

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Mental Health Alcohol & Other Drug Liaison
Business Unit/Department:	Emergency Department (ED)
Division:	Drug Health Services
Award/Agreement:	Nurses and Midwives (Victorian Public Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement
Classification:	CAPR 2 Grade 3B Y1
Reports To:	Operational: Manager Addiction Medicine & Residential Services
Direct Reports:	N/A
Date Prepared/Updated:	21 January 2026

Position Purpose

The Mental Health Alcohol & Other Drug Nurse Liaison (MHAOD Liaison) role supports the short-term care for patients who present with concerns across the range of acuity and severity of mental health and alcohol & other drug (AOD) care needs.

The MHAOD Liaison will play a key role in the smooth functioning of the Hub and ensuring patients receive best care in the right place for their needs. The main role is to work with/ support ED Physician and Associate Nurse Unit Manager (ANUM), with responsibility for screening patients on arrival to ED for suitability for receiving care in the Hub (as opposed to other ED spaces) using protocols and guidelines to support safe and clear decision making.

The MHAOD Liaison will play a key role in supporting clinicians to provide initial care that leads to de-escalation, while assessing risk that supports decision making about the patients' most appropriate pathway of care. The role involves working collaboratively with emergency clinicians, emergency mental health clinicians, AOD clinicians, Victoria Police Officers, and Ambulance Victoria paramedics.

The MHAOD Liaison will provide person-centered coordinated care that will meet the complex and changing needs of mental health/AOD clients in the ED. The MHAOD Navigator will demonstrate clinical expertise; utilize strategic and creative thinking with respect to health care alternatives, with the aim of improving patient outcomes through early intervention and disposition and reducing avoidable admissions and extended length of stays within the ED. The position will have an overview of all mental health, alcohol and other drug presentations and planned outcomes.

As a member of the health care team, the MHAOD Liaison is at the forefront of the provision of high quality nursing care to consumers on a day-to-day basis.

As a Registered Nurse, the incumbent is accountable for :

- The maintenance of their own clinical knowledge, further education and working within the confines of their specific scope of practice at all times, in accordance with the boundaries set by their experience and skill
- Ensuring that they are registered to work as a Registered Nurse in Australia at all times whilst working as a nurse within Western Health and practice in alignment with Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) Registered Nurse Standards for Practice

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The role of the Registered Nurse, working within a multidisciplinary team, incorporates the following activities: unsupervised clinical practice, coordination of care, counselling, health promotion and teaching, consumer advocacy, collaborative consumer and unit management, research, supervision and mentorship/preceptorship, interaction/liaison with multidisciplinary team, accurate and timely documentation.

The Registered Nurse will contribute to providing quality health and well-being services for our consumers demonstrating competent 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.

Business Unit Overview

Drug Health Services delivers care within the Operations Directorate and is the main provider of integrated, multidisciplinary treatment and support services to people with substance use disorders in Melbourne's west.

Key features of this service include inpatient and outpatient specialist clinics, residential withdrawal, dual diagnosis residential rehabilitation, consultation and liaison services, community adolescent and adult services, and specialist women's programs.

The service's innovative, person-centred programs include specialist support for adults and adolescents, many of whom have complex needs associated with factors such as mental health, trauma, family violence, poverty, and homelessness. The service is strengthened through co-location with Western Health metropolitan hospitals, enabling the provision of care across the continuum from acute settings through to community-based treatments and recovery support.

Key Responsibilities



Leadership

- Work collaboratively within the nursing team model of care using delegation, supervision, coordination, consultation and referrals
- Take accountability for own actions and others under direction and sphere of responsibility
- Role model behaviours consistent with the professional Code of Conduct and organisational values and challenge others when their behaviour does not meet expectations
- Lead by example, and motivate staff to strive for excellence
- Demonstrate initiative in supporting early career and less experienced staff
- Contribute to peer feedback and engage in appraisals for early career staff, as directed by your manager
- Work within and towards the Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Plan



Research

- Work collaboratively and in support of the ED leadership team to further develop the role
- Participate in audits and review of data reports where required
- Use evidence to support improvement to consumer care and practice
- Be curious about ways to improve practice and outcomes
- Promote evidence based practice and share findings at internal and external forums
- Participate in quality and research projects as appropriate



Evidence Based practice

- Undertake administrative tasks according to the protocols established for the team and required for reporting on the minimum data set reporting framework
- Contribute to the application of information systems to improve clinical practice and inform clinical decision making

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- Using evidence-based practice, participate in evaluation of the progress of individuals and groups towards expected outcomes and reformulation of care plans.
- Be familiar with local and organisational policies, procedures and guidelines
- Contribute to adverse event investigations, and undertake individual and team-based reflective practice
- Participate and contribute to improvement of policies, procedures and protocols and identify areas of improvement in nursing practice
- Participate in new initiatives to enhance consumer outcomes and experience, or staff employment outcomes and experience
- Act to ensure safety by managing clinical risk and intervene, as necessary, to achieve optimal outcomes for patients/consumers and teams
- Be aware of Western Health's Strategic Priorities, and ensure activities align with these priorities



