

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	Kaiārahi (Matua/Whaea)		
Reports to	Pou Whirinaki, SMHS (Cultural accountability) Ratonga Kaiarataki -Service Manager for Te Korowai Atawhai – SMHS (Managerial accountability)		
Location	Hillmorton Hospital, Christchurch		
Department	Specialist Mental Health Services		
Direct Reports	Nil	Total FTE	1.0
Date	9/10/2026		
Salary band (indicative) i	PSA Allied, Public Health, Scientific & Technical Collective Agreement 1 st December 2025 – 31 st October 2027 Designated Positions Scale Band Designated B		
Children's Worker role ii	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

This role serves as a cultural practice leader which includes relationship building with key stakeholders, including hapu and whānau. The role is to lead and support the Pūkenga Atawhai team.

Purpose

To support the embedding of *Te Ao Māori* (the Māori world view), *tikanga*, *mātauranga Māori*, and *Te Reo Māori* into everyday operations and service delivery.

This cultural leadership and managerial role requires the candidate to have extensive experience working in mental health services, with proven ability to lead and manage teams effectively.

The Kaiārahi plays a key role in maintaining functional operational and management linkages across the Specialist Mental Health Services (SMHS) and is integral to the support of the Pūkenga Atawhai roles within the cultural workforce.

The Kaiārahi will work together with the Pouako Mātauranga, who has the primary role of organising the content for Whanaungatanga and Manuhiri Days. The Kaiārahi has the responsibility to support this operationally (to ensure the smooth, efficient, and effective scheduling and overall coordination of these days) and to support the attendance and input of Pūkenga Atawhai to ensure their priorities for training are met. This plan is under the direction of Te Kahui Pou Hauora Māori.

The Kaiārahi also facilitates management of the interface between the clinical and cultural pathways of care through close liaison with the Clinical and Charge Nurse Managers to ensure provision of culturally safe, high-quality service delivery within the clinical teams across SMHS in line with divisional priorities.

The role reflects the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and fosters a culture of partnership, respect, inclusion and whanaungatanga across SMHS.

Role Responsibilities	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Providing leadership and responsibility for the maintenance of key cultural processes across the clinical teams of SMHS	• All service areas have planned and regular interface management of key processes impacting the delivery of services and the performance of Pūkenga Atawhai. • Key operational and systems process issues are identified and Service Manager and Pou Whirinaki are regularly informed of Te Korowai Atawhai operational activity. • Staff and operational issues are identified and resolved efficiently and effectively.
Coordinating the efficient use of resources at and for Te Korowai Atawhai.	• Management of Te Korowai Atawhai environment, both physically and professionally, is well maintained, serviced and culturally safe. • Works in partnership with the Pouako Mātauranga (Cultural Educator) whose role is to co-ordinate and deliver key educational courses based on Hauora and Tikanga to fit the needs of all SMHS staff, both clinical and cultural. • Support is maintained for the Pou Whirinaki and Pouako Mātauranga to enable efficient use of resources to deliver work programmes approved by Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori. • Optimises the use of resources to meet the identified needs of SMHS, Te Korowai Atawhai, and the clinical teams. • Regularly updates key documents and resources available to both Te Korowai Atawhai, the clinical teams and tāngata whaiora and whānau as approved by Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori and/or the Quality Team.

Taking responsibility for the maintenance of key cultural processes across the clinical teams of SMHS	• Pou Whirinaki is regularly kept informed of Te Korowai Atawhai activities and provided with timely operational information to enable them to: ➢ Carry out their role at the senior level of SMHS. ➢ Ensure that Te Korowai Atawhai delivers high- quality, effective and efficient services across SMHS clinical teams, aligned with SMHS Core Purpose, Strategy and Divisional priorities. • Ensures the Out of Hours/Emergency Pūkenga Atawhai Roster is maintained, current, and effectively communicated to the clinical teams. • Supports and promotes Pūkenga Atawhai participation in Whanaungatanga and Manuhiri Days.
Develops key relationships across SMHS	• Form collaborative relationships with key stakeholders to facilitate staff involvement and commitment to cultural competency within SMHS and the organisation. • All Pūkenga Atawhai practise according to Service/Unit protocols, Quality standards, organisational and divisional policies, and procedures. • The divisional Cultural Pathway, Te Korowai Atawhai Hauora Hinengaro Pathway published July 2026, and Care Pathways for clinical teams are linked and clearly maintained across all services. • Supports Clinical and Charge Nurse Managers to ensure culturally appropriate services are delivered to tāngata whaiora and whānau through effective participation/representation in the recruitment, induction, orientation and performance and development processes for Pūkenga Atawhai. • Success and Development Discussions for Pūkenga Atawhai are completed conjointly with Clinical/Charge Nurse Managers in their respective clinical areas on an annual basis. • A workforce development pathway is in place for Pūkenga Atawhai, with clinical line managers regularly informed of appropriate pathways to support ongoing growth and developmental opportunities.
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. • Participates in quality improvement projects initiated in collaboration with the Pou Whirinaki and Pouako Mātauranga as supported by Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori.

