

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	Advanced Practitioner - Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Physiotherapist		
Reports to	Team Leader Physiotherapy		
Location	Canterbury District		
Department	Christchurch Physiotherapy		
Date	12/10/2026		
Salary band (indicative)ⁱ	PSA Allied, Designated D1-3		
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:

The Advanced Practitioner - Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Physiotherapist is an expert clinician who provides highly specialised physiotherapy assessment, diagnosis, management and consultation for neonates with highly complex clinical presentations requiring intensive and specialised care.

The role contributes expert knowledge and advanced clinical skills to neonatal care across the continuum of health care through direct patient care, consultation, education, leadership, service development, quality improvement and research. Working as a key member of the multidisciplinary neonatal team, the Advanced Practitioner supports the delivery of equitable, evidence-based and whānau-centred care that optimises developmental, functional and health outcomes for infants and their families.

The Advanced Practitioner acts as a recognised expert resource within neonatal physiotherapy locally, regionally and nationally, contributing to the development of contemporary models of

care, clinical standards and workforce capability. The role leads innovation and service improvement initiatives and actively contributes to research and knowledge translation to advance neonatal physiotherapy practice.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Expert Clinical Practice	• Provides expert physiotherapy assessment, diagnosis and management of neonates with highly complex clinical presentations within the NICU and neonatal service. • Demonstrates expert clinical reasoning and autonomous decision-making in the management of medically fragile infants with complex cardiorespiratory, neurological, developmental and musculoskeletal needs. • Provides advanced consultation and specialist recommendations for complex cases across inpatient, outpatient and community care settings. • Works in partnership with parents and whānau to support developmental care, infant wellbeing and family-centred practice. • Acts as the clinical lead for complex neonatal physiotherapy presentations and provides expert advice to clinicians across Health New Zealand and regional services. • Utilises highly specialised assessment tools and outcome measures to guide clinical decision-making and evaluate patient outcomes.
Clinical Leadership and Service Development	• Provides professional and clinical leadership within neonatal physiotherapy and the wider neonatal service. • Leads the development, implementation and evaluation of innovative models of care that improve outcomes for infants and whānau. • Influences strategic service direction through expert contribution to neonatal care planning, policy development and clinical governance activities. • Leads the development of regional clinical pathways, standards, protocols and guidelines relevant to neonatal physiotherapy practice. • Identifies opportunities to improve equity, quality, efficiency and patient outcomes and drives implementation of service improvements. • Represents the organisation at regional and national forums relating to neonatal physiotherapy and neonatal health service development.
Consultation and Specialist Support	• Provides expert consultation and advice for clinicians managing complex neonatal presentations both within and beyond the organisation.

	• Supports multidisciplinary decision-making through expert contribution to clinical discussions, case reviews and care planning. • Functions as a recognised resource for physiotherapists, allied health professionals, nurses and medical staff in neonatal care. • Facilitates continuity of care by supporting the transition of infants between tertiary, secondary and community services. • Develops collaborative relationships with regional and national stakeholders to enhance neonatal service delivery and patient outcomes.
Education and Workforce Development	• Leads the development of neonatal physiotherapy capability across the physiotherapy workforce. • Designs and delivers advanced education programmes for physiotherapists, multidisciplinary staff, students, parents and whānau. • Provides expert supervision, mentoring and clinical coaching for physiotherapists working within neonatal and paediatric services. • Contributes to advanced practice development and succession planning within the profession. • Supports development of neonatal physiotherapy knowledge and skills across regional neonatal networks.
Research and Evidence-Based Practice	• Leads and participates in research activities that contribute to the advancement of neonatal physiotherapy practice. • Initiates, evaluates and disseminates research, audit and quality improvement projects relevant to neonatal care. • Promotes and supports implementation of contemporary evidence into clinical practice. • Contributes to publications, conference presentations, professional networks and other scholarly activities. • Evaluates service and patient outcomes to inform future service development and strategic planning.

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.

Relationships

External	Internal
• Tāngata whaiora and their whānau • Other professional colleagues across the Canterbury region and nationally (and internationally as appropriate) • Relevant training institutions • Support Groups • Professional Associations and Regulatory Authorities • Consumer Groups, family-whānau groups • Other stakeholders e.g. NGOs, government departments and agencies • Mana whenua ki Waitaha • Local iwi • Union Partners	• Service, Clinical and Case Managers and Leaders • Chief Allied Health, Scientific and Technical (CAHST), DAHs and Associate DAHSTs. • Physiotherapists • Other Allied Health professions • Allied Health Educators, Coordinators and Professional Leaders • Nursing and Medical professionals and leaders • Union Delegates

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- Registration with the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand and current Annual Practising Certificate.
- Extensive post-registration clinical experience including significant advanced experience within neonatal and/or paediatric physiotherapy.
- Demonstrated expert clinical practice in the management of highly complex neonatal presentations.
- Demonstrated experience leading service development, quality improvement and clinical governance initiatives.
- Demonstrated experience providing advanced consultation, education and supervision.
- Proven ability to lead change and influence practice across professional and organisational boundaries.
- Knowledge and application of Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and commitment to achieving equitable health outcomes.

Desired:

- Research experience including publications, presentations or participation in funded research projects.
- National or regional leadership roles within neonatal or paediatric physiotherapy.
- Involvement in development of clinical guidelines, standards or advanced practice frameworks.
- Recognised expertise within neonatal developmental care, neonatal respiratory care, neonatal neurological assessment, or neonatal follow-up services.

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.
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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.