

Role title	Head of Pay and Reward	Grade	Senior Leader / Head of Function
Reports to	Chief Technology & Finance Officer	Location	Central Support Office, Darlington
Job family	Finance & IT Directorate	Job Code	
Role Purpose			
HC-One is a pan-UK provider of residential and nursing care, operating 146 care homes across England, Scotland and Wales with combined capacity of approximately 8,000 residents. HC-One is backed by US investment trust ownership, bringing specific requirements for financial reporting, internal controls (Sarbanes-Oxley compliance) and investor-grade governance standards. Our values — Quality, Innovation, Compassion, Integrity and Respect — guide everything we do. The Head of Pay and Reward leads HC-One's entire payroll and reward function, accountable for the accurate, compliant and timely processing of payroll for circa 8,000 employees across 146 care homes in England, Scotland and Wales, and for developing and implementing HC-One's total reward strategy. At HC-One's scale — 8,000 predominantly care-facing employees on a range of contracts (full-time, part-time, zero-hours and bank) across three UK nations, with a diverse workforce spanning registered nurses, care workers, domestic staff, kitchen staff, activities coordinators and management — pay and reward is operationally critical and strategically complex. The care sector faces persistent workforce challenges including high staff turnover, acute competition from NHS, agency and other private care providers, the annual NMW/NLW uplift which compresses pay differentials and directly impacts Group cost of care, and the need to demonstrate a compelling total reward offer to attract and retain the workforce that underpins resident care quality and CQC ratings. The postholder is responsible for payroll governance and compliance (including HMRC PAYE and NI, Scottish Income Tax, pension auto-enrolment and RTI), for developing and implementing HC-One's total reward strategy, for maintaining market benchmarking aligned to the care sector, and for leading the annual pay review process. Reporting to the CTFO and managing the Payroll Manager and Pay & Reward Administrator, this is a dual operations and strategy role requiring both expert payroll technical knowledge and senior reward management capability. Given HC-One's US investor trust oversight, payroll cost data must meet the accuracy and timeliness standards required for SOX Section 404 controls compliance in management accounts and investor reporting. The postholder ensures payroll data flows are accurately reflected in financial reporting.			
Main Activities			
Payroll Operations & Governance Provide senior leadership of HC-One's payroll function, holding ultimate accountability for payroll accuracy, timeliness and compliance for circa 8,000 employees. Oversee the end-to-end payroll cycle across all frequencies (weekly, fortnightly, monthly) and all employee groups — including care workers on zero-hours and bank contracts, registered nurses and management. Ensure full HMRC compliance: PAYE, NI, RTI submissions, year-end returns, P60 and P11D production. Manage Scottish Income Tax compliance for all Scotland-based employees. Ensure all statutory pay (SSP, SMP, SPP, SAP, SPBP) is correctly calculated across a high-volume, high-turnover care workforce. Govern pension auto-enrolment: worker assessment, enrolment, contributions, opt-outs and re-enrolment cycles. Maintain robust payroll controls including pre-payment approval, reconciliation to management accounts and segregation of duties — meeting SOX Section 404 requirements.			

Provide the Group Management Accountant with accurate payroll cost data by home, by area and by region within the month-end timetable.

Total Reward Strategy & Design

Develop and implement HC-One's total reward strategy, ensuring the reward framework supports attraction, retention and engagement of care, nursing and management staff in the highly competitive care sector labour market.

Ensure the total reward offer positions HC-One competitively relative to NHS, agency and competitor private care providers in each of the home's local labour markets — particularly for registered nurses, care workers and senior carers.

Lead the design and implementation of the Group's pay architecture: pay grades, pay ranges, pay progression frameworks and spot rates for specialist or shortage roles (particularly registered nurses and senior carers).

Design and implement non-pay reward elements including: employee recognition programmes, healthcare and wellbeing benefits, life assurance, employee assistance programmes, long-service recognition, referral schemes and development incentives — building a compelling total reward proposition beyond pay alone.

Own HC-One's approach to salary sacrifice and flexible benefits, including pension contribution flexibility, cycle to work, technology and car schemes.

Lead HC-One's response to the Care Quality Commission's focus on workforce adequacy and staff wellbeing, ensuring the reward strategy supports positive CQC outcomes by reducing turnover and improving workforce stability.