	Provides Māori health partnership input and representation across key divisional forums, including strategic planning, service delivery and model of care development, training and development, complaints management, and serious event review processes as delegated.
Equity	- Commits to helping all people achieve equitable health outcomes. - Demonstrates awareness of colonisation and power relationships. - Demonstrates critical consciousness and on-going self-reflection and self-awareness in terms of the impact of their own culture on interactions and service delivery. - Shows a willingness to personally take a stand for equity. - Supports Māori-led and Pacific-led (where appropriate and as required) responses .
Innovation & Improvement	- Is open to new ideas and fosters a culture where individuals at all levels bring their ideas for continuous improvement. - Develops and maintains appropriate internal and external networks to support current knowledge of leading practices. - Maintains a high level of competence through: ➤ Cultural supervision ➤ Ongoing education as identified through annual performance reviews with Ratonga Kaiarataki and Pou Whirinaki.
Collaboration and Relationship Management	- Models strong team player behaviour by working collaboratively with colleagues, avoiding silo thinking and decision-making, and supporting others to do the same to achieve the best outcomes for the division. - Works with peers to ensure the voice of and direct aspirations of Māori are reflected in planning and delivery of services. - All Pūkenga Atawhai have access to cultural supervision and success and development processes which are supported by line managers. - Ensures performance planning is undertaken collaboratively and regularly between clinical line managers and Kaiārahi, fostering shared understanding. - Participation at key Māori hui of HNZ/Waitaha and NGO/community agencies appropriate to the core business of SMHS is maintained.
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 practical steps to mitigate risks and hazards in the workplace that could cause harm, whilst maintaining high-quality tāngata whaiora outcomes. - Leads 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 unit. • Understands, and operates within, the financial & operational delegations of their role, ensuring peers and team members are also similarly aware.
Regular reporting to the Ratonga Kaiarataki (Service Manager) and to Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori	• Annual and sick leave on Whanaungatanga and Manuhiri Days is reported to the respective Clinical/Charge Nurse Manager by the Kaiārahi. • Monthly reports and audit reporting processes for Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori, along with any reporting requirements by SMHS Divisional Leadership Team are completed accurately, timely and contain the required statistics and relevant information. • Any delegated responsibilities from the Pou Whirinaki and the Ratonga Kaiarataki are carried out effectively in the best interests of SMHS.

Matters which must be referred to the Ratonga Kaiarataki (Service Manager) for Te Korowai Atawhai

- Issues of risk and/or safety that arise within the functioning of the clinical teams and within the context of Whanaungatanga and Manuhiri Days.
- Staff issues are identified in a timely manner and communicated.
- Resource needs are identified and communicated.
- Health & Safety and Compliance concerns are reported.

Relationships

External	Internal
• Mana Whenua Ki Waitaha • Ngāi Tūāhuriri (as agreed with Pou Whirinaki) • Ngā Maata Waka • National Workforce Centres (especially Te Rau Ora)	• Pukenga Atawhai • Pou Whirinaki, SMHS • Pou ako Mātauranga • Ratonga Kaiarataki (Service Manager) Te Korowai Atawhai • Te Ao Mārama • Te Kāhui Pou Hauora Māori • Te Kaihāpai (Māori Lived Experience) • Whānau Kaitautoko (Māori Family Lived Experience) • Director Lived Experience • Pou Matatau • Service Leadership Teams • Clinical and Charge Nurse Managers • SMHS Nursing and Allied Health Directorates • SMHS Quality and Patient Safety Team

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- Knowledge of and ability to communicate Te Ao Māori, tikanga, Mātauranga Māori, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Proficiency in Te Reo Māori and intent for further development
- Hold a minimum of Diploma in Hauora Māori Level 5 or above (NZQA accredited organisation).
- Extensive Pukenga Atawhai / Māori Health Worker experience (More than two years) in a tertiary mental health service and experience of leading teams.
- A strong Tāngata Whaiora and Whānau centred approach.
- Proven leadership ability and commitment to developing others.
- Strong organisational skills to manage mahi and deliver on mutual outcomes
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to manage complex team dynamics.
- Ability to work collaboratively and effectively with clinical, managerial and support service staff.
- Competency in the use of information technology systems used within SMHS.
- Evidence of ongoing professional and cultural development.
- Ability to identify opportunities to enhance capability and embed cultural awareness, responsiveness, and safety of all staff.
- Whakapapa to iwi.

Desired:

- Hold a recognised NZ health qualification in a relevant area.
- Māori Tohu - Mātauranga Māori

You will be able to:

Essential:

- Demonstrate ability in conflict resolution.
- Take care of own physical and mental wellbeing.
- Maximise individual and team contributions to achieve the organisation's vision, purpose, and goals.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with people at all levels.
- Demonstrate a strong drive to deliver and take personal responsibility.
- Demonstrate self-awareness and commitment to ongoing leadership growth and improvement.
- Demonstrate integrity, commitment, loyalty, and high standards of personal, professional, and organisational behaviour.

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.