

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Senior Mental Health Nurse
Business Unit/Department:	Mental Health Services
Division:	Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
Award/Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement
Classification:	Registered Psychiatric Nurse: Grade 6 (NP61)
Reports To:	Director of Nursing, Mental Health and Wellbeing Services
Direct Reports:	Area Senior Nurse Consultant Transition Program Clinical Nurse Educators
Date Prepared/Updated:	January 2026

Position Purpose

The Senior Mental Health Nurse provides mental health nursing leadership across Mental Health and Wellbeing Service (MHWS) at Western Health (WH). The incumbent holds overall responsibility for the coordination of professional and clinical practice development for the mental health nursing workforce within the MHWS. The Senior Mental Health Nurse supports the Director of Nursing for the Division to ensure excellence in the achievement and maintenance of mental health standards in clinical practice. This involves the support and promotion of clinical education to achieve advanced capabilities of nursing and interprofessional workforce. The values and standards of professional mental health should consistently reflect the provision of recovery-oriented and consumer-focused care.

It is essential that the Senior Mental Health Nurse has an experienced understanding of:

- Current and future mental health care initiatives
- Contemporary evidence based mental health nursing practice
- Potential and actual changes to professional workforce directions and
- Industrial relationships that enable effective contribution to, and collaborative delivery of these workforce directions.

The position works across all service streams within the WH MHWS and requires the establishment and maintenance of strong engagement with stakeholders, both within WH and external services. The role supports the Director of Nursing (DON) – MHWS, with professional governance and mental health nursing workforce development. This requires strong and effective leadership, education and change management skills to support and assist in the development of service models of care.

The position works collaboratively with operations managers, program managers and the mental health senior leadership team to ensure high standards of clinical care are achieved and that staff feel supported in continually striving for improvement in the delivery of care. The role includes supporting clinical supervision, planning and professional development opportunities. The role holds a focus on both the emerging nursing workforce and the ongoing development of the nursing profession for already established nurses within the MHWS.

The Senior Mental Health Nurse will enhance quality health and well-being services for our consumers demonstrating proficient to expert behaviours across the five domains of leadership, research, evidence-based practice, education & learning and clinical expertise as identified in the Western Health Nursing and Midwifery Professional Practice Framework.

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Business Unit Overview

Mental Health & Wellbeing Services:

The Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing Services spans multiple Western Health sites and within the local community by servicing consumers across the lifespan. The Western Health catchment includes the local government municipalities and growth areas of Brimbank, Sunbury, Maribyrnong and Melton.

Our recovery-oriented approach to care is provided by a multidisciplinary workforce comprising skilled clinicians, 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.

Nursing & Midwifery:

The Nursing and Midwifery Directorate provides professional leadership to Western Health's nursing and midwifery workforce, supporting professional practice, ensuring high quality, innovative evidence-based nursing/midwifery care to Western Health care recipients. The directorate advances nursing and midwifery research and learning opportunities, supporting the application of innovative research-based approaches with a focus on translating research into nursing and midwifery practice. The Directorate has operational responsibility for Best Care, Nursing & Midwifery Workforce Unit, Infection Prevention, Best Experience (incorporating Aboriginal Health, Consumer Partnerships & Diversity) and a number of expert nurse consultants.

Western Health Values: Compassion, Accountability, Respect, Excellence & Safety

Western Health aspires to be a values-driven organisation and all employees are required to model the following values in their day-to-day tasks:

- Compassion – consistently acting with empathy and integrity.
- Accountability – empowering our staff to serve our community.
- Respect – for the rights, beliefs and choice of every individual.
- Excellence – inspiring and motivating innovation and achievement.
- Safety – working in an open, honest and safe environment.

Western Health Focus: 'Best Care'

At Western Health we are committed to high quality, safe and person-centred patient care. The Western Health framework for Quality, Safety and clinical governance describes a vision for 'Best Care' for all Western Health patients and consumers.

