

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Senior Mental Health Clinician – Intake
Business Unit/Department:	Community Mental Health Team
Division:	Mental Health and Wellbeing Services
Award/Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement, Medical Scientists, Pharmacists & Psychologists (Victorian Public Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement
Classification:	RPN4 / OT3 / SW3 / P3
Reports To:	Program Manager
Direct Reports:	N/A
Date Prepared/Updated:	12 December 2025

Position Purpose

Western Health's Mental Health and Wellbeing Service (WH MH&WS) is situated in a growth corridor where continuous development, service expansion and innovative new programs are on the rise. Working within our catchment area allows for challenging and rewarding careers, where teamwork, flexibility and achievement are apparent in everything we do. We recognise that it takes a team to run a successful service, and we value and support all our team members.

The Senior Intake Clinician provides advanced clinical screening, assessment and decision-making to determine the most appropriate service response. This includes interpreting referral information, conducting assessments, identifying and managing risk, and coordinating care pathways across internal programs and external providers.

Senior Clinicians in Intake contribute to safe service flow, support team capability and provide senior clinical guidance in complex presentations. They model advanced practice, assist with risk escalation processes and promote a positive, accountable team culture. The role includes mentoring, supervision (as appropriate), supporting onboarding and contributing to clinical governance activities. This position is fast-paced and requires strong communication skills, clinical confidence, sound judgement and the ability to synthesise information quickly and accurately. The role combines direct consumer contact, multidisciplinary collaboration, service coordination and administrative responsibilities.

Business Unit Overview

The Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing Services spans across multiple Western Health sites and within the local community and services consumers across the lifespan.

The Division has recently been established following a key recommendation from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Our Vision

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Western Health's Mental Health and Wellbeing Service (MH&WS) provides a comprehensive range of specialist mental health services to people residing in the local government areas of Melton, Brimbank, Maribyrnong and parts of Hume (Sunbury/Bulla). We deliver specialist clinical programs across Adult Community Services, EMH/PARC/CL Psychiatry, the St Albans Community Care Unit, the Adult Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit, and the Adult Acute Inpatient Unit.

The MH&W service is situated in a growth corridor characterised by continuous development, service expansion, and innovative new programs.

Our recovery-oriented care is delivered by a skilled multidisciplinary workforce, including lived and living experience workers, with input from consumers and carers. These services include hospital based, community and specialist mental health and wellbeing services for adults, older adults, children and adolescents who are experiencing, or are at risk of developing a serious mental illness.

The Division collaborates across several Divisions within Western Health and partners with external health services and community services to ensure the provision of Best Care.

The Division aims to innovate and develop services and care options across Western Health to ensure Best Care for the community of Western Melbourne.

Key Responsibilities

Senior Intake Clinicians provide advanced clinical screening, assessment and decision-making to ensure consumers receive timely and appropriate access to mental health services. Responsibilities include:

Intake Screening and Assessment

- Conduct timely, clinically informed screening of referrals received from Centralised Triage, internal programs and external providers.
- Undertake mental health assessments, including risk assessment and brief formulation, to determine the appropriate service response.
- Prioritise referrals based on urgency, risk, complexity and service demand.
- Engage directly with consumers, families and referrers to gather collateral and clarify presenting issues when needed.

Risk Identification and Escalation

- Identify, assess and document clinical risk clearly and accurately.
- Escalate acute, high-risk or unstable presentations promptly to the Team Leader, Manager or Consultant Psychiatrist.
- Contribute to team-based risk discussions and support decision-making regarding service response and care pathways.

Service Navigation and Coordination

- Coordinate timely referral pathways to internal Western Health programs, including community teams, EMH, PARC, ACIS, or inpatient units as appropriate.
- Liaise with external services, including GPs, private providers, AOD, housing, and NGO supports, to facilitate integrated care.
- Advocate for consumers and families by ensuring referrals are directed to the most appropriate service based on assessed need.

Clinical Advice and Secondary Consultation

- Provide senior clinical advice to team members regarding intake decisions, risk management and service options.
- Offer secondary consultation to internal programs and external agencies seeking guidance on MH&WS access pathways.
- Support the team's understanding of referral criteria, reform-based models and evolving service structures.

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Documentation and Digital Systems

- Maintain accurate, comprehensive and timely documentation of assessments, decisions and referral outcomes.
- Record all activity, contacts and outcomes in accordance with Western Health and ABF reporting requirements.
- Use electronic systems competently to support decision-making, workflow management and data integrity.

Leadership and Team Support

- Model advanced clinical practice and contribute positively to team culture and workflow management.
- Provide informal mentoring, guidance and day-to-day clinical support to junior clinicians and students.
- Assist with onboarding new staff and support capability building across the team.
- Collaborate with the Team Leader to identify service pressures, risk trends and opportunities for improvement.

