

Position Description | Te whakaturanga ō mahi Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

Title	<i>Clinical Occupational Therapist, Specialist Mental Health Service (SMHS)</i>
Reports to	<i>Clinical Manager/Clinical Nurse Manager, Professional accountability to Clinical Lead Occupational Therapy</i>
Location	<i>SMHS</i>
<i>Date (the PD is finalised)</i>	<i>May 2026</i>
<i>Salary band (indicative)*</i>	<i>Steps 1 - 10 (Core Salary Scale - Health NZ and PSA Allied, Public Health, Scientific & Technical Collective Agreement),</i>

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 the role

The primary purpose of the Occupational Therapist role within SMHS is to:

- Provide comprehensive occupational therapy assessment and intervention for tāngata whai ora who are experiencing significant mental health and or/addiction challenges; supporting client-centred recovery and well-being with a specialist skillset in the areas of occupational performance and participation; adapting practice as appropriate to the designated service area.
- Work both autonomously and collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team (MDT) supporting tāngata whai ora best outcomes, inclusive of complex and sustainable discharge planning.
- Maintain a professional focus on supporting tāngata whai ora with identifying and overcoming barriers to enable meaningful engagement, connection, and purpose; knowledge sharing with the team, whānau, and wider support services to ensure continuity of care.
- Ensure therapeutic interventions are client centred, recovery focused, contemporary, and evidence based; delivered individually and/or within therapeutic groups across inpatient and community settings.
- Dependent on the designated service area, occupational therapists may act as a Duly Authorised Officer under The Mental Health Act 1992 (after suitable training and authorisation); provide case management for tāngata whai ora; provide direction and delegation to the kaiāwhina workforce (mainly Allied Health Assistants) and hold specialist knowledge in areas such as but not limited to sensory modulation and harm minimisation, equipment and environmental needs.

- Provide supervision to students and other occupational therapists in line with experience, and participate in ongoing service and professional development, taking personal accountability for these tasks.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
	• Adheres to Health New Zealand (HNZ) and the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand Registration Board (OTBNZ) Codes of Conduct and Competencies. • Maintains professional responsibilities: holds an annual practicing certificate (APC) and activity engages in the OTBNZ ePortfolio, supervisors/mentors students and/or other occupational therapists as appropriate. • Takes responsibility for identifying and addressing gaps in own professional development, specific to the profession and/or designated service area. • Prioritises workload and meets service timeframes. Maintains accurate, up to date and confidential documentation. • Provides safe, client-centred, and evidence based occupational therapy assessment and intervention. • Incorporates principles of recovery into practice and maintains an occupational therapy lens to inform clinical reasoning and advocacy within MDTs. • Maintains close working relationships with other occupational therapists, wider allied health and nursing/medical colleagues, Te Korowai Atawhai and Lived Experience teams. • Performs other duties as appropriate, delegated by the service or profession.
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	• Remains focused on the pursuit of Māori health gain as well as achieving equitable health outcomes for Māori. • 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. • Actively supports kaimahi Māori by improving attraction, recruitment, retention, development, and leadership.
Equity	• Commits to helping all people achieve equitable health outcomes. • Shows a willingness to personally take a stand for equity. • Supports Māori-led and Pacific-led responses.
Innovation & Improvement	• 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. • Models an agile approach – tries new approaches, learns quickly, adapts fast. • Develops and maintains appropriate external networks to support current knowledge of leading practices.
Collaboration and Relationship Management	• 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.

	Works with peers in Hauora Māori Service and Pacific Health Business Unit to ensure the voice of and direct aspirations of Māori and Pacific People are reflected in planning and delivery of services.
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 to the [Line Manager and/or Clinical Lead as appropriate]

- Concerns identified during contact with tāngata whai ora/whānau/carers/providers
- Role expectations, personal training and development requirements
- Changes which may impact your ability to perform your role
- Health and safety concerns
- Leave (sickness, annual, educational or other)

Relationships

External	Internal
- Tāngata whai ora, whānau, carers - Health and social service organisations - Relevant government and non-government agencies - General Practitioners and health providers - Occupational Therapy tertiary education providers - Occupational Therapy Board of NZ - Other HNZ services	- Occupational Therapists across service and wider SMHS - Clinical Lead Occupational Therapy - Clinical Occupational Therapy Specialist - Service MDT, Allied Health Consultant and Senior Leadership Team - Supervisor - Director Allied Health

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- A current Annual Practicing Certificate with the Occupational Therapy Board of New Zealand

- A minimum of 2 years' experience in a clinical mental health occupational therapy or commitment to professional development via undertaking a funded post-graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Addictions (New Entry to Specialist Practice Programme) or if experience requirements permits; completing the Experience Practitioner Pathway (EPP) within the first year of practice.
- Clearance under the provisions of Vulnerable Children's Act (2014)
- Eligibility to work in New Zealand
- Current NZ diverse license
- Experience implementing Te Tiriti O Waitangi into practice
- Excellent time management and interpersonal skills
- Accurate and timely documentation and computer literacy

Desired:

- Clinical mental health practice experience

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.
- With the support of Health NZ, proactively take care of your own health and safety, to ensure a safe and supportive work environment.
- Maximise the quality and contributions of individuals and teams to achieve the organisation's vision, purpose and goals.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with people at all levels within the public and private sectors, related industry and community interest groups and the wider national and international communities.
- Demonstrate a strong drive to deliver and take personal responsibility.
- Demonstrate self-awareness of your impact on people and invests in your own leadership practice to continuously grow and improve.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal, professional and institutional behaviour through commitment, loyalty and integrity.

Desired:

- Contribute to service development; support the service and profession via supervision, teaching, mentoring, and involvement in appropriate working groups.

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.

**The reference to salary band in this position description is for internal benchmarking and role sizing purposes only. The salary band designation does not form a term or condition of employment and may be changed by the employer at any time. In accepting a Health NZ employment agreement you acknowledge and accept this. Changes to the salary band will not affect an employee's current salary or remuneration.*