Key Responsibilities



Leadership:

- Communicates information and expectations clearly and concisely in a way that builds effective and collaborative working relationships with others.
- Maintains a professional demeanour and serves as a role model for all nursing staff, both as a clinician and in line with behavioural expectations.
- Provides leadership in clinical situations demanding action.
- Take accountability for own actions and others under direction and sphere of responsibility
- Promotes a culture of innovation, education, excellence and consumer/client first focus, through policies and practices that support and recognise individual and collective team contribution.
- Demonstrates strong mentoring skills within the nursing and multidisciplinary team and supports succession planning.
- As an expert resource, provides expert clinical knowledge and direction to ensure that clinical standards, policies and procedures promote a consumer-focused model of care.
- Exhibit a high level of emotional self-control and flexibility in complex, changing, and/or ambiguous situations and when confronted with challenges
- Maintains and fosters relationships with appropriate internal and external stakeholders.
- Represent the mental health nursing workforce to the MHWS and the broader health service
- Accept leadership responsibility in mental health nursing education, training and professional development program delivery.

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Research:

- Obtains feedback through auditing, incident recommendations, and service user feedback ascertain whether service standards meet stakeholder expectations and responds to any identified deficits.
- Identifies areas that require improvement through observation, audits, incidents, staff feedback and implements improvement initiatives accordingly.
- Lead quality or practice improvement initiatives at local level and/or contributes to quality or practice improvement initiatives at program or organisational level
- Apply research evidence to clinical practice, has well developed strategies to inform practice in the absence of high-level evidence
- Present and publish in appropriate professional conferences and journals and remain informed of the current literature
- Participate in practice based and service orientated research, evaluation and audits



Evidence Based Practice:

- Provide guidance to the service on the development of education and professional development best-practice initiatives
- Using evidence-based practice, participate in evaluation of the progress of individuals and groups towards expected outcomes and reformulation of plans.
- Be familiar with local and organisational policies, procedures and guidelines
- Contribute to adverse event investigations, and undertake individual and team-based reflective practice
- Continuously reviews existing practices and policies according to evidence-based practice to minimise adverse, promote positive consumer outcomes and identify areas of improvement in nursing practice
- Participate in new initiatives to enhance patient and consumer outcomes and experience, or staff employment outcomes and experience
- Identifies opportunities for process redesign and to support staff in the implementation of redesign projects and activities.
- Be aware of Western Health's Strategic Priorities, and ensure activities align with these priorities



Education & Learning:

- Maintains and updates own professional development portfolio to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to learning and best practice.
- Exchange and share information from participation in seminars and conferences with colleagues via huddles, in-services, presentations, education forums, team and other meetings
- Provides education within area of extended nursing knowledge, skills & essence of nursing to multidisciplinary team members and consumers/families.
- Works with the early career education team to support nurses to develop their capabilities and achieve core competencies within the mental health setting.
- Promote the development of, and involvement in, professional networks and learning communities
- Promotes and supports the mental health nursing workforce to further their professional development through supporting research and quality improvement opportunities which can lead to publication and presentation at professional conferences.
- Develop and evaluate policy initiatives that aim to foster patient/consumer involvement and provide them with real and meaningful choices about treatment options
- Ensure learning and development opportunities are appropriate and available to nurses at all levels, and that all nurses have Learning Plans and professional supervision arrangements in place
- Ensure Continuing Professional Development (CPD) processes are in place for nursing staff



Clinical Expertise:

- Increase the capability, skill and capacity of the specialist mental health nursing workforce within MHWS
- Provides an efficient and consumer focused service commensurate with senior role.
- Analyses situations and make appropriate decisions in a timely manner that meets the needs of consumers, staff and organisation
- Act to ensure safety by managing clinical risk and intervene as necessary, to achieve optimal outcomes for patients/consumers and teams