Annual Pay Review

Lead the annual pay review process: scoping, modelling, decision-making framework and implementation.

Model the cost impact of NMW/NLW uplifts (applying from April each year) on HC-One's 8,000-employee cost base, providing the CTFO and Board with accurate cost modelling ahead of the April implementation.

Model pay compression effects of NMW/NLW increases: identify where the uplift to the minimum wage compresses differentials between NMW roles and higher-graded roles, and recommend remediation.

Lead the negotiation and benchmarking analysis informing pay decisions for non-NMW roles, particularly registered nurses, senior carers, team leaders and management grades.

Coordinate the pay review implementation process with the Payroll Manager to ensure all changes are implemented accurately on the correct effective date.

Market Benchmarking & Workforce Intelligence

Maintain HC-One's participation in the Social Care Reward Survey (National Care Forum / Agenda Consulting) and other relevant sector benchmarking studies, ensuring HC-One has accurate data on competitor pay and benefits by role and by region.

Produce an annual market benchmarking report for the CTFO and People Director, covering: pay competitiveness by role type and region, benefits competitiveness, turnover drivers and retention risk assessment.

Monitor NMW/NLW announcements and modelling implications in-year, providing proactive cost impact analysis to the CTFO.

Maintain intelligence on NHS Agenda for Change pay rates (particularly for Band 5 and 6 nurses) as the primary competitive benchmark for registered nurse pay.

Monitor competitor care group reward initiatives and sector-level workforce trends, providing insight to the CTFO and People Director.

Compliance, Governance & Team Leadership

Ensure HC-One meets all employment tax, benefits-in-kind and P11D obligations.

Maintain payroll and reward governance documentation.

Ensure payroll system is fit for purpose and drives continuous improvement.

Line-manage the Payroll Manager and Pay & Reward Administrator.

Qualifications and Skills Required

	Essential	Desirable
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Qualifications and knowledge	Expert knowledge of PAYE, NI, RTI, statutory pay, Scottish Income Tax and year-end processes Knowledge of NHS Agenda for Change pay scales as a competitive benchmark for registered nurse recruitment and retention Understanding of CQC's workforce adequacy and staff wellbeing expectations and the reward strategies that support positive CQC outcomes	CIPP Diploma or equivalent senior payroll qualification CIPD or reward management qualification
Skills	Advanced payroll systems proficiency, with strong controls, reconciliation and segregation-of-duties discipline Cost-modelling and analytical skills to quantify NMW/NLW impact and pay compression for Board-level decisions Ability to design and communicate a compelling total reward proposition across a diverse, multi-site workforce Strong stakeholder management, with the credibility to influence at Board level and manage external partners (HMRC, pension provider, benchmarking bodies)	
Experience	Significant senior-level payroll leadership experience in a large, complex, multi-site organisation with a predominantly hourly-paid, high-turnover workforce Experience of pension auto-enrolment lifecycle governance across a large, diverse workforce Demonstrable experience developing and implementing total reward strategies in a care, health or hospitality organisation where NMW/NLW is a primary pay determinant Proven track record leading the annual pay review process including NMW/NLW cost modelling, pay compression analysis and non-NMW benchmarking Experience designing non-pay reward elements: recognition programmes, wellbeing benefits, referral schemes and flexible benefits	Experience maintaining participation in the Social Care Reward Survey or equivalent sector-specific benchmarking Experience of payroll and reward data requirements for SOX-controlled management accounts and investor reporting
Personal attributes	Committed to HC-One's values: Quality, Innovation, Compassion, Integrity and Respect High level of integrity and discretion in handling sensitive payroll and pay data Collaborative, resilient and delivery-focused, comfortable balancing operational rigour with strategic reward design	
Special features		
An Enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post. A DVLA licence check is required in line with HC-One insurance policies. Based at the Central Support Office, Darlington; regular office attendance is required, with some travel to homes and regional offices.		



HC-One is an equal opportunities employer and encourages applications from all sections of the community.

Dimensions:

Circa 8,000 employees across 146 care homes in England, Scotland and Wales (combined capacity approximately 8,000 residents).

Payroll across all frequencies (weekly, fortnightly, monthly) and all contract types — full-time, part-time, zero-hours and bank.

Direct reports: Payroll Manager and Pay & Reward Administrator.

US investment trust ownership; payroll and reward data subject to SOX Section 404 controls and investor reporting.