

## Position Description | Te whakaturanga o mahi Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

<b>Title</b>	Pou Whirinaki, Specialist Mental Health Service (SMHS) (Senior Māori leader for Specialist Mental Health Services)		
<b>Reports to</b>	The Pou Whirinaki reports to and is accountable to the General Manager, Specialist Mental Health Service (SMHS)		
<b>Location</b>	Hillmorton Hospital		
<b>Department</b>	Specialist Mental Health Service Waitaha Canterbury		
<b>Direct Reports</b>	0	<b>Total FTE</b>	1.0 FTE
<b>Date</b>	4 March 2026		

The Health System in Aotearoa is entering a period of transformation as we implement the Pae Ora/Healthy Futures vision of a reformed system where people live longer in good health, have improved quality of life, and there is equity between all groups.

We want to build a healthcare system that works collectively and cohesively around a shared set of values and a culture that enables everyone to bring their best to work and feel proud when they go home to their whānau, friends and community. The reforms are expected to achieve five system shifts. These are:

1. The health system will reinforce Te Tiriti principles and obligations.
2. All people will be able to access a comprehensive range of support in their local communities to help them stay well.
3. Everyone will have equal access to high quality emergency and specialist care when they need it.
4. Digital services will provide more people the care they need in their homes and communities.
5. Health and care workers will be valued and well-trained for the future health system.

### Te Mauri o Rongo – The New Zealand Health Charter

The foundation for how we ensure our people are empowered, safe and supported while working to deliver a successful healthcare system, is Te Mauri o Rongo – the New Zealand Health Charter. It guides all of us as we work towards a healthcare system that is more responsive to the needs of, and accessible to all people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It applies to everyone in our organisation and sits alongside our code of conduct as our guiding document.

Te Mauri o Rongo consists of four pou (pillars) within it, including:

**Wairuatanga** – working with heart, the strong sense of purpose and commitment to service that health workers bring to their mahi.

**Rangatiratanga** – as organisations we support our people to lead. We will know our people; we will grow those around us and be accountable with them in contributing to Pae

Ora for all.

**Whanaungatanga** – we are a team, and together a team of teams. Regardless of our role, we work together for a common purpose. We look out for each other and keep each other safe.

**Te Korowai Āhuru** – a cloak which seeks to provide safety and comfort to the workforce.

These values underpin how we relate to each other as we serve our whānau and communities.

Together we will do this by:

- caring for the people
- recognising, supporting, and valuing our people and the work we all do
- working together to design and deliver services, and
- defining the competencies and behaviours we expect from everyone.

## About our team

As a member of the SMHS Divisional Leadership Team, this role has shared accountability for:

- **Leading and engaging** the SMHS, Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora Waitaha, Our Health System, and key stakeholders across the New Zealand mental health sector to build trust, common understanding and shared ownership.
- **Growing** understanding of and engagement with the purpose and strategy for SMHS in the context of Our Health System as it relates to mental health.
- **Developing, contributing to, and aligning** system-wide direction and plans, establishing clear priority, and supporting parts of the system to understand the accountability they share and have clear and agreed responsibilities.
- **Building** the people capability across the system and within the business to make it [the direction and plans] happen, while also building the process capability to do it effectively and efficiently.
- **Communicating** so that across SMHS, within the DHB and Our Health System, our people remain aligned with and informed about plans, priorities, and progress.

This shared accountability will be exercised in support of the organisation's vision to be a fully integrated healthcare system.

## About the role

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The Pou Whirinaki is responsible for leading and implementing the SMHS Hauora Māori strategic plan and priorities ensuring services are grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and responsive to the needs of whānau. The role supports SMHS to deliver whānau-centred care reflecting Māori values and aspirations enabling Māori whānau, tāngata whaiora with serious or acute mental disorders in their recovery. This will be achieved in partnership with partners and stakeholders to align with the SMHS Core Purpose and Strategy, the recommendations of He Ara Oranga and other relevant local and national strategic documents.

Reporting to the General Manager of SMHS, the Pou Whirinaki will work in partnership with the SMHS Divisional Leadership Team, fostering excellence in Māori grounded care, with practices responsive to the environment in which Māori whānau and tangata whaiora seek help and support. The role builds strong relationships between SMHS and Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora Regional Hauora Māori Services, Mana Whenua, wider leadership forums within Health and Hospital Services and local communities.

