

Position Description | Te whakaturanga ō mahi Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

Title	Social Worker		
Reports to	District Social Work Team Leader		
Location	Nelson Hospital		
Department	Allied Health		
Direct Reports	None	Total FTE	1
Budget Size	Opex	Nil	Capex
Delegated Authority	HR	Nil	Finance
Date	17 February 2026		
Job band (indicative)	PSA step 1-7		

The Health System in Aotearoa is entering a period of transformation as we implement the Pae Ora/Healthy Futures vision of a reformed system where people live longer in good health, have improved quality of life, and there is equity between all groups.

We want to build a healthcare system that works collectively and cohesively around a shared set of values and a culture that enables everyone to bring their best to work and feel proud when they go home to their whānau, friends and community. The reforms are expected to achieve five system shifts. These are:

1. The health system will reinforce Te Tiriti principles and obligations.
2. All people will be able to access a comprehensive range of support in their local communities to help them stay well.
3. Everyone will have equal access to high quality emergency and specialist care when they need it.
4. Digital services will provide more people the care they need in their homes and communities.
5. Health and care workers will be valued and well-trained for the future health system.

Te Mauri o Rongo – The New Zealand Health Charter

The foundation for how we ensure our people are empowered, safe and supported while working to deliver a successful healthcare system, is Te Mauri o Rongo – the New Zealand Health Charter. It guides all of us as we work towards a healthcare system that is more responsive to the needs of, and accessible to all people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It applies to everyone in our organisation and sits alongside our code of conduct as our guiding document.

Te Mauri o Rongo consists of four pou (pillars) within it, including:

Wairuatanga – working with heart, the strong sense of purpose and commitment to service that health workers bring to their mahi.

Rangatiratanga – as organisations we support our people to lead. We will know our people; we will grow those around us and be accountable with them in contributing to Pae Ora for all.

Whanaungatanga – we are a team, and together a team of teams. Regardless of our role, we work together for a common purpose. We look out for each other and keep each other safe.

Te Korowai Āhuru – a cloak which seeks to provide safety and comfort to the workforce.

These values underpin how we relate to each other as we serve our whānau and communities.

Together we will do this by:

- caring for the people
- recognising, supporting and valuing our people and the work we all do
- working together to design and deliver services, and
- defining the competencies and behaviours we expect from everyone.

About the role

The position is central to the Social Work service, working collaboratively with colleagues, other allied health staff, and the medical supporting appropriate and safe discharges from hospital.

The expectation is to provide safe and clinically effective assessment and intervention, either within a specific area or across a broad range of areas, with a focus on the development of more in-depth knowledge and skills.

To provide a professional and accountable social work service in accordance with the code of ethics and practice standards defined by the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). To maximise independent living and good health through the provision of comprehensive and effective social work services.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Leadership & Management / Te Ārahi me te Whakahaere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilises resources (time, equipment,) efficiently and effectively. • Maintains timely and accurate statistics as required by the organisation. Contributes to the development of team goals and service delivery. • Attends and contributes to relevant department, clinical and team meetings, leading and facilitating such meetings as requested. • Assists team leaders and professional leaders in clinical assurance activities as requested.

