

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Nurse Unit Manager
Business Unit/Department:	Theatre - Perioperative Services Percinct
Division:	Surgical, Endoscopy, Anaesthetic Services
Award/Agreement:	Nurses and Midwives (Victorian Public Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement
Classification:	Nurse Unit Manager Level 2 (NM11)
Reports To:	Operational: Operations Manager Professional: Director of Nursing and Midwifery
Direct Reports:	Associate Nurse Unit Managers Registered Nurses Enrolled Nurses Registered Undergraduate Students of Nursing
Date Prepared/Updated:	27 August 2026

Position Purpose

Through visible and accessible leadership, the Nurse Unit Manager (NUM) is at the forefront of providing care that is underpinned by right, safe, coordinated and high quality nursing consumer centred care across the multidisciplinary environment of their unit. The role is responsible for the operational, professional and clinical service management of their staff and resources. The NUM will achieve this through the development of effective partnerships, leadership and management of all nursing staff and resources, within a multidisciplinary team environment.

As a professional Registered Nurse, the Nurse Unit Manager 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

The NUM fulfils key accountabilities for the unit, including the development of the clinical area business plan linking with the Divisional business plan. These accountabilities encompasses the coordination and management of the daily operations of the clinical area, activity and access of bed/service utilisation, budget, safety and quality, facilities and equipment, staff recruitment and retention, workforce KPIs such as personal and annual leave, performance development/management, coordination of staff development programs and management of designated portfolios.

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The NUM must provide robust clinical leadership and management expertise, to be an active mentor, role model, and to facilitate the development of clinical and management skills in all staff consigned within their responsibility. The NUM will work alongside the team to ensure that there robust clinical leadership and administrative capability and presence on the Ward/Unit, with daily rounding to all consumers.

Attributes for effective NUM Leadership include:

- **Being visible and accessible in the clinical area to the multidisciplinary clinical team, consumers and service users**, for example by being available to visitors and enabling team members to ask questions
- **Working alongside the team in a collaborative capacity**, for example by supporting junior colleagues with the provision of direct care, fostering a culture of learning and discovery, maintaining their clinical practice as part of the roster
- **Monitoring and evaluating standards of care provided by the multidisciplinary clinical team**, for example enabling reflective review at staff handover, bringing staff together to review clinical and workforce data and conducting ward based nursing audits
- **Providing regular feedback to the nursing clinical team on standards of nursing care provided and experience by consumers and service users**, for example by giving feedback at the end of each interaction with nursing staff, at the end of the shift or in handover and using consumer survey results to drive change
- **Creating a culture of learning, development and research that will sustain best care**, for example by ensuring there are systems in place to evaluate and develop nursing practice, support shared governance and decision making and enhance individual/team performance to improve consumer care delivery and enhance the consumer experience
- **The NUM will foster a culture of inclusiveness, trust, flexibility, accountability and continuous quality improvement**. The role will work collaboratively to ensure improvements and ideas support best care, strategic priorities and a consumer focused philosophy

The NUM will contribute to providing 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.

Business Unit Overview

Perioperative Services Precinct at Footscray Theatre Precinct provides diagnostic and interventional procedures, as well as an elective surgery program operating Monday to Friday.

The precinct comprises 8 operating theatres (including Hybrid theatre) with dedicated anaesthetic rooms, 4 procedure rooms with dedicated anaesthetic rooms and a 28 Post Anaesthetic Care Unit

There are up to 14 surgical specialties operate within the Footscray Theatre Precinct, including Orthopaedics, Vascular Surgery, Otolaryngology (ENT), Neurosurgery, Urology, and General Surgery. The precinct also supports Cardiology and Interventional Radiology services, delivering a broad range of procedural and surgical care.

