Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Position Description | Te whakaturanga ō mahi
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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	Inpatient Occupational Therapy Team Lead Professional accountability to Occupational Therapy Professional Lead
Location	This position is expected to work from Hutt Hospital
Department	Hutt Hospital Inpatient Allied Health, CAHOA group Capital, Coast & Hutt Valley District
Date	02/10/2026
Salary band (indicative)[i]	[PSA – MECA Allied Professions, Scientific and Technical] HNZ Collective
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

The primary purpose of the role is to:

The Occupational Therapist in this position works within the inpatient services at Hutt Hospital, providing specialist occupational therapy assessment and intervention for patients across the lifespan. The role encompasses a broad range of clinical presentations, including acute and chronic medical conditions, neurological disorders, orthopaedic injuries, cardiac and surgical conditions.

The Occupational Therapist is responsible for assessing the impact of illness, injury, or disability on an individual's occupational performance and functional independence, with a strong focus on supporting safe, timely, and sustainable discharge planning.

Working collaboratively with patients, whānau, and multidisciplinary team members, the Occupational Therapist delivers evidence-informed interventions that promote recovery, maximise functional outcomes, and support engagement in meaningful daily activities and life roles.

The role requires the ability to manage a diverse caseload within a fast-paced inpatient environment and to work flexibly across a range of clinical areas in response to service demand. This is a float inpatient role with responsibility for providing occupational therapy services across acute wards and rehabilitation services, including Older Persons' Rehabilitation Services (OPRS), as required. The Occupational Therapist will be expected to provide clinical cover and support across specialties, adapt quickly to different clinical environments, and contribute to equitable service delivery across the hospital. The role may also include discharge-to-assess activities and follow-up support in the community when required to facilitate successful transition from hospital to home.

Occupational Therapists in this role are expected to demonstrate a broad and developing range of clinical skills appropriate to inpatient practice. This includes comprehensive assessment of functional cognition, activities of daily living, transfers and equipment needs, home environment considerations, risk assessment, discharge planning, and the prescription of adaptive equipment and advice regarding simple environmental modifications. Practitioners must be able to apply sound clinical reasoning, work autonomously within their scope of practice, and effectively manage complex clinical situations while maintaining a person-centred and culturally responsive approach.

This role is suitable for an Occupational Therapist at the end of their second year of practice and beyond, who has established foundational clinical competence and is developing greater depth and breadth of knowledge within their clinical area. The Occupational Therapist is expected to provide safe, effective, and evidence-based assessment and intervention, contribute to service development and quality improvement activities, and engage in ongoing professional development to support continued growth in clinical expertise

Works across inpatient services, including acute and Older Persons' Rehabilitation Services (OPRS), and in other clinical areas as identified or reasonably requested to support safe patient care, service continuity, and organisational priorities.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Clinical Practice	• Takes legal and professional responsibility for managing own caseload of patients / clients with increasing complexity and be able to independently adapt and make decisions regarding occupational therapy intervention. • Utilises information available to prioritise patients/clients to enable appropriate allocation of referrals and workload with staff in the team. • Carries out comprehensive assessment with patients (and whānau where appropriate) This may include use of standardised assessments to assist in assessment and intervention planning. • Formulates and delivers individualised occupational therapy intervention using comprehensive clinical reasoning skills and in depth knowledge of treatment approaches. This should, take into account the patient's own goals and those of the wider multidisciplinary team (MDT).

