

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	Psychologist- Critical Care Outreach
Reports to	Team Leader for Social Work
Location	Wellington Regional Hospital
Department	

Date	03-09-2026
Salary band (indicative)ⁱ	APEX Step 1-13
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 address a critical gap in psychological care for ICU patients, reduce the long-term risks of psychological harm, improve patient outcomes and quality of life, and ensure equitable access to psychological support across the region.

While primarily based at Wellington Hospital, this role will provide outreach services throughout the region, with a focus on trauma and long-stay patients, who are at highest risk of long-term psychological distress. This service will be delivered through a stepped care model, including a referral and screening process to identify patients at risk of psychological harm post-discharge, and provision of interventions via telehealth and face-to-face sessions.

Clinical specialty/area

This role provides follow-up psychological care to patients and their family/whānau, who are facing psychological distress following an Intensive Care admission.

Clinical skills

Clinical duties will include:

- Applying a risk matrix to screen referrals and identify patients appropriate for psychology follow-up
- Conducting thorough psychological assessments and planning interventions based on severity, degree of risk, and other impacting factors
- Identifying appropriate model of care delivery for patients (including, but not limited to: case consults with other health professionals, facilitated online group sessions, individual 1:1 assessment and advice, psychoeducation, specialised evidence-based therapeutic intervention)
- Supporting patients to manage the psychosocial aspects of Post-Intensive Care Syndrome

A key focus will be on optimising functional independence, quality of life, and engagement in rehabilitation. A range of psychological presentations are relevant including delirium, cognitive impairment, panic, anxiety, acute stress, adjustment difficulties, low mood, substance use issues, personality functioning, complex relationship dynamics, and managing physical symptoms. The clinician will be experienced in working with people with high and complex needs, as well as those from a wide range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Demographics

In this role you will provide follow-up psychological care for adult ICU survivors who have been discharged home from Wellington ICU, to any of the region's districts: Capital, Coast & Hutt Valley, Hawke's Bay, Mid-Central, Wairarapa, or Whanganui. While primarily based at Wellington Hospital, this role will provide outreach services throughout the region, with a focus on trauma and long-stay patients, who are at highest risk of long-term psychological distress.

[Insert description of position and key activities, may be bullet pointed or in paragraph form. Avoid listing specific tasks here or in the KRAs as these may change over time e.g. as business processes change.]

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Clinical Practice	• Utilises information available to appropriately screen referrals and prioritise patients/clients to enable optimal allocation of service resources. • Provides and delivers psychological assessments, consultations and treatments to patients post-ICU (and whānau where appropriate) • Facilitates the transition of patients on to other organisations and health professionals where necessary (through onward referrals) • Takes legal and professional responsibility for managing a caseload of clients with high and complex needs • Assesses the client'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)

	• Investigates and designs resource-efficient, effective treatment programmes where appropriate to achieve agreed therapeutic objectives • Regularly reassesses and evaluates the client's progress against identified goals, and adjusts interventions as situations change • Demonstrates provision of, and supports others with culturally safe/bicultural practice with patients and their whānau • Demonstrates an awareness of health inequities, with evidence of implementing actions within own clinical practice and identifying solutions for wider service delivery that will contribute to reducing health inequities • Completes documentation consistent with legal and organisational requirements • Demonstrates recognition that the client's knowledge, experiences and culture are integral to effectively addressing the presenting health issue and/ or restoring function • Provides timely and accurate reports as required
Teaching and Learning	• Contributes to the design, development and delivery of specialist training on a range of subjects relating to post-ICU care • Contributes to wider workforce capability by providing education in post-ICU care across relevant sectors • Provides critical analysis, appraisal and integration of current research outcomes and relevant literature in order to maintain levels of knowledge and practice. Demonstrate application of this knowledge in practice • Maintains an awareness of current developments in the clinical areas being worked in • Completes mandatory training as applicable for the role • Maintains competency to practice through identification of learning needs and continuing competency activities. This should comply with professional registration requirements • Participates in annual performance reviews and associated clinical assurance activities • Participates in regular professional supervision in line with the organisations requirements and / or professional body • Provide advice, support, teaching and instruction to enable interventions to be carried out by other health professionals where appropriate • Provides clinical support and consultation around specific aspects of clinical work of clinicians of other disciplines where appropriate • Provides formal supervision of other psychologists where appropriate to their level of experience/expertise, and in line with the organisation's requirements and / or professional body
Leadership and Management	• Presents a credible and positive profile for the service • Demonstrates negotiation and management of conflict skills within the workplace • Carries out and supports others with assessments and management of clinical risks

	• Demonstrates and role models highly effective communication, reasoning and negotiation skills to establish therapeutic relationships and set expectations with people, whānau and the multidisciplinary and wider health teams. This includes relaying complex, sensitive and contentious information.
Service Improvement & Research	• Promotes professional practice that is based on best practice and research that supports organisational strategic aims • Contributes to the identification and implementation of changes in practice, as appropriate to post- ICU care, in relation to national and regional drivers in provision of health and social support • Works to improve service processes, in line with evidence-based practice and person-centred care • Contributes to the development of 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. • Contributes to updating competency based frameworks for clinical staff in area of clinical expertise • Takes a proactive approach to appropriately challenge and question established interventions and approaches • Actively participates in national and regional working groups / clinical networks to identify and implement innovative practice and or service improvements as appropriate • Establishes working partnerships with external organisations to promote integrated working that improves the outcomes and experience of people affected by an ICU admission • Contributes to annual planning process, including identifying gaps in service and participating in work / projects that may result from the planning process • Practices in a way that utilises resources in the most cost effective manner • Is aware 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 etc.) • Complies with all relevant organisational policies, procedures and guidelines • Where possible, promotes research into psychosocial outcomes/interventions for critical care patients

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.
- [insert other matters which must be referred, and who they should be referred to]

Relationships

External	Internal
• [Hospice & Palliative Care services • CASA • Iwi & Māori health providers • Home & Community Support Services • Primary Health Organisations (PHOs) • Community NGOs	• Central Region Allied Health Critical Care Team Coordinator • ICU Psychologists • Allied Health ICU staff • ICU Clinical Nurse Specialists • ICU SMOs • Consult Liaison • Whānau Care/Māori Health Services • Pacific Health Services

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- Registered psychologist (or eligible for registration) with the New Zealand Psychologist Board
- Current New Zealand Annual Practicing Certificate

- A commitment and understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (and application to health) and a willingness to work positively to improve health outcomes for Māori
- Experience of working with people who have complex needs
- Current full NZ driver's license with ability to drive a manual and automatic car
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Internet resources and email
- A high standard of written and spoken English

Desired:

- [Experience working with Māori and Pacific peoples
- Experience working with people affected by a serious illness
- Experience working in a health care setting

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.
- Demonstrate a high level of interpersonal skill
- Work on own initiative and organise own workload to operate effectively
- Recognise professional boundaries
- Recognise and manage risk
- Work effectively in an emotionally challenging and dynamic environment
- Respond to changing demands/priorities/workloads at short notice
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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.