

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	Occupational Therapist (new entry level) Allied Health New Entry to Specialist Practice Mental Health Graduate Programme
Reports to	Learning and Development Manager MHAIDS
Location	Two clinical areas as assigned during AH-NESP programme. Locations will be across the district.
Department	Learning and Development & Clinical areas as assigned during AH-NESP programme, MHAIDS Capital, Coast & Hutt Valley District
Date	05/08/2026
Salary band (indicative)ⁱ	PSA HNZ Collective - Core Salary scale step One
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:

[An **occupational therapist - new entry level** (within first two years of practice), provides safe and clinically effective tangata whaiora/client assessment and intervention, with a focus on developing clinical capability with support from more experienced practitioners and leaders.

The MHAIDS Allied Health – New Entry to Specialist Practice (AH-NESP) programme supports the transition from student to practitioner for new graduate social workers and occupational therapists working in the mental health, addictions and intellectual disability service (MHAIDS).

An Occupational Therapist should be registered by, and hold a current annual practising certificate with the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand. They are required to practice in accordance with all relevant legislation and DHB policy, including codes of ethics and conduct.

Occupational Therapists in the MHAIDS AH-NESP programme will:

- Complete two rotations within the MHAIDS clinical sectors, which may include intangata whaiora, community, adult, forensic rehabilitation, younger persons, specialist māori and pasifika services.
- complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Health Science (Mental Health & Addictions) at Auckland University of Technology. This qualification focuses on recovery-oriented mental health practice.
- receive expert clinical mentorship on the job, weekly clinical supervision and regular tautoko from the AH-NESP coordinator.
- participate in peer support opportunities with the other AH-NESP clinicians and receive specific professional tautoko from MHAIDS occupational therapy and social work groups.

The programme is coordinated and managed by the MHAIDS AH-NESP Coordinator.

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Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Clinical Practice	• Takes legal and professional responsibility for managing own caseload of tangata whaiora / clients, with support from a more experienced therapist. • Carries out comprehensive assessment with tangata whaiora (and whānau where appropriate). This may include use of standardised assessments to assist in assessment and intervention planning. • Formulates and delivers individualised occupational therapy intervention using appropriate clinical assessment, reasoning skills and knowledge of treatment approaches. This should take into account the tangata whaiora's own goals and those of the wider multidisciplinary team (MDT). • Demonstrates effective communication to establish a therapeutic relationship and set expectations with the tangata whaiora, whānau and the MDT team, inclusive of the wider health team and external agencies as appropriate. • Assesses the tangata whaiora'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 tangata whaiora / client's progress against identified goals and adjust intervention as situations change. • Refers on to other services to work with the tangata whaiora/client towards achievement of longer term goals. • Develops comprehensive discharge / transfer plans as appropriate.

	• Carries out regular clinical risk assessments for tangata whaiora/ 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 tangata whaiora and their whānau. • Actively contributes at clinical meetings and case conferences to ensure the delivery of a coordinated multidisciplinary service and to ensure that occupational therapy is integrated into the overall intervention including discharge planning. • Completes documentation consistent with legal and organisational requirements. • Adheres to any applicable recognised best practice for occupational therapy and any relevant clinical policies and practice guidelines. • Provides advice, teaching and instructions to tangata whaiora, carers, relatives and other professionals to promote consistency of support being delivered. • Demonstrates an understanding of the roles of the multidisciplinary team.
Teaching & Learning	• Maintains competency to practice through identification of learning needs and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities. This should comply with professional registration requirements. • Contributes to the education of occupational therapy students as directed and delegated by student supervisors. • Maintains an awareness of current developments in the clinical areas being worked in. • Be 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.
Leadership & Management	• Attends and contributes to relevant department, clinical and team meetings • 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.
Service Improvement and Research	• Undertakes as directed, the collection of data for use in service audit and research projects. • Participates in quality improvement activities when requested.

	• 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. • Awareness of and 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.).
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.

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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.
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Relationships

External	Internal
• Tangata Whaiora, Whānau • Other HNZ clinical services • PHO and NGO providers • External agencies • Auckland University of Technology • Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand	▪ AH-NESP coordinator ▪ Operations Manager ▪ Professional Leader Occupational Therapy (professional accountability) ▪ Team leader ▪ Multidisciplinary team ▪ Wider MHAIDS teams ▪ Lived experience and family/whanau consultants and advisors ▪ Cultural consultants and advisors/equity leads

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- NZ Registered Occupational Therapist with current annual practicing certificate.
- Focus on delivering high quality care for the tangata whaiora/client/whanau.
- Self-motivated in developing clinical and professional practice.
- 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.
- Current full NZ driver's licence with ability to drive a manual and automatic car (required for roles based in the community or where the role may be required to work across multiple sites).
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Internet resources and e-mail.
- A high standard of written and spoken English.

Desired:

- Clinical placements and or clinical experience applicable in mental health, addictions and intellectual disability
- Member of Occupational Therapy New Zealand – Whakaora Ngangahau Aotearoa - Professional Association

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.
- Use rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions
- Use time effectively and efficiently – values time, concentrates efforts on the more important priorities
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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.