens
Patient Groups	Mental Health, Eating Disorder & Private Patients
Team Management	Sous Chefs, Chef de Parties, Senior Chefs, Apprentice Chef & Kitchen Catering Assistants
Operating Environment	24/7 Healthcare Facility

3. Main Responsibilities

Kitchen Leadership & Culinary Management

- Maintain a hands-on approach within the kitchen, supporting food preparation, service delivery, and operational requirements whenever needed.
- Lead and coordinate all kitchen operations across two separate kitchen areas
- Manage and support Sous Chefs, Chef de Parties, Senior Chefs, Apprentice Chef, and Kitchen Catering Assistants
- Drive high culinary standards, ensuring food quality and presentation consistently meet restaurant-level expectations
- Support the develop of seasonal menus and fresh food offerings in collaboration with the Catering Manager and Dietitians
- Support the development of specialist menus for Eating Disorder and Mental Health services
- Ensure all meals are prepared consistently in line with recipes, specifications, and dietary requirements

Private Patient & Hospitality Standards

- Deliver premium dining experiences for Private Patients with restaurant-quality presentation
- Support hospitality functions, special events, and private dining requirements
- Drive innovation and continuous improvement within the food offer
- Ensure patient feedback is reviewed and service improvements implemented where appropriate
- Maintain strong working relationships with Front of House teams led by the Assistant Front of House Manager

Operational & Financial Management

- Manage kitchen rotas, staffing levels, and operational coverage across both kitchens
- Support labour management and cost control in line with budget expectations
- Monitor stock ordering, stock rotation, and inventory management
- Minimise food waste and support sustainability initiatives
- Ensure kitchen equipment is maintained and operational issues are escalated promptly
- Support achievement of departmental financial and operational targets

Food Safety, Compliance & Governance

- Maintain full compliance with HACCP, Food Safety, COSHH, and Health & Safety legislation
- Ensure robust allergen management and specialist dietary controls are maintained
- Support successful internal and external audits including EHO, Safeguard, and Client audits
- Ensure infection prevention and healthcare compliance standards are maintained
- Complete and oversee food safety records, temperature checks, and compliance documentation
- Promote a culture of safety, accountability, and operational excellence

People Management & Development

- Lead, coach, and develop kitchen teams to achieve high performance standards
- Support apprentice development and structured culinary training
- Deliver team briefings, inductions, and ongoing competency training
- Promote Sodexo values of Service Spirit, Team Spirit, and Spirit of Progress
- Foster a positive and inclusive team culture focused on patient experience and service excellence

4. Accountabilities

Operational Excellence: Lead high-quality kitchen operations that consistently meet Sodexo and Priory Hospital standards.

Patient & Customer Experience: Deliver exceptional food quality and restaurant-standard presentation for all services, particularly Private Patients.

Compliance & Governance: Maintain full compliance with food safety, healthcare, and company standards.

Leadership & Team Development: Lead and develop kitchen teams to achieve operational and service excellence.

Financial Responsibility: Support effective labour management, stock control, waste reduction, and budget performance.

5. Person Specification

Essential Skills & Experience

- Previous experience as a Head Chef, Executive Chef, or Senior Sous Chef within a high-volume fresh food environment
- Strong leadership and kitchen management experience
- Excellent fresh food cooking and food presentation skills
- Experience managing multiple kitchen operations or complex catering environments
- Strong knowledge of food safety, allergen management, and healthcare compliance
- Experience supervising and developing catering teams
- Strong communication, organisational, and problem-solving skills
- Level 3 Food Safety Qualification minimum

Desirable Experience

- Healthcare or hospital catering experience
- Experience supporting Mental Health or Eating Disorder services
- Hospitality or fine dining experience
- Financial and labour management experience
- NVQ Level 3 Professional Cookery or equivalent qualification

6. Sodexo Competencies

Competency	Expectation
Service Spirit	Deliver outstanding food quality and patient experience
Team Spirit	Lead and support teams collaboratively across kitchen operations
Spirit of Progress	Drive culinary innovation and continuous improvement
Leadership	Lead by example and develop high-performing teams
Customer Focus	Prioritise patient wellbeing and hospitality standards

Compliance & Safety	Maintain safe and fully compliant operations
Commercial Awareness	Support efficient cost management and operational performance

7. Working Conditions

- Healthcare environment supporting vulnerable patients
- Fast-paced multi-kitchen catering operation
- Weekend and shift working required
- Standing, lifting, and manual handling duties required
- Responsibility for operational leadership across two kitchen environments

8. Management Approval

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Document Owner	Peter Smith