

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

Title	Speech Language Therapist			
Reports to	Team Leader, Speech-language Therapy (Operational & Professional)			
Location	Nelson and Wairau			
Department	Allied Health			
Direct Reports	Nil		Total FTE	
Budget Size	Opex	Nil	Capex	Nil
Delegated Authority	HR	Nil	Finance	Nil
Date	April 2026			
Job band (indicative)	PSA Allied Health clinical/degree qualified scale Step 1 to Step 10			

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 primary purpose of the role is to:

- Work with adult patients with communication and/or swallowing difficulties within Health NZ.
- To provide comprehensive patient assessment, in order to develop an agreed plan of care ensuring interventions provided are in line with contemporary, research and evidenced based practice in order to deliver safe, high quality clinical care.

ROLE PERSPECTIVE

The specific group of Allied Health services include Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech-language Therapy, Social Work, Clinical Psychology (cancer services), Orthotics and Audiology. Services are delivered regionally across the inpatient, outpatients and community settings. Each department is supported by a Team Leader who reports to the Director of Allied Health.

The position is central to the Speech-language Therapy department, working collaboratively with Speech-language Therapy colleagues, other allied health staff, services and reporting to the Team Leader.

Health NZ (Nelson Marlborough) is responsible for the effective delivery of health and disability services to people of Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough. This includes hospital based services, community based services and referrals to and from appropriate tertiary centres.

Allied Health, Scientific and Technical professionals work in health care teams providing a range of diagnostic, technical, therapeutic and direct patient care and support services that are critical to the other health professionals they work with and the communities they serve.

This role will work collaboratively with all health professionals as well as the wider multi-disciplinary team throughout the Health NZ in a way that is consistent with the Organisation's vision and values.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Leadership & Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 of speech-language therapy staff as requested. • Takes a leading role as appropriate in clinical or other projects related to specific role and/or areas of interest. • 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. • Utilises resources (time, equipment) efficiently and effectively. • Is an actively contributing member of the speech-language therapy team.
Clinical Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes legal and professional responsibility for managing own caseload of patients with increasing complexity and is able to independently adapt and make decisions regarding speech-language therapy intervention. • Utilises information available to prioritise patients to enable appropriate allocation of referrals and workload with staff in the team. • Carries out comprehensive assessment with patients (and whānau where appropriate). This may include use of standardised assessments to assist in assessment and intervention planning. This may also include referral for videofluoroscopy (VFSS) or fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES). • Works with a second speech-language therapist to carry out VFSS assessments and/or FEES assessments as required, depending on competency level and role. • Formulates and delivers individualised speech-language therapy intervention using comprehensive clinical reasoning skills and in-depth knowledge of treatment approaches. This should take into account the patient's own goals and those of the wider inter-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.
 - Assesses the patient's understanding of assessment, interventions and goals and gains informed consent for intervention, taking into account those who lack capacity (e.g. those with cognitive difficulties).
 - Regularly reassesses and evaluates the patient's progress against identified goals and adjusts intervention as situations change.
 - Refers on to other services, including Talklink, to work with the patient towards achievement of longer term goals.
 - Develops comprehensive discharge/transfer plans as appropriate.
 - Carries out regular clinical risk assessments for patients on own caseload and takes action to effectively manage identified risks, seeking support where appropriate.
 - Demonstrates an awareness of health inequalities, with evidence of implementing actions within own clinical practice towards reducing these for the patient and/or 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 speech-language therapy is integrated into the overall intervention (where appropriate), including discharge planning.
 - Adheres to any applicable recognised best practice for speech-language therapy and any relevant clinical policies and practice guidelines.
 - 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.
- Maintains timely and accurate statistics as required by department.
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- Undertakes assessments in an organised and systematic way.
 - Completes documentation consistent with legal and organisational requirements.
 - 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 provision of culturally safe and bicultural practice with patients and their whānau.
 - Demonstrates an understanding of the roles of the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary team.
 - Applies evidence based practice.
 - Participation in peer review.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in multidisciplinary team meetings as required by the role. • Ensures linkages to the wider allied health services.
<p>Teaching and Learning</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 New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA) continuing professional development requirements. • Contributes to training within the team/service. • Supervises, educates and assesses the performance of speech-language therapy students. • Provides interdisciplinary education in direct clinical area, or discipline specific teaching across teams. • Maintains an awareness of current developments in the clinical areas being worked in and makes recommendations to changes in practice. • Involved in the induction and training of newly appointed staff as required. • Provides mentoring and clinical support and/or professional supervision where required. • 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 requirements of the organisation and/or professional body. • Attends and contributes to the department in-service training programme.
<p>Service Improvement and Research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadens research and development skills through participation in local audit and research projects as identified by team leaders, professional leaders or other Allied Health professionals. • Participates in quality improvement activities to develop and improve service delivery, clinical practice or professional standards. This may include care pathways / treatment protocols, standards of practice etc. • 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 or projects that may result from the planning process. • Practises in a way that utilises resources (including staffing) in the most cost effective manner. • Active participation in department quality and service developments. • Establishes working partnerships with external organisations to promote integrated working.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in workforce redesign programmes e.g. Calderdale Framework. • Complies with all legislative and contractual requirements as applicable to the role (e.g. Health and safety in Employment Act 1992, Privacy Act 1993, Vulnerable Children’s Act 2014, Privacy Act, ACC service specifications etc.).
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain own professional registration requirements with the NZSTA. • You have a current Annual Practising Certificate from the NZSTA. • You have an up-to-date CPD log with the NZSTA. • Identifies areas for personal and professional development. • Participates in professional supervision in line with the requirements of the organisation and/or professional body. • Participates in the organisation’s performance development process. • Training and development goals are identified/agreed with line manager / professional leader. • Performance objectives are reviewed annually with the line manager / professional leader. • Completes relevant internal HNZ courses (both online and in person). • Actively seeks feedback and accepts constructive criticism.
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. • You respond positively to requests for assistance in own and other areas, demonstrating adaptability and willingness. • You produce work that complies with Health NZ processes and reflects best practice. • You live and support the Health NZ values in everything you do.
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. • Actively supports kaimahi Māori by improving attraction, recruitment, retention, development, and leadership.
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commits to helping all people achieve equitable health outcomes. • 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 TEAM LEADER, SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY

- Any / All serious incidents and adverse events.

Relationships

External	Internal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA) • NGO Maori Providers • NGO - Community • GPs and Primary Care • Talklink • Enable • Peers in other districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Speech-language Therapy staff • Te Waka Hauora • Other Allied Health Staff • Patients and their families and whanau • Clinical Staff (nursing, medical) • Medical specialists including ENT, neurologists, and geriatricians • Needs Assessment & Service Co-ordination

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- Relevant qualification in speech-language therapy that is recognised and approved by the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association (NZSTA).
- Experience in implementing Te Tiriti o Waitangi in action.
- Registered Member with the NZSTA
- Current Annual Practicing Certificate
- Current full drivers licence.
- The degree of post qualification experience and knowledge is variable dependent on the area of responsibility and requirements of the role.
- Clinical experience in a variety of clinical areas within the hospital and/or community environment as commensurate to the role.
- Experience of working with other professions in multi- or inter-disciplinary contexts.
- Broad understanding of practice areas.
- A sound knowledge of IT systems and applications, and ability to understand and comply with Health NZ Information Technology policies.
- Demonstrated organisational and time management skills.
- High standard of oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to make autonomous decisions when required.
- Advanced problem-solving skills, including using rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions.
- Ability to work as an integral part of the speech-language therapy and multi/inter-disciplinary team, and to maintain positive relationships with other team members.
- Ability to exercise initiative, prioritise and respond appropriately to clients.
- Flexibility and adaptability to accommodate service demands as directed by the Team Leader.
- Ability to access and interpret relevant research.
- Outstanding interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to network, and develop key relationships and partnerships.
- Influencing skills, ability to get others on board and motivate them to reach their potential.
- Ability to think outside the square 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 work in a supportive and honest manner.
- Demonstrable peer credibility and respect.

- Accepts responsibility for own actions.
- Ongoing commitment to continuing education and professional development.
- A commitment and understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi (and application to health) and a willingness to work positively in improving health outcomes for Maori.
- Committed to the ideals of research and evidence-based best practice.

Desired:

- Evidence of ongoing personal educational development e.g. undertaking further tertiary level education.
- Knowledge of private, public and voluntary resources in the community an advantage.
- Training in professional supervision skills and experience desirable.

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.
- With the support of Health NZ, proactively take care of your own health and safety, to ensure a safe and supportive work environment.
- 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.

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.

**The reference to salary band in this position description is for internal benchmarking and role sizing purposes only. The salary band designation does not form a term or condition of employment and may be changed by the employer at any time. In accepting a Health NZ employment agreement you acknowledge and accept this. Changes to the salary band will not affect an employee's current salary or remuneration.*