Clinical Governance and Service Development

- Participate in quality activities, audits, incident reviews and service development initiatives.
- Support implementation of new processes, care pathways and policy changes linked to mental health reform.
- Represent the Intake function at internal and external meetings where requested.

Professional Practice

- Maintain compliance with relevant legislation, clinical standards and organisational policies.
- Engage in reflective practice, supervision and mandatory training to support ongoing professional growth.

Senior Intake Clinicians are expected to meet Western Health's organisational, clinical and service performance standards. Indicators include:

Timely Screening and Response

- Complete screening and clinical decision-making for referrals within required timeframes. Ensure urgent and high-risk referrals are actioned promptly, with escalation pathways followed as needed.
- Documentation Accuracy and Timeliness
- Record all assessments, risk evaluations, screening outcomes and collateral information clearly and within required timelines.
- Maintain accurate referral documentation that supports continuity of care and clinical governance requirements.

Activity and ABF Reporting

- Enter activity, contacts and outcomes in accordance with Activity Based Funding and service reporting requirements.
- Ensure documentation and coding accurately reflect the consumer interaction and service response.

Clinical Risk Management

- Identify, document and escalate clinical risk appropriately.
- Demonstrate timely communication of risk to the Team Leader, Manager or Consultant Psychiatrist.

Referral Pathway Decision-Making

- Demonstrate consistency and clinical accuracy in matching consumers to the correct service pathway.
- Provide clear rationale for decisions to internal teams and external providers when required.

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Portfolio and Operational Contribution

- Complete allocated portfolio tasks and service improvement work within agreed timeframes.
- Communicate emerging issues or barriers early to support effective service flow.

Team Collaboration and Support

- Provide informal clinical guidance to colleagues and support onboarding of new staff.
- Contribute constructively to team culture, workflow management and multidisciplinary decision-making.

Professional Development and Compliance

- Maintain mandatory training and engage in supervision and reflective practice. Apply relevant legislation, policies, service models and care pathways consistently.
- Senior Intake Clinicians play an important role in supporting safe and consistent service delivery when clinicians are on leave or when service pressures increase. Responsibilities include:

Continuity of Service and Consumer Care

- Provide short-term oversight or follow-up for consumers with complex needs when their primary clinician is on leave.
- Offer secondary clinician support for complex or emerging-risk presentations to ensure continuity of care and safe decision-making.
- Assist with prioritisation and redistribution of clinical tasks in consultation with the Team Leader or Manager.

Clinical Guidance and Support

- Provide informal senior clinical advice, mentoring and decision-making support to junior clinicians, students and new staff.
- Support colleagues in managing complex referrals, risk issues or challenging presentations.
- Maintain clear and timely communication with the team to support coordinated responses during leave periods or high-demand times.

Risk and Escalation

- Escalate identified risks, service pressures or capacity issues promptly to the Team Leader, Manager or Consultant Psychiatrist.
- Contribute to team-based discussions that address flow, risk and urgent consumer needs.
- The duty function sits with Intake, and Intake clinicians provide duty coverage as required, including during unplanned leave.

About You

- You are an experienced mental health clinician who brings confidence, clarity and sound clinical judgement to fast-paced decision-making environments. You can synthesise information quickly, communicate effectively and determine appropriate service responses under pressure.
- You value collaboration and contribute positively to a team that manages complex referrals and competing priorities. You are comfortable working autonomously when required, while also knowing when to seek guidance or escalate concerns. Your communication is clear, respectful and effective with consumers, families, referrers and colleagues.
- You bring a strong commitment to recovery-oriented practice, cultural safety, trauma-informed care and working alongside lived and living experience practitioners. You are adaptable, reflective and committed to continuous learning, contributing to a safe, supportive and accountable workplace culture.

Your Experience

- You have strong experience working in public mental health settings and supporting consumers presenting with a broad range of psychiatric, psychosocial and risk-related needs.
- You are confident in conducting mental health assessments, identifying risk, formulating brief clinical impressions and determining appropriate pathways for care.

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- You bring a solid understanding of the Victorian mental health system, including referral criteria, service models and contemporary reform directions. You can navigate complex situations, balance competing priorities and make timely, clinically sound decisions in a fast-paced environment.
- You are skilled at engaging with consumers, families, carers and referrers, gathering relevant collateral and providing clear communication about service responses. You can work effectively across internal programs and with external providers to support safe, coordinated access to care.
- Your practice reflects a commitment to trauma-informed approaches, cultural safety, gender-sensitive practice and collaboration with lived and living experience colleagues. You are organised, adaptable and able to maintain high standards of documentation and professional conduct.

Please note that duties and responsibilities may be adjusted from time to time to meet team and service needs, as directed by the manager

In addition to the key responsibilities specific to your role, you are required to deliver on the [Key Organisational Accountabilities](#) which are aligned with the Western Health strategic aims. Allied Health Professionals are also required to deliver on the [WH AH Capability Framework](#).

Key Working Relationships

Internal:

- Community Team Manager
- Community Team Leaders
- Consultant Psychiatrists
- Multidisciplinary Team
- Administration staff
- MH&W clinical programs

External:

- Centralised Triage
- Non-government agencies, drug and alcohol services and primary health providers

Selection Criteria

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Formal Qualifications

Occupational Therapists:

- Registration under the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (2009) with the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia.
- An approved Degree from a recognised school of Occupational Therapy or other qualifications approved for eligibility for membership of the Australian Association of Occupational Therapy (Vic.).

Psychologists:

- Registration as a Psychologist under the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (2009) with practice endorsement as a Clinical, Forensic or Clinical Neuro Psychologist with the Psychology Board of Australia (or eligibility to enter a registrar program as a clinical, forensic or clinical neuro psychologist with the Psychology Board of Australia where relevant).

Registered Psychiatric Nurses:

- Registration as a registered nurse under the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (2009) with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia.
- Bachelor's degree in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing or equivalent, or bachelor's degree in nursing plus a Postgraduate qualification in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing.

Social Workers:

- An approved degree in Social Work and eligibility for membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers.

Essential Criteria

- Minimum 5 years' experience for nurses and 7 years' experience for allied health clinicians working with consumers with complex needs in public mental health settings.
- Advanced skills in mental health assessment, brief formulation, risk identification and clinical decision-making in a fast-paced environment.
- Strong understanding of consumer rights, supported decision-making and recovery-oriented practice.
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate informed choice and collaborative engagement with consumers, carers and families.
- Knowledge of AMHS operations and evidence-based approaches to managing high-risk and complex clinical presentations.
- Comprehensive understanding and practical application of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022, including principles of least restrictive care, supported decision-making, consent, information-sharing and consumer rights.
- Strong understanding of your profession's Code of Ethics and its application in clinical practice.
- High level of professionalism, reliability, autonomy and accountability.
- Experience providing informal clinical leadership, mentoring or senior clinical support within a team.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with primary health providers, community agencies and other service partners.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to problem-solve, negotiate and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Ability to work with consumers from diverse cultural backgrounds, using culturally safe, gender-sensitive and family-inclusive approaches.
- Current Victorian driver's licence and capacity to drive work vehicles.
- Compliance with all legal and professional registration requirements relevant to your discipline.

Desirable

- Ability to speak a community language
- Advanced computer skills

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<h3>Additional Requirements</h3> <p>All employees are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a police / criminal history check prior to employment • Obtain a working with children check prior to employment (if requested) • Obtain an Immunisation Health Clearance prior to employment • Report to management any criminal charges or convictions you receive during the course of your employment • Comply with relevant Western Health clinical and administrative policies and guidelines. • Comply with and accept responsibility for ensuring the implementation of health and safety policies and procedures • Fully co-operate with Western Health in any action it considers necessary to maintain a working environment, which is safe, and without risk to health • Protect confidential information from unauthorised disclosure and not use, disclose or copy confidential information except for the purpose of and to the extent necessary to perform your employment duties at Western Health • Safeguard children and young people in our care, by ensuring that your interactions are positive and safe, and report any suspicions or concerns of abuse by any person internal or external to Western Health • Be aware of and comply with relevant legislation: Public Administration Act 2004, Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2022 (Vic), Fair Work Act 2009 (as amended), the Privacy Act 1988 and responsibilities under s141 Health Services Act with regard to the sharing of health information, the Family Violence and Child Information Sharing Schemes, Part 5A and 6A Family Violence Protection Act 2008 • Be aware of and comply with the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and other Western Health employment guidelines
<h3>General Information</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeployment to other services or sites within Western Health may be required • Employment terms and conditions are provided according to relevant award/agreement • Western Health is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing for its employees a work environment which is free of harassment or discrimination. The organisation promotes diversity and awareness in the workplace • Western Health is committed to Gender Equity • Western Health provides support to all personnel experiencing family and domestic violence • This position description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work that is to be performed by the person appointed to the role. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required. Western Health reserves the right to modify position descriptions as required. Employees will be consulted when this occurs • Western Health is a smoke free environment

I confirm I have read the Position Description, understand its content and agree to work in accordance with the requirements of the position.

Employee's Name: _____

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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