<p>Clinical Practice / Te Mahi Haumanu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs and delegates work to allied health assistants and support staff as required in the role, ensuring that delegated tasks, documentation and communication is carried out. • Takes professional responsibility for managing own caseload of patients with increasing complexity and be able to independently adapt and make decisions regarding social work intervention. • Utilises information available to prioritise patients to enable appropriate allocation of referrals and workload, with staff in the team. • Carries out comprehensive psychosocial assessment with patients (and whānau where appropriate). This may include use of standardised assessments to assist in assessment and intervention planning. • Formulates and delivers individualised social work intervention using comprehensive clinical reasoning skills and in-depth knowledge of treatment approaches. This should, consider the patient's own goals and those of the wider interdisciplinary team (IDT). • Demonstrates effective communication, to establish a therapeutic relationship and set expectations with patients, whānau and the IDT, inclusive of the wider health team and external agencies as appropriate. This includes relaying complex, sensitive and contentious information. • Regularly reassesses and evaluates the patient's progress against identified goals and adjust intervention as situations change. • Refers on to other services to work with the patient towards achievement of longer-term goals. • To facilitate access for the client to appropriate funding as assessment determines. • To support effective and timely discharge planning of the client from the service. This may be part of a wider multi/interdisciplinary team. • Carries out regular clinical risk assessments for patients on own caseload and acts to effectively manage identified risks, seeking support where appropriate. This may include, mental state, assessing harm, to self and/or others, elder abuse and neglect, family violence, child abuse and neglect and vulnerable adults. • Demonstrates an awareness of health inequalities, with evidence of implementing actions within own clinical practice towards reducing these for the patient/whānau. • Represents the service and/or individual patients at clinical meetings and case conferences to ensure the delivery of a coordinated multidisciplinary service and to ensure social work is integrated into the overall intervention (where appropriate) including discharge planning. • Adheres to any applicable recognised best practice for social work and any relevant clinical policies and practice guidelines.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides advice, teaching and instructions to patients, carers, relatives and other professionals to promote consistency of support being delivered. • Identifies unmet needs of patients and identifies potential solutions to address these needs. • Undertakes assessments in an organised and systematic way. • Completes documentation consistent with organisational requirements. • Demonstrates provision of culturally safe and bicultural practice with patients and their whānau. • Provides appropriate supportive counselling and refers on to other services to work with the patient/client towards achievement of longer-term goals. • Demonstrates awareness of local, sub-regional and regional context in relation to provision of health and social support and the impact on service provision. • Demonstrates an understanding of the roles of the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary team. • Applies evidence-based practice. • Participation in peer review as per organisational guidelines. • Participation in multidisciplinary team meetings as required by the role. • Ensures linkages to the wider allied health services. • Facilitates and contributes to family meetings for patients and their families. • Demonstrates respect and sensitivity towards the rights, beliefs and choices of patients and their families and to members of the multi/ interdisciplinary team. • Support safe transition home and undertake home visits as required by specific role. • All client, family interventions reflect a partnership between the client, family and the service provider. • Advocates for clients, families and whanau.
<p>Teaching & Learning / Ako Atū, Ako Mai</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains competency to practice through identification of learning needs and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities. This should comply with professional registration requirements. • Contributes to training within the team/service. • Maintains an awareness of current developments in the clinical areas being worked in and make recommendations to changes in practice. • Provides mentoring and clinical support and/or professional supervision where appropriate. • Broadens research and development skills through participation in local audit and research projects as identified by team leaders or Allied health professionals. • Participates in quality improvement activities to develop and improve service delivery, clinical practice or professional standards etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and /or participates in regional/sub regional professional networks as appropriate to area of work. • Contributes to annual planning process, including identifying gaps in service and participating in work/projects that may result from the planning process. • Practises in a way that utilises resources (including staffing) in the most cost-effective manner, including inter-disciplinary and transdisciplinary practice. • Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research and apply to practice. • Completes mandatory training as applicable for the role. • Participates in an annual performance review and associated clinical assurance activities. • Participates in regular professional supervision in line with the organisation's requirements and/or professional body. • Attends and contributes department in-service training programme. • Active participation in department quality and service developments. • Establishes working partnerships with external organisations to promote integrated working. • Participate in workforce redesign programmes.
Professional Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain own professional registration requirements as directed by the legislation relevant to the incumbent's profession. • Adheres to the ethics, code of conduct and social work competencies of the New Zealand Social Work Registration Board Code. • You have an up-to-date professional development plan.
Other Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking duties from time to time that may be in addition to those outlined above but which fall within your capabilities and experience, within the social work guidelines and scope of practice. • You respond positively to requests for assistance in own and other areas, demonstrating adaptability and willingness. • Produce work that complies with organisational processes and reflects best practice. • You live and support the organisational values in everything you do.
Professional Development – self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying areas for personal and professional development. • Participates in professional supervision in line with the organisation's requirements and/or professional body. • Participates in the organisation performance development process. • Training and development goals are identified/agreed with line manager / professional leader. • Performance objectives reviewed annually with the line manager / professional leader. • Actively seek feedback and accept constructive criticism.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains focused on the pursuit of Māori health gain as well as achieving equitable health outcomes for Māori. • Supports tangata whenua- and mana whenua-led change to deliver mana motuhake and Māori self-determination in the design, delivery and monitoring of health care.
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commits to helping all people achieve equitable health outcomes. • Demonstrates awareness of colonisation and power relationships. • Demonstrates critical consciousness and on-going self-reflection and self-awareness in terms of the impact of their own culture on interactions and service delivery. • Shows a willingness to personally take a stand for equity. • Supports Māori-led and Pacific-led responses.
Innovation & Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is open to new ideas and create a culture where individuals at all levels bring their ideas on how to 'do it better' to the table. • Models an agile approach – tries new approaches, learns quickly, adapts fast. • Develops and maintains appropriate external networks to support current knowledge of leading practices.
Collaboration and Relationship Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models good team player behaviour, working with colleagues to not allow silo thinking and behaviour at decision making level to get in the way of doing our best and collegially supports others to do the same. • Works with peers in Hauora Māori Service and Pacific Health Business Unit to ensure the voice of and direct aspirations of Māori and Pacific People are reflected in planning and delivery of services.
Health & safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercises leadership and due diligence in Health and Safety matters and ensures the successful implementation of Health and Safety strategy and initiatives. • Takes all reasonably practicable steps to eliminate and mitigate risks and hazards in the workplace that could cause harm, placing employee, contractor and others' health, safety, and wellbeing centrally, alongside high-quality patient outcomes. • Leads, champions, and promotes continual improvement in health and wellbeing to create a healthy and safe culture.
Compliance and Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes responsibility to ensure appropriate risk reporting, management and mitigation activities are in place/ followed. • Ensures compliance with all relevant statutory, safety and regulatory requirements applicable to the Business Unit. • Understands, and operates within, the financial & operational delegations of their role, ensuring peers and team members are also similarly aware.

