

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	Social Worker
Reports to	Associate Director of Allied Health – Rural Health service
Location	Ashburton Hospital
Department	Rural Health Division – 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 comprehensive assessment and outcome-focussed innovative care, applying evidence-based practice, interventions and education across a broad range of areas including inpatient acute and rehab care, community-based intervention, family violence, maternity care, competency, end of life and aged care support amongst other presentations. This role covers all health based social work from birth to death both within the hospital setting and in the community.

The Social Worker effectively manages highly sensitive and complex information and situations, including those involving abuse, trauma, mental distress, family violence, grief, and safeguarding concerns, requiring sound professional knowledge, emotional intelligence, clinical judgement, and communication skills.

Alongside clinical workload there is a responsibility for contributing to quality and service improvements and the development of team members and students, as well as themselves.

Specific objectives for your role will be agreed separately with your Line Manager (or their delegate), as part of your annual performance planning process.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Professional & Clinical Practice	• Maintains a clinical caseload, as agreed with the Line Manager. • Demonstrates sound clinical reasoning and professional judgement • Is an effective and positive team member, who works collaboratively with others for the patient's best interests. • Maintains clinical and statistical records to organisational and professional body standards. • Demonstrates clinical and professional competencies specific to service needs, position and profession. Applies evidence-based practice • Demonstrates sound interpersonal, communication, and emotional regulation skills to support patients and whānau, carers, during periods of crisis, grief, trauma, or psychosocial stress • Communicates professionally, effectively and empathetically with patients, whānau, caregivers, colleagues, referring staff and others who interact with the service. • Interacts compassionately with patients and whānau and demonstrates patient-centred care. • Adheres to professional standards of practice and code of ethics. • Adheres to organisational policies and procedures and legislative requirements, including those of the relevant professional body. • Adheres to the supervision process, as outlined by Allied Health Supervision Policy and specific to the service needs. • Acts as a supervisor for others. • Identifies gaps in service delivery or model of care and identifies solutions to improve efficiency. • Represents the profession and Allied Health at inter-disciplinary forums. • Supports student placements.
Service Improvement & Research - Te Whakapai Ratonga me te Rangahau	• Implements change in practice, as a result of clinical audit, review and benchmarking. • Develops clinical resources relevant to own work area to assist staff and students in orientation and care delivery. • Works collaboratively and pro-actively to overcome barriers to health care, facilitating positive change in own work area. • Leads the development of local policies and guidelines relevant to the clinical area. • 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.)
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.
Continuing Professional Development	• Undertakes critical literature review to effect change in practice. • Consistently evaluates own performance through reflection, supervision and feedback. • Supports the development of others through facilitating self-reflection, mentoring, peer review and supervision. • Evaluates clinical practice through clinical audit and open enquiry and presents findings in own work area. • Provides teaching to health professionals of own and other profession. • In partnership with line manager and professional lead fulfils responsibilities performance review process. • Engages critically with your own professional development needs and works in partnership with your Line Manager and Professional Leader, to ensure continuous learning that reflects profession-specific and service needs. • Takes a pro-active approach to setting and achieving performance objectives relevant to experience and practice setting. • Ensures Annual Practicing Certificate (APC) requirements are met.
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.

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, GPs and LMC's • Oranga Tamariki	• Allied Health Professionals, Professional Lead & Associate Director of Allied Health • Hauora Māori • Family Violence team • Other teams and services relevant to supporting the Tangata Whaiora and whānau journey • Legal services

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- An undergraduate qualification / degree in Social Work.
- New Zealand Social Work registration and current Annual Practising Certificate or ability to have a practicing certificate 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.
- 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:

- A member of the New Zealand Association of Social Workers

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.

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.