

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
Reports to	Associate Director of Allied Health
Location	Ashburton
Department	Rural Health Services Waitaha Canterbury
Date	05/10/2026
Salary band (indicative)ⁱ	In accordance with Public, Allied and Technical Health Employee's Multi-Employer Collective Agreement (MECA) Core Scale Steps 1 to 8 per annum according to qualifications and experience pro-rata for hours worked.
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:

Provide Occupational Therapy services to Ashburton hospital inpatients and the wider Mid Canterbury community via community outreach.

- Provides safe and clinically effective assessment, intervention and advice, to patients/clients/tangata whaiora, whanau and others within the MDT and community.
- Support delivery of excellent care for a variety of presentations with supporting interventions throughout their inpatient and community-based health journey.
- To ensure & prioritise a focus on patient safety & quality relating to care and processes within Whanau and Community and Allied Health Therapy Services
- Delivery of organisational KPI's including relevant MOH target, financial budgets and service plans.
- To recognise, support and contribute to the delivery of the Allied Health Rural Division, Waitaha Canterbury and Health NZ vision, values and behaviours.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Clinical Practice- Te Mahi Haumanu	• Takes professional, legal and organisational responsibility for managing a caseload of patients / clients/tangata whaiora with increasing complexity and be able to independently adapt and make decisions regarding occupational therapy intervention. • Utilises information available to prioritise patients / clients/tangata whaiora accepted into the service. • Carries out comprehensive assessment with patients / clients/tangata whaiora and their whānau. This may include standardised and non-standardised assessments and clinical observations to assist in assessment and intervention planning. • Formulates and delivers individualised occupational therapy intervention using comprehensive clinical reasoning skills and in-depth knowledge of occupational performance intervention approaches. This is in partnership with the patients /clients/tangata whaiora, their whānau and the clinical advice of the wider inter professional team (IPP) or multidisciplinary team (MDT). • Demonstrates effective communication and utilises relationship centred practice to establish a therapeutic relationship and develop agreed goals with the patients /clients/tangata whaiora, their whanau, including the wider health team and external agencies. This includes relaying complex, sensitive and contentious information. • 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 patients /clients/tangata whaiora progress (as appropriate) against identified goals and adjust intervention as situations change. • Refers on to other services to work with the patients/clients/tangata whaiora towards achievement of longer-term goals • Develops comprehensive discharge/transfer plans with the patients / clients/tangata whaiora and their whānau. • Carries out regular clinical risk assessments with patients /clients/tangata whaiora on own caseload and takes action to effectively manage identified risks, seeking support where appropriate. • Provides advice, teaching and coaching to patients/clients/tangata whaiora, their whānau and other professionals to promote consistency of support being offered. • Demonstrates an awareness of health inequalities, with evidence of implementing actions within own clinical practice towards reducing these for the patient/ clients/tangata whaiora, and their whānau. • Demonstrates provision of culturally safe practice and a confident approach to partnership, protection and participation with patients / clients/tangata whaiora and their whānau. • Represents the service and / or individual patients / clients/tangata whaiora at clinical meetings and case

	conferences to ensure the delivery of an integrated approach to intervention and to ensure occupational therapy is integrated into the overall intervention (where appropriate) including discharge planning. • Completes documentation consistent with legal, professional and organisational requirements. • Adheres to applicable recognised evidence-based research and best practice for occupational therapy and any relevant clinical policies and practice guidelines. • Responsible for functional assessments and prescription of short-term loan equipment, longer term equipment funded by Enable New Zealand and minor environmental adaptations and alterations to the patients/clients/tangata whaiora home. Achieves and maintains Enable accreditation as required. • 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/clients/tangata whaiora and their whānau and identifies potential solutions to address these needs. • Demonstrates an understanding of the roles and contributions of the interprofessional team (IPP) and multidisciplinary team (MDT). • Works in other areas as identified or following a reasonable request in order to support the organisation in managing safe patients / clients/tangata whaiora care and maintaining service delivery.
Leadership & Management - Te Ārahi me te Whakahaere	• Attends and contributes to relevant department, clinical and team meetings, leading and facilitating such meetings as requested. • Assists ADAH and professional lead in clinical assurance activities of occupational therapy 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.
Service Improvement & Research - Te Whakapai Ratonga me te Rangahau	• Broadens research and development skills through participation in local audit and research projects as identified by colleagues, professional leaders • Participates and leads quality improvement activities to develop and improve service delivery, clinical practice or professional standards. • Develops and /or participates in regional and national 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 activities 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.)
Professional Competencies	• Maintain own professional registration requirements as directed by the legislation • You have an up-to-date professional development plan.
Professional Development – Self	• Identifying areas for personal and professional development. • Participates in professional supervision in line with the organisation's requirements and/or professional body. • Participates in the organisation performance development process. • Training and development goals are identified/agreed with line manager / Professional Leader. • Performance objectives reviewed annually with the line manager / professional leader. • You actively seek feedback and accept constructive criticism.
Other Duties	• Undertaking duties from time to time that may be in addition to those outlined above but which fall within your capabilities and experience. • You respond positively to requests for assistance in own and other areas, demonstrating adaptability and willingness. • You produce work that complies with Health NZ processes and reflects best practice. • You live and support the Allied health team, Waitaha and Health NZ values in everything you do.

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.

Relationships

External	Internal
• Client /patient/ tangata whaiora and their whānau • Community Services and Agencies • All other Health Providers, including NGO and GPs • Regional and National Stroke service	• Allied Health Professionals, Professional Lead & Associate Director of Allied Health • Hauora Māori • IIG staff, admin and other staff, • Other teams and services relevant to supporting the Tangata Whaiora and whānau journey

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (BSc), or equivalent.
- New Zealand Registered occupational therapist with current annual practising certificate (APC) or able to be registered by 31st Dec 2026.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office
- Clean current full NZ driver's license.
- Effective communication skills.
- Positive attitude with problem solving focus.
- Self-motivated in developing clinical and professional practice.
- Member of Occupational Therapy New Zealand Association
- Demonstrates the ability to engage effectively and respectfully with Māori consumer (patients/families/whanau) and staff.
- Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of local tikanga and Māori culture sufficiently to be able to respond appropriately to Māori.
- Demonstrates ability to apply the Treaty of Waitangi within the Service.
- Shows commitment to and demonstrates the behaviours of the health sector.

Desired:

- Accredited assessor with Enable New Zealand in Band 1, 2 and non-banded (or the ability to work towards):
 - Personal Care
 - Household Management
 - Housing Modifications
 - Wheelchair and Seating
- Membership of the Occupational Therapy Whakaora
- Ngangahau Aotearoa
- Shows commitment to and demonstrates the behaviours of the health sector.

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.
- Be fit and able to undertake the physical nature of the role including manual handling of patients and lifting and installation of equipment as required.

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.