Education & Learning

- Participate in education and training for staff across the ED
- Representation on hospital committees and meetings relevant to role
- Participate in ongoing learning opportunities
- Contribute to the updating of educational information provided to patients and consumers, and their families and carers
- Support new staff through the orientation buddy role or formal preceptorship
- Showcase work and improvement activities
- Provide timely informal and formal feedback to students, early career and novice staff
- Exchange and share information with colleagues via informal or formal forums such as huddles, in-services, presentations, education forums, team meetings.



Clinical expertise

- Practice at an advanced level of clinical emergency mental health and/or AOD nursing demonstrating critical thinking and reasoning, advanced problem solving and expert clinical judgement.
- Identify clients that are suitable for the hub
- Support the provision of care for patients displaying behaviors of concern in collaboration with the multidisciplinary emergency department team
- Contribute to the initial development of an individual support plan.
- Encourage and ensure linkages with community, health and other support services as indicated.
- Where multiple service providers are involved in a client's care, ensure coordination is established in order to support best outcomes for the client
- Assess the clinical, non-clinical and social needs, including the identification of 'at risk' consumers and record with appropriate and accurate documentation in the consumers history and care plan and implement consumer specific risk minimisation strategies
- Demonstrate accountability and responsibility for care delivered
- Recognise changes in consumers' condition and take necessary action including reporting and escalation seeking appropriate assistance
- Accurately reflect the consumers requirements, outcomes or events within prescribed Western Health documentation, ensuring all legal requirements are met in regards to legibility of content and identity of reporter in accordance with Western Health policies and procedures
- Effectively develop discharge plans that reflect the needs of consumers and their significant others and demonstrates an understanding of the role of community providers
Role model best practice and reference latest research
- Identify clinical practice improvement opportunities and discuss with your manager
- Perform other nursing duties as required

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 & Deputy Emergency Department- Footscray
- Nurse Unit Manager/s Emergency & Short Stay Unit
- Director of Nursing, Emergency, Medicine & Access
- Footscray Emergency Department – Associate Nurse Unit Managers
- Workforce and Quality, Safety, & Clinical Practice Improvement
- Operations Manager- Emergency Services
- ED Triage
- ED Nurse in Charge
- ED Consultants
- Access Manager/After Hours Coordinator
- Emergency Mental Health Clinicians
- Mental Health Consultants and Registrars
- DHS AOD CNCs
- MHAOD Connect service
- Drug Health Lived Experience Workforce
- Willim Berrbang Unit

External:

- Consultation Liaison Nurses
- Area Mental Health Services Mental Health Triage Services
- Mental Health Community Teams
- Western Health Mental Health Access Coordinator
- Mental Health Acute IPU
- General Practitioners
- Private Psychiatrists and Psychologists
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Locals
- AOD and mental health support services
- Consumers, families and carers

Selection Criteria

Essential

- Current registration as a Registered Nurse with AHPRA
- Have completed or be working towards a Post Graduate Diploma in AOD and/or Mental Health
- Demonstrated experience in the delivery of mental health and AOD clinical services in a variety of settings, including emergency departments.
- Comprehensive understanding of the AOD sector and the general health and welfare sectors and associated community-based treatment options
- Demonstrated expertise in undertaking mental state examination and risk assessments.
- Comprehensive understanding of the AOD and mental health sectors and the general health and welfare sectors and associated community-based treatment options
- Experience assessing and managing complex client presentations, marked by psychiatric co-morbidities
- Demonstrated ability to deliver best practice brief therapeutic interventions within scope of practice.
- Strong leadership skills and evidence of contributing to a cohesive multidisciplinary team.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain working relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to consult, liaise and negotiate sensitively with clients, treating teams, their family or carers and members of other community services.
- Expertise in supporting clinical students on placement during clinical rotations.
- Ability to work in a computerised environment.
- Demonstrate effective organisational skills, particularly with respect to time management, delegation and supervision

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- Have well developed written and verbal communication skills
- Have highly developed interpersonal skills
- Demonstrate evidence of undertaking professional development activities to maintain and enhance nursing expertise
- A commitment to high quality, safe and person-centred care

Desirable

- Experience in a clinical leadership role
- Quality improvement training
- Demonstrated supervision and consultation skills and experience in developing professional competencies

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, the Family Violence and Child Information Sharing Schemes, Part 5A and 6A Family Violence Protection Act 2008, Safe Patient Care Act 2015, Mental Health & Wellbeing Act 2022

- 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

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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: Click here to enter the Employee's name.

Employee's Signature: _____

Date: Click here to enter a date.

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