

Position Description | Te whakaturanga ō mahi

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

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.

Title	Hospital Dental Assistant
Reports to	Clinical Head of Department - Hospital Dental Services
Location	Nelson
Department	Hospital Dental Services
Date	21 August 2026
Salary band (indicative)ⁱ	Allied Health MECA PSA Step 3 to Step 7
Children's Worker roleⁱⁱ	Yes

Better Health, Better Care, Every Day.

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora is committed to providing high-quality healthcare for all New Zealanders. We are focused on improving access to care, delivering better health outcomes, achieving national health targets, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of our health system.

We know that great healthcare starts with great people. That's why we are committed to building a high-performing, inclusive workplace where our people are supported to grow, contribute, and make a real difference for patients, whānau, and communities across Aotearoa.

About the role

The primary purpose of the role is to:

Ensure that the hospital dental department clinical requirements are supported and that effective dental assistance is provided to dentists and dental specialists.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Clinical Core Tasks	- Will provide full chair side assistance for dental staff in the Hospital Dental Clinic. - Provide full assistance (including set up and clean up) for dental treatment performed in Theatre under general anaesthetic. - Provide dental assistance for clinicians in other hospital departments and in general wards when necessary. - Record accurate clinical patient records. - Assist Dental Specialists when required in both G.A. sessions and Outpatient Clinics, which may include minor surgery.

	• Scan dental radiographs. • Maintain high standards of infection control adhering to Health NZ district policies. • Full dental assistance is given effectively, timely and reaches defined standards as measured by periodic performance reviews and management patient feedback. • Ensuring timely processing of instruments and equipment through central sterilising unit and Theatre Sterilising unit.
Administrative	• Will use the electronic patient management database when required. • Will make clinical appointments when needed including specific appointments for clinicians. • Maintain clinic stock at an appropriate level. • Relieving reception, answering telephone calls, actioning outward and inward mail, photocopying, scanning and general filing as appropriate. • Provide administration support to the Hospital Dental Departments. • Appointments are arranged according to instructions. • Stock levels are consistently maintained. • Messages are taken accurately, courteously, delivered promptly and are in sufficient detail to allow an informed response. • Filing, scanning, photocopying and mail are processed accurately and within agreed timeframes. • Data is accurately maintained and input into the electronic patient management database. • Dental department administration requirements supported.
Quality Improvement	• A quality, customer-focused service is provided at all times, which follows best practice. • Participation in quality improvement processes in your area of work.
Professional Development	• Participation in annual performance review process including review of performance goals and identification of areas for professional development.
General	• Other duties as negotiated with your Manager.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Access and Outcomes	• Supports efforts to improve access to services and achieve better outcomes for the communities we serve. • Uses evidence and insights to identify barriers and opportunities for improvement. • Contributes to inclusive, responsive, and effective service delivery.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi	• Demonstrates a commitment to understanding and applying Te Tiriti o Waitangi in a practical and appropriate way. • Supports initiatives that improve outcomes for Māori and strengthen relationships with Māori partners and stakeholders. • Contributes to an inclusive workplace that values diversity and supports the attraction, development and retention of Māori employees.
Health & safety	• 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	• Takes responsibility to ensure appropriate risk reporting, management and mitigation activities are in place. • 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 your manager

- Employees are expected to escalate matters early to ensure patient safety, service, continuity and compliance with organisational and legislative requirements.
- Any event causing harm to patients, staff, members of the public or the organisation.
- Any matter where there is potential or actual risk of harm identified.
- Any complaint or significant negative feedback.
- Any significant quality or staff performance issue that may impact on service delivery or safety.

Relationships

External	Internal
• Patients, relatives • Families and whānau • NGO Māori Providers • NGO - Community • GP's and Primary care • Community-based Dentists and Dental Specialists	• Other Hospital Oral Health Service staff from other HNZ districts • Clinical and Non-Clinical Staff • Te Waka Hauora • Public Health Services • Community Oral Health Services

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential: Qualifications

- Year 11 – NCEA Level 1 English (or equivalent)

- Year 11 – NCEA Level 1 Maths (or equivalent)
- NZQA Level 3 qualification (or equivalent)*

*NZQA Level 3: New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing – Dental Assisting

**If not previously obtained; to be completed within 2 years of commencement or to be commenced within 1 year of employment.*

Knowledge and Skills

- Excellent organisation and time management skills.
- High standard of oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to follow instructions.
- Demonstrated ability to work and relate well in a multi-disciplinary team.
- Sound interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate successfully with a wide range of people.
- Able to be flexible with a dependable self reliant work attitude.
- Computer skills – Intermediate knowledge of Microsoft Office applications ie: Outlook, Excel, Word.
- Keeps up to date with available information technology relevant to position.
- Understands and complies with Health NZ Information Technology policies.

Personal Attributes

- Total commitment to patient oriented care and quality standards
- Have integrity, the ability to work without supervision and respect for the confidentiality and sensitivity of information
- Demonstrated ability to self motivate and use initiative
- Be versatile and possess the ability to adapt within a changing environment
- Demonstrated commitment to exhibiting cultural sensitivity
- Commitment to ongoing self development

Desired:

- Experience in implementing Te Tiriti o Waitangi in action.
- Drivers licence
- Recent hospital dental experience (preferred)

You will be able to

Essential:

- Deliver results through effective planning, sound judgement, and personal accountability.
- Build trusted relationships and works collaboratively to achieve shared goals.
- Communicate clearly and adapts their approach to different audiences and situations.
- Demonstrate curiosity, adaptability, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

- Maintain high standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethical behaviour.
- Contribute to a positive, inclusive, and safe working environment.
- Take responsibility for their own development and supports the development of others where appropriate.

ⁱ Salary band reference is for internal benchmarking and role sizing purposes only. The salary band designation is not a term or condition of employment and may be changed by the HNZ. Changes to the salary band will not affect an employee's current salary or remuneration.

ⁱⁱ The Children's Act 2014 makes provisions for the protection of children and helping them thrive, achieve and belong. At Health New Zealand, we safety check every children's worker. The purpose of this safety check is to reduce the risk of harm to young people and is a legal requirement for those employed in work that involves contact with children and young people including face-to-face, over the phone, or email contact. It is part of our commitment to ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children and young people. Your continued employment with Health NZ is conditional on a satisfactory safety check.