This leadership role supports the SMHS Divisional Leadership and Māori leadership roles with a specific focus on development of Te Korowai Atawhai and the Pūkenga Atawhai workforce, the wider delivery of Hauora Māori-informed learning, training, and education to all SMHS kaimahi. It is the lead Māori voice within the SMHS clinical governance structure, relevant forums and portfolios and assists service delivery informed by Te Ao Māori.

The Pou Whirinaki is a key role that links whānau experience and Māori specialist knowledge to clinical governance and ensuing practices within SMHS.

### Function

The Pou Whirinaki will have two key functions as below:

KEY RESULT AREA	EXPECTED OUTCOMES / PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides strategic leadership within the SMHS Divisional Leadership Team and SMHS governance structures, informed by Te Ao Māori and local tikanga.</li> <li>• Ensures the strategic direction SMHS aligns with Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora Regional and District Teams, acknowledging the aspirations of mana whenua a local IMPB and the broader Māori community.</li> <li>• Chairs Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori to provide Māori governance for the wider division.</li> <li>• Supports SMHS Divisional Leadership to ensure Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and Hauora Māori informed practices are integrated and coordinated across all SMHS services.</li> <li>• Supports the Māori leadership roles to design and implement SMHS Hauora Māori strategy and plan.</li> <li>• Provides Māori leadership and support within SMHS including Te Korowai Atawhai, and within the clinical services of SMHS.</li> </ul>
<b>Te Tiriti o Waitangi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remains focused on the pursuit of Māori health gain as well as achieving equitable health outcomes for Māori.</li> <li>• Supports tangata whenua- and mana whenua-led change to deliver mana motuhake and Māori self-determination in the design, delivery, and monitoring of health care.</li> <li>• Actively supports kaimahi Māori by improving attraction, recruitment, retention, development, and leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Equity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commits to helping all people achieve equitable health outcomes, especially for Māori.</li> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of colonisation and power relationships.</li> <li>• Demonstrates critical consciousness and on-going self</li> </ul>

	<p>reflection and self-awareness in terms of the impact of their own culture on interactions and service delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows a willingness to personally take a stand for equity.</li> <li>• Supports Māori-led and Pacific-led responses.</li> </ul>
<b>Effective relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets regularly with the General Manager and Divisional Leadership Team.</li> <li>• Maintains consistent communication with Te Korowai Atawhai, Service leaders, and other Māori Leaders within SMHS and Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora</li> <li>• Maintains consistent communication with Mana Whenua in conjunction with SMHS General Manager, District and Regional Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora Leaders.</li> </ul>
<b>Tikanga and kawa</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and maintain the development of appropriate tikanga and kawa in collaboration with mana whenua <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides Māori expertise and advice to senior clinical leaders and health professionals.</li> <li>• Ensures advice is informed by feedback from tāngata whaiora, whānau, Pūkenga Atawhai, and community stakeholders.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Māori Partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively participates (or clearly delegates) in relevant SMHS leadership forums including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori</li> <li>○ SMHS Clinical Governance meeting</li> <li>○ Serious Event Review meetings</li> <li>○ Complaints Committee</li> </ul> <p>And any other meeting as directed by the General Manager.</p> </li> <li>• Involvement in developing and reviewing policies and procedures with respect to tikanga, kawa and Māori.</li> <li>• Participates in relevant planning processes, service development, monitoring, and evaluation for SMHS.</li> <li>• Supports, as required, auditing to ensure SMHS is compliant with policies and procedures from a Māori perspective Hauora Māori Standards</li> </ul>
<b>Training and education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available as required to support Manuhiri Day and Te Korowai Atawhai meetings to enhance knowledge and expertise.</li> <li>• Contributes to education or training forums as requested by the General Manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Recruitment Partner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures Māori representation in all selection processes.</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies and pursues professional and Māori cultural development goals in consultation with the General Manager</li> <li>• Completes planning goals within negotiated timeframes.</li> </ul>
<b>Other duties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All duties requiring to be performed in the best interests of Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora are done in a competent and efficient manner.</li> <li>• Undertake such other duties as reasonably directed by the General Manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and People Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leads, nurtures, and develops our team to make them feel valued.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritises developing individuals and the team so Health New Zealand has enough of the right skills for the future, supporting diversity of leadership to develop – Māori, Pacific, people with disabilities and others.</li> <li>• Provides leadership that shows commitment, urgency and is visibly open, clear, and innovative whilst building mutually beneficial partnerships with various stakeholders both internally and externally.</li> <li>• Implements and maintains People &amp; Communications strategies and processes that support provide an environment where employee experience, development, and performance management drive achievement of the organisation’s strategic and business goals.</li> <li>• Ensures Business Unit culture develops in line with expectations outlined in Te Mauri o Rongo, ensuring unification of diverse teams whilst simultaneously supporting local cultures to be retained &amp; strengthened.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Innovation &amp; Improvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is open to new ideas and create a culture where individuals at all levels bring their ideas on how to ‘do it better’ to the table.</li> <li>• Models an agile approach –tries new approaches, learns quickly, adapts fast.</li> <li>• Develops and maintains appropriate external networks to support current knowledge of leading practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration and Relationship Management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Models good team player behaviour, working with colleagues to not allow silo thinking and behaviour at decision making level to get in the way of doing our best and collegially supports others to do the same.</li> <li>• Works with peers in Hauora Māori Service to ensure the voice of and direct aspirations of Māori are reflected in planning and delivery of services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health &amp; safety</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercises leadership and due diligence in Health and Safety matters and ensures the successful implementation of Health and Safety strategy and initiatives.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Leads, champions, and promotes continual improvement in health and wellbeing to create a healthy and safe culture.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Compliance and Risk</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes responsibility to ensure appropriate risk reporting, management and mitigation activities are in place.</li> <li>• Ensures compliance with all relevant statutory, safety and regulatory requirements applicable to the Business Unit.</li> <li>• Understands, and operates within, the financial &amp; operational delegations of their role, ensuring peers and team members are also similarly aware.</li> </ul>