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- Represents clinical specialty in multidisciplinary working groups
- Contributes to a Quality and Business Plan as required in accordance with the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards and Western Health Guidelines
- Work collaboratively with the other Senior Nurses and Educators and the relevant tertiary institutions to ensure that teaching and training meets skill levels required for working within the Western Health MHWS
- Support the Director of Education and Learning (and delegates) to coordinate the placement of post graduate training students across the MHWS
- Participate in Serious Incident Reviews and Root Cause Analyses as panel leader or participant as required
- Undertake portfolios related to nursing-led NSQHS Standards, the Health & Wellbeing Practice domain and as required by the organisation
- Build on existing risk management practices to strengthen the specialist mental health workforces' balanced capability to assess and manage risk at the organisation, program and individual levels
- Comply with Health Service and Divisional specific regulations, Western Health policy and procedures and the by-laws, policies and the ethical standards of the profession
- Participate in and contribute to service development projects as professional representative for mental health nursing
- Provide a senior nursing perspective in clinical review meetings and assist in the development of clinician's practice
- Actively participate in organisational committees and working parties as required
- Be aware of and observe service agreements and linkages with other agencies
- Be aware of the interdependent relationships between the MHWS clinical programs

Key Portfolios:

- Provide mental health nursing leadership and support to nurses across the Western Health Mental Health and Wellbeing Division.
- Work collaboratively across Western Health Nursing leadership, to build the capacity and capability of the nursing workforce.
- Contributes to the planning, implementation and evaluation of the professional development activities including education and training programs to meet the needs of the Western Health nursing workforce.
- Provide regular reporting on nursing metrics to the governing clinical and nursing leadership.
- Ensure best practice standards of mental health nursing underpin the programs learning activities and outcomes
- Engage in and advance the utilisation of mental health nursing research outcomes into clinical best practice standards.
- Promotes incorporation of contemporary mental health nursing practices that utilise evidence-based approach which encourages creativity, critical thinking and effective practice.
- Support the Area Senior CNC, Unit based CNC's and CNE's across Western Health to develop and deliver nursing practice activities, including the nursing role related competency framework and WH Professional Practice Framework.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement process.
- Increasing the capability, skill, and capacity of the specialist mental health workforce.
- In collaboration with the operational managers and clinical leadership provide guidance and positive role modelling to staff through the maintenance of high standards of professional ethics and clinical competence.
- Always adhere to the principles of confidentiality and treat with the strictest confidence, information in relation to the treatment of patients and significant others.
- Ensure service provision is guided by evidence-based, culturally safe and trauma-informed principles incorporating the diverse needs of all young people and families, including those from LGBTQI+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and culturally and linguistically diverse population
- Support and participate in the Health Services Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Policies and Procedures and implement (where appropriate) at unit/service area level including reporting any incidents of unsafe work practices, sites/areas or equipment.
- Participation in formal performance and annual discussion review processes
- Establish and maintain effective interfaces and partnerships with key agencies and community groups through consultation, liaison, education, and collaborative projects: including Office of the CMHN, CMHN etc.
- Participate in ongoing service improvement and professional development initiatives and activities.
- Provide nursing leadership to support the service to meet and maintain the NSQHS accreditation

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standards as directed by the Director of Nursing Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Contribute to organisation-wide and service/team initiatives and planning activities.
- Successful completion of required mandatory training activities, including training related to the NSQHS Standards
- Operate within the legal frameworks e.g., *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022* and *Privacy Act*.
- Compliance with Health Service and Divisional specific Regulations, Western Health Policy & Procedures, Code of Conduct and the by-laws and Policies and the ethical standards of the profession
- Accept accountability to ensure that all clinical information is documented and stored in compliance with the Victorian Health Records Act 2001
- Contribute to a culture of caring, teamwork, continuous improvement, constructive performance review, quality work standards and client service.
- Work in your scope of practice and seek help where required.
- Create a psychologically safe work environment where everyone feels safe to speak up.
- Prioritise wellbeing and ensure safe work practices are developed and adhered to in their area.
- Speak up for safety, our values and wellbeing