Matters which must be referred to the District Social Work Team Leader

- All employees are expected and encouraged to immediately ask questions and raise any concerns/issues with their colleagues at their place of work, particularly if the care of a patient could potentially be compromised.
- All staff are expected to act professionally and to actively listen to the concerns or opinions of others being raised at the time.

Relationships

External	Internal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration authority SWRB • Associations- ANZASW • NGO Maori Providers • Statutory agencies • NGO – Community Providers • GP's and Primary care • Academic Institutions • Peers in other districts • ACC • Ministry of Social Development-Work & Income • Ministry of Housing • Nelson Marlborough District Council • Advocacy Services • Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Work Staff • Patients, relatives, carers, families and whanau • Other Allied Health Staff • Nursing and Medical colleagues • Violence Intervention Coordinators • Pou Manaaki Services • Needs Assessment and Service Co-ordination • Mental Health Services • Alcohol and Drug Services

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- A relevant graduate and post-graduate qualification.
- Experience in implementing Te Tiriti o Waitangi in action.
- 4-year bachelor's degree in social work
- Social Work Registration Board registration
- Current full Annual Practicing Certificate
- Current full drivers licence
- Knowledge of working in a health-related environment
- Proven clinical and professional abilities
- Broad understanding of Social Work theories and practice.
- Committed to the ideals of research and evidence-based best practice.
- Have a sound knowledge of IT systems and applications
- Outstanding interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to network, development key relationships and partnership.
- Influencing skills, ability to get others on board and motivate them to reach their potential.
- Possesses the ability to think creatively as well as to communicate and influence at all levels.

- Innovative, proactive, enthusiastic, flexible and creative with a positive approach to all situations including problem solving.
- Ability to motivate.
- Ability to work in a supportive and honest manner.
- Demonstrable peer credibility and respect.
- Accepts responsibility for own actions.

Desired: Member of ANZASW (Aotearoa New Zealand Association for social workers)

You will be able to

Essential:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including how to apply Te Tiriti principles in a meaningful way in your role.
- Take care of own physical and mental wellbeing, and have the stamina needed to go the distance.
- Maximise the quality and contributions of individuals and teams to achieve the organisation's vision, purpose and goals.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with people at all levels within the public and private sectors, related industry and community interest groups and the wider national and international communities.
- Demonstrate a strong drive to deliver and take personal responsibility.
- Demonstrate self-awareness of your impact on people and invests in your own leadership practice to continuously grow and improve.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal, professional and institutional behaviour through commitment, loyalty and integrity.

Desired:

- Demonstrate knowledge of working in a health-related environment.

This position description is intended as an insight to the main tasks and responsibilities required in the role and is not intended to be exhaustive. It may be subject to change, in consultation with the job holder.

From time to time, it may be necessary to consider changes to the position description in response to the changing nature of our work environment – including technological requirements or statutory changes. If this occurs this will be discussed with you. This Position Description may be reviewed as part of the preparation for your annual performance and development review.