Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

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	Social Worker
Reports to	District Social Work Team Leader
Location	Wairau Hospital
Department	Allied Health
Date	26 November 2026
Salary band (indicative)[i]	PSA step 3-7
Children's Worker role[ii]	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 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	• 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. • 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.
Clinical Practice / Te Mahi Haumanu	• 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. • 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.
Teaching & Learning / Ako Atu, Ako Mai	• 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. • 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	• 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	• 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 organsiational values in everything you do.
Professional Development – self	• 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.

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

- Employees are expected to escalate matters early to ensure patient safety, service, continuity and compliance with organisational and legislative requirements.
- [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
• Registration authority SWRB	• Social Work Staff

- 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
- Marlborough District Council
- Advocacy Services
- Police

- 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:

- 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.

Desired:

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

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[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.