

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	Team Leader/Clinical Nurse Manager
Location	Capital Coast & Hutt Valley (CCHV) District
Department	Community Allied Health Older Adult (CAHOA)

Date	23/07/2026
Salary band (indicative)ⁱ	PSA Core Salary scale step 1-7
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:

The Social Worker is an integral member of the Advancing Wellness at Home Initiative (AWHI) team, providing comprehensive psychosocial assessment, intervention, advocacy, care coordination and rehabilitation support to patients transitioning safely from hospital to home.

Working within an Early Supported Discharge (ESD), rehabilitation and wellness-focused model of care, the Social Worker partners with patients, whānau and community providers to address psychosocial, cultural, environmental and practical factors that may impact health, wellbeing, independence and recovery. The role focuses on supporting equitable outcomes, reducing barriers to successful discharge, strengthening community connections and enabling people to remain safely in their own homes wherever possible.

As a member of the AWHI **Interprofessional Practice (IPP)** team, the Social Worker works collaboratively with nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language therapy, allied health assistants, medical teams, care coordinators and community providers to deliver coordinated, holistic and person-centred care. Through shared decision-making, collaborative

goal setting and integrated care planning, the role contributes to rehabilitation outcomes, health equity, self-management and wellness-focused care that supports patients and whānau to achieve their goals and maintain independence.

The Social Worker promotes a strengths-based and whānau-centred approach that recognises the importance of culture, connection, identity, participation and self-determination in health and wellbeing. The role supports patients and whānau to navigate health and social systems, access appropriate community resources and services, and build sustainable supports that enhance quality of life and long-term wellbeing.

The Social Worker contributes to service development, continuous quality improvement, workforce development activities and interprofessional practice initiatives that enhance patient experience, improve outcomes and support sustainable healthcare delivery within community settings.

Working hours are Monday to Friday during business hours. The role may be required to work across the district as required to support patient safety and service delivery needs.

About AWHI

Advancing Wellness at Home Initiative (AWHI) is the Early Supported Discharge (ESD) service for Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora. The service supports people to transition safely from hospital to home through rehabilitation, reablement and recovery-focused care delivered within the community.

AWHI delivers services funded through both the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC). The service provides short-term, intensive support designed to maximise independence, improve health and wellbeing outcomes, reduce avoidable hospital utilisation, and support people to remain safely in their homes and communities.

AWHI operates using an **Interprofessional Practice (IPP)** model, where team members work collaboratively across traditional professional boundaries to provide coordinated, person-centred and whānau-centred care. This innovative model enhances the patient experience, promotes continuity of care and enables clinicians to work at the top of their scope of practice. The team maintains this approach through regular case discussions, collaborative care planning, reflective practice and weekly Interprofessional Practice meetings that bring together a range of professional perspectives to support optimal patient and whānau outcomes.

The AWHI team comprises Registered Nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Speech Language Therapists and Allied Health Assistants. Working together, the team supports rehabilitation, recovery, self-management and wellness goals within a person's own environment, recognising the importance of culture, whānau, identity and community connections.

The majority of referrals are received directly from inpatient hospital services, enabling earlier discharge from hospital and supporting patients to continue their recovery safely and effectively within their homes and communities.

AWHI Medical

AWHI Medical supports frail older adults aged 65 years and over (or 55 years and over for Māori and Pacific peoples) following a medical event that has resulted in functional decline, reduced independence or safety concerns that may impact discharge home. The service provides short-term rehabilitation, reablement, clinical intervention and Packages of Care (POC) to support recovery and maximise independence. AWHI Medical operates as a seven-day service between 7.30am and 7.00pm.

AWHI Non-Acute Rehabilitation Programme (NARP)

AWHI NARP provides intensive, keyworker-led ACC rehabilitation to individuals recovering from injury. The service supports patients who are willing and able to participate in goal-focused rehabilitation and delivers coordinated interventions and Packages of Care that maximise recovery, restore function and support a return to independence and meaningful participation in daily life.

AWHI Neuro/Stroke

AWHI Neuro/Stroke provides intensive early rehabilitation for people following stroke and selected neurological conditions. The service supports patients to transition home within the critical early recovery period and delivers coordinated rehabilitation through clinician and Allied Health Assistant input within a seven-day service model. The focus is on maximising recovery, promoting independence and supporting patients and whānau to achieve meaningful rehabilitation goals.

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.

Key Accountabilities

The following role accountabilities may evolve with organisational change and there may be additional duties, relevant to this position that will be required to be performed from time to time.