**Matters which must be referred to the General Manager SMHS**

- Any matter that represents a reputational risk for SMHS, and/or broader Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora and mana whenua
- Any issue that has health, safety, material, time, cost, or resourcing implications outside of the scope of the role.
- Any matter that requires escalation for decision making

**Relationships**

External	Internal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hauora Māori Providers</li> <li>• Other Government Agencies as relevant</li> <li>• Industry Professionals and Representative Groups</li> <li>• Iwi Māori Partnership Boards</li> <li>• Iwi, Hapū,</li> <li>• Other Māori stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SMHS Divisional, Service and Clinical Leadership Teams</li> <li>• SMHS designated Māori Leadership roles</li> <li>• SMHS Nurse Consultant Workforce Development</li> <li>• SMHS Professional Leadership groups</li> <li>• SMHS Quality and Patient Safety Team</li> <li>• SMHS Lived Experience Advisory Team</li> <li>• Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora Senior District and Regional Leaders</li> <li>• Staff and members of the other teams in Health New Zealand   Te Whatu Ora</li> </ul>

**About you – to succeed in this role**

**You will have**

**Essential:**

- A relevant graduate or postgraduate qualification, or equivalent experience.
- Strategic leadership experience.
- Fluency in Te Reo Māori (or a strong commitment to achieving fluency), alongside a deep understanding of applying mātauranga Māori in the workplace.
- Experience in implementing Te Tiriti o Waitangi in action.
- Endorsement of Māori standards and competencies, including expertise in applying tikanga and kawa.
- Whakapapa Māori.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral, able to express compelling ideas concisely.

**Desired:**

- Have a clinical background in the mental health sector.
- Comprehensive understanding of the New Zealand Health Sector.
- Experience working and mainstream large organisations.

**You will be able to**

**Essential:**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including how to apply Te Tiriti principles in a meaningful way in your role. Demonstrate deep knowledge of Mātauranga Māori, Tikanga, and Te Reo Māori.
- Foster mana enhancing contributions of individuals and teams to achieve the organisation's vision, purpose and goals.
- Establish and maintain positive partnerships across public, private, and community sectors.
- Demonstrate a strong drive to deliver and take personal responsibility for actions.
- Demonstrate a deep understanding of the local Te Tiriti context and mana whenua aspirations.
- Demonstrate self-awareness of your impact on people and invests in your own leadership practice to continuously grow and improve.
- Adapt to multiple work environments and proactively respond to change by "working smarter."
- Be tāngata whaiora and whānau focused and committed to quality outcomes.

**Desired:**

- Have, and be able to utilise, the skills and knowledge necessary for constant quality improvement.

*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.*