Key Responsibilities



Leadership

- Establish and maintain a strong leadership presence and promote excellence at a unit / ward level

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- Role model the Western Health values and behaviours when carrying out duties and in dealing with staff, consumers and colleagues
- Role model high standards of professional conduct and an ongoing commitment to sustaining and strengthening performance and accountability across the organisation
- Lead by example, and motivate staff to strive for excellence with acknowledgement of high performance through rewards and incentives
- Take accountability for own actions and others under directions and sphere of responsibility
- Foster an environment that encourages staff to ask questions, and answer these as honestly and directly as possible
- Provide proactive leadership and support to sustain **“Timely Care”** at the local level and responding to internal and external consumer feedback, for example:
 - Consumers are discharged appropriately and in a timely manner
 - Complaints are closed in line with the organisational target
 - Responding appropriately to the reporting requirements
- Foster a culture that recognises and promotes the importance of consumers and community in the provision of Best Care, and the role that community providers play in health care.
- Exhibit a high level of emotional self-control and flexibility in complex, changing, and/or ambiguous situations and when confronted with challenges
- Develop a performance excellence culture with clear accountability and governance structure
- Develop and manage the budget of the ward/unit on a continuous basis with a monthly dialogue and review with your line manager. Develop and implement strategies sound resource management practices to manage any variations identified
- Assist with the development of the Divisional annual business plan, and support with development, implementation and evaluation of the clinical area business plan. Identify proposals for submission for capital/grant/special projects or equipment replacement funding
- Meet Western Health operational financial and quality key performance indicators
- Plan strategically and work dynamically to manager competing priorities of the service / organisation
- Proactively manage retention / recruitment of staff

Enter specific responsibilities here or delete



Research

- Foster a culture of research and innovation by nurturing reflective practice, encouraging employees to undertake research and leading research within the unit.
- Lead quality or practice improvement initiatives at local level
- Identify and supervise clinical champions in research or practice improvement activities
- Evaluate clinical practice against research evidence and identify areas of practice improvement highlighting gaps in research evidence
- Apply research evidence to clinical practice, use well developed strategies to inform practice in the absence of high level evidence
- Enter specific responsibilities here or delete



Evidence Based practice

- Be familiar and comply with local and organisational policies, procedures and guidelines
- Be aware of Western Health's Strategic Priorities, and ensure activities align with these priorities
- Initiate innovations that support continuous improvement
- Support the establishment of partnerships with consumers, carers/families and the multidisciplinary team when designing, implementing and maintaining systems
- Understand and address key local quality, safety and consumer experience issues and the broader organisational goals and prioritised actions for Best Care
- Drive and sustain a quality care and continuous improvement focus at a local level with an expectation of improved clinical and consumer outcomes
- Lead accreditation preparation and readiness at the local level and ensure standards are sustained on an ongoing basis to ensure optimal achievement at all times
- Utilisation of consumer experience data to guide service improvement

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- Contribute to modifications to policies, procedures and protocols based on evidence based research and identify areas of practice that need improvement and implementing strategies to improve them.
 - Comply with confidentiality obligations with regard to staff, consumers and colleagues
- Enter specific responsibilities here or delete



Education & Learning

- Develop and foster a learning culture, act to ensure processes, frameworks and/or support tools are in place for enhanced learning through reflection
- Exchange and share information from participation in meetings, seminars and conferences with staff and colleagues. For example via huddles, in-service presentations, education forums and team meetings
- Hold a minimum of one Ward\Unit meeting per month. In addition the Unit/Ward leadership team to meet monthly. This should involve the Associate Unit Managers, Clinical Education Resource Nurses and Best Care Coordinators. The leadership team meeting should extend to specific portfolio holding nurses.
- Provide learnings from consumer feedback
- Promote social awareness amongst the ward/unit team including actions supporting social responsibility and sustainable use of resources
- Promote a culture of learning, innovation and research within the unit by acting as clinical nurse lead providing support, mentoring and education to team members
- Facilitate education to nurses, to build the knowledge and skill required to procure and judge the value of evidence. , seek and appraise scientific and other quantitative and qualitative evidence to make a determination on the suitability of translation into practice
- Actively support and contribute to the development of advanced nursing practice roles that seek to improve consumer care and service delivery
- Provide appropriate, consistent and equitable