Education Portfolio

Staff:

- Promote ongoing Professional Development for all staff
- Support the Director of Nursing (Mental Health and Wellbeing) and Director of Education & Learning (or delegates) to ensure that the undergraduate, graduate, post graduate and early career portfolios are well managed according to the WH workforce performance matrix.
- Support the co-ordination of transition nurse placements, oversee education and preceptorship provided by the transition clinical nurse educators and coordinator, and other relevant clinical staff
- Ensure Continuing Professional Development (CPD) processes are in place for nursing staff
- Provide professional support to the Area Clinical Nurse Consultant, Nurse Practitioners and other senior nursing positions within the Division and other related WH Divisions.
- Undertake portfolios related to accreditation and organisation wide survey as required contribute to divisional quality planning
- Facilitate best practice standards of mental health nursing within the defined service
- Actively promote collaboration and practical application of evidence-based practice into clinical practice
- Provide professional supervision as required, and develop the system of supervision for nursing staff
- Actively participate in organisational committees and working parties as required
- Be aware of and observe service agreements and linkages with other agencies
- Be aware of the interdependent relationships between the MHWS clinical programs
- Take an active interest in evidence-informed and innovative treatment and care, and facilitate for own discipline
- Participate in practice based and service orientated research, evaluation and audits
- Provide evidence-based learning and development opportunities inclusive of professional wisdom and drawing upon empirical evidence

Self:

- Demonstrate responsibility for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of self and actively maintain a CPD portfolio and required by professional standards
- Participate in ongoing learning opportunities.

Workforce Portfolio:

- Active ongoing involvement in workforce recruitment and retention
- Support workforce wellbeing programs and post incident support to clinical areas
- Active involvement in Transition/Graduate/Post Graduate Meetings
- Active involvement in Clinical Supervision, CoP and Reflective Practice Groups

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.

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Key Working Relationships

Internal:

- Director of Nursing - Mental Health and Wellbeing Service
- Director of Education and Learning
- Divisional Director MHWS
- Directors of Nursing & Midwifery
- Clinical Services Director MHWS
- Lead Consultants
- Program Managers
- Operations Managers
- Pharmacists
- Area Senior Clinical Nurse Consultant and Clinical Nurse Consultants
- Clinical Nurse Educators
- Unit Managers
- Nurses
- Discipline Seniors
- Lived Experience Workforce
- Health Information Managers
- Multidisciplinary Team
- Administration staff

External:

- Consumers, their family/carers or supporters
- Office of Chief Psychiatrist
- Safer Care Victoria (Office of the Chief Mental Health Nurse)
- Department of Health, in particular Mental Health and Drugs Division
- Primary Care providers
- Acute Health staff

Selection Criteria

Formal Qualifications:

- Registration as a Registered Nurse 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.

Essential:

- A minimum of 10 years' previous experience in nursing practice within the mental health field.
- Experience in developing, implementing, and evaluating a broad range of professional development, training activities and/or curriculum for mental health nurses.
- Previous senior leadership experience
- Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to work autonomously and be a self-starter.
- Ability to develop effective and respectful working relationships, collaborations, and partnerships with a range of stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead, develop, implement, and evaluate projects as required.
- Demonstrated ability to mentor and advise colleagues to work collaboratively and effectively with clients and their families.
- Research, publication, and public presentation experience.
- Experience, interest and knowledge of research and its role in knowledge development and service improvement

Desirable:

- Completed or working towards Masters in Mental Health Nursing, or equivalent and related Masters
- Current Victorian driver's license
- Postgraduate qualification in public health or health management

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Additional Requirements

All employees are required to:

- 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 (OHS Regulations 2017), Fair Work Act 2009 (as amended), Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025, the Privacy Act 1988 and responsibilities under s141 Health Services Act with regard to the sharing of health information, Part 5A of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 and Part 6A of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.
- Be aware of and comply with the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and other Western Health employment guidelines.

General Information

- 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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