	• Demonstrates effective communication, to establish a therapeutic relationship and set expectations with patients / clients, whānau and the MDT, inclusive of the wider health team and external agencies as appropriate. 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 patient / client's progress against identified goals and adjust intervention as situations change. • Refers on to other services to work with the patient/client towards achievement of longer term goals. • Develop comprehensive discharge / transfer plans as appropriate. • Carries out regular clinical risk assessments for patients/ clients on own caseload and takes action to effectively manage identified risks, seeking support where appropriate. • Demonstrates provision of culturally safe and bicultural practice with patients and their whānau. • Demonstrates an awareness of health inequalities, with evidence of implementing actions within own clinical practice towards reducing these for the patient/client and/or whānau. • Represents the service and / or individual patients/clients at clinical meetings and case conferences to ensure the delivery of a coordinated multidisciplinary service and to ensure occupational therapy is integrated into the overall intervention (where appropriate) including discharge planning. • Completes documentation consistent with legal and organisational requirements. • Adheres to any applicable recognised best practice for occupational therapy and any relevant clinical policies and practice guidelines. • Provides advice, teaching and instructions to patients, carers, relatives and other professionals to promote consistency of support being delivered. • Responsible for assessment and prescription of short term equipment, longer term equipment funded by Enable NZ and minor structural adaptations to the patient's home. • 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 and identifies potential solutions to address these needs. • Demonstrates an understanding of the roles of the multidisciplinary team.
Teaching & Learning	• Maintains competency to practice through identification of learning needs and Continuing Competency (CPD) activities. This should comply with professional registration requirements. • Contributes to training within the team/service.

	• Supervises, educates and assesses the performance of occupational therapy students. • Provides interdisciplinary education in direct clinical area, or discipline specific teaching across teams. • Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research and apply to practice. • Maintains an awareness of current developments in the clinical areas being worked in and make recommendations to changes in practice. • Be involved in the induction and training of newly appointed staff as required. • Completes mandatory training as applicable for the role. • Participates in an annual performance review and associated clinical assurance activities. • Participates in regular professional supervision in line with the organisations requirements and/or professional body. • Provides mentoring and clinical support and / or professional supervision where required.
Leadership & Management	• Attends and contributes to relevant department, clinical and team meetings, leading and facilitating such meetings as requested. • Assists team leaders and professional leaders 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 and Research	• Broadens research and development skills through participation in local audit and research projects as identified by team leaders, professional leaders or Advanced or Expert AH professionals. • Participates in quality improvement activities to develop and improve service delivery, clinical practice or professional standards. This may include care pathways / treatment protocols, standards of practice etc. • Develops and /or participates in regional / sub regional 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 / projects 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.).

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/Family/Whanau/Carers • Enable • ACC • Clinical Equipment Pool Staff (CEP) • MDT staff on various wards • Care Co-ordination Centre / Capital Support • AWHI – Early supported discharge team	• Occupational Therapists • Allied Health Assistants • Physiotherapists • Social Workers • Speech & Language Therapists • Dietitians • ACNM's • Medical staff • Nursing staff

	• Administrators • Professional Leader Occupational Therapy • Director of Allied Professions • Professional Lead Occupational Therapy

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- NZ Registered Occupational Therapist with current annual practicing certificate.
- Minimum of 2 years clinical practice.
- Clinical experience applicable to role.
- Self-motivated in developing clinical and professional practice.
- Focus on delivering high quality care for the patient/client/whānau.
- A commitment and understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi (and application to health) and a willingness to work positively in improving health outcomes for Maori.
- Current full NZ driver's licence with ability to drive a manual and automatic car (required for roles based in the community or where the role may be required to work across multiple sites or completing home visits).
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Internet resources and e-mail.
- A high standard of written and spoken English.

Desired:

- Member of Occupational Therapy New Zealand Professional Association
- Previous acute hospital experience

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.

- Use rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions

Desired:

- Demonstrate flexibility in working across acute and rehabilitation services, adapting practice to meet changing patient and service needs.
- Build and maintain effective relationships across multidisciplinary teams to support coordinated, patient-centred care.
- Advocate effectively for patients and whānau, ensuring their needs, goals, and preferences are represented in clinical decision-making.
- Apply clinical governance principles through active participation in quality improvement, risk management, audit, service evaluation, and patient safety initiatives.
- Interpret and apply occupational therapy research to support evidence-based practice and continuous improvement in service delivery.

[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.