Key accountabilities	Deliverables / Outcomes
1. Clinical practice	- Takes legal and professional responsibility for managing own caseload of patients / clients with increasing complexity and be able to independently adapt and make decisions regarding intervention. - Utilises information available to prioritise patients/clients to enable appropriate allocation of referrals and workload with staff in the team. - Carries out comprehensive assessments with patients (and whānau where appropriate) this may include use of standardised assessments to assist in assessment and intervention planning. - Formulates and delivers individualised intervention using comprehensive clinical reasoning skills and in depth knowledge of treatment approaches. This should, take into account the patient's own goals and promote self-management. - Demonstrates effective communication, to establish a therapeutic relationship and set expectations with patients / clients, whānau and the MDT, inclusive of the wider health team and external agencies as appropriate. This includes relaying complex, sensitive and contentious information.

Key accountabilities	Deliverables / Outcomes
	- Assesses the patient's understanding of assessment, interventions and goals and gain informed consent for intervention, taking into account those who lack capacity (e.g. those with cognitive difficulties). - Regularly reassesses and evaluates the patient / client's progress against identified goals and adjusts intervention as situations change. - Refers on to other services to work with the patient/client towards achievement of longer term goals. - Develops comprehensive discharge / transfer plans as appropriate. - Carries out regular clinical risk assessments for patients/ clients on own caseload and takes action to effectively manage identified risks, seeking support where appropriate. - Demonstrates provision of culturally safe and bicultural practice with patients and their whānau. - Demonstrates an awareness of health inequalities, with evidence of implementing actions within own clinical practice towards reducing these for the patient/client and/or whānau. - Represents the service and / or individual patients/clients at clinical meetings and case conferences to ensure the delivery of a coordinated service. - Completes documentation consistent with legal and organisational requirements. - Adheres to any applicable recognised best practice 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. - Responsible for assessment and prescription of short term equipment and longer term equipment funded by Enable NZ. - Demonstrates awareness of local, sub-regional and regional context in relation to provision of health and social support and the impact on service provision. - Identifies unmet needs of patients and identifies potential solutions to address these needs. - Demonstrates an understanding of the roles of the multidisciplinary team.
2. Teaching & Learning	- Maintains competency to practice through identification of learning needs and Continuing Competency (CPD) activities. This should comply with professional registration requirements. - Contributes to training within the team/service.

Key accountabilities	Deliverables / Outcomes
	▪ Supervises, educates and assesses the performance of students relevant to profession. ▪ Provides inter-professional education in direct clinical area, or discipline specific teaching across teams. ▪ Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research and apply to practice. ▪ Maintains an awareness of current developments in the clinical areas being worked in and make recommendations to changes in practice. ▪ Involved in the induction and training of newly appointed staff as required. ▪ 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 organisations requirements and/or professional body. ▪ Provides mentoring and clinical support and / or professional supervision where required.
3. Leadership & Management	▪ 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 staff 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.
4. Service Improvement & Research	▪ Broadens research and development skills through participation in local audit and research projects as identified by team leaders, professional leaders or Advanced or Expert AH 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. ▪ Establishes working partnerships with external organisations to promote integrated working. ▪ 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

Key accountabilities	Deliverables / Outcomes
	Awareness of and complies with all legislative and contractual requirements as applicable to the role (e.g. Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, Privacy Act 1993, Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, ACC service specifications etc.)

Works in other areas as identified or following a reasonable request in order to support the organisation in managing safe patient care and maintaining service delivery.

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.

- Serious actual or potential patient safety concerns.
- Significant clinical risk, safeguarding or vulnerable adult concerns.
- Complaints or incidents of a serious nature.
- Professional conduct or ethical issues.
- Workload capacity issues that may affect safe service delivery.
- Media enquiries or requests for external comment.
- Matters outside delegated authority.

Relationships

External	Internal
• General Practice Teams • Community Health Providers • Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) • Aged Residential Care Providers • NASC Providers • ACC • Housing and Social Service Agencies • Community Support Organisations • Patients, Whānau and Carers	• AWHI Nursing Team • Social Work Professional Lead • Allied Health Professionals • Allied Health Assistants • Medical Teams • ORA Services • Hospital Social Work Services • Care Coordination Services • Māori Health Services • Pacific Health Services • Operations and Clinical Leadership Teams

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- NZ recognised Social Work qualification.
- Current registration with the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB).
- Current Annual Practising Certificate.
- Minimum of two years' post-registration experience.
- Experience working within health, rehabilitation, disability, aged care or community settings.
- Knowledge of psychosocial assessment, discharge planning and community support systems.
- Full New Zealand Driver Licence.

Desired:

- Experience working within community rehabilitation or Early Supported Discharge services.
- Understanding of older persons' health, stroke rehabilitation and long-term condition management.
- Knowledge of community funding streams, housing and social support systems.
- Experience working with Māori and Pacific communities.

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 advanced assessment, advocacy and care coordination skills.
- Build strong therapeutic relationships with patients and whānau.
- Work effectively within an interdisciplinary team environment.
- Manage competing priorities in a dynamic community setting.

- Promote equitable health outcomes and culturally safe practice.
- Contribute to service development and quality improvement initiatives.
- Support and mentor colleagues and students where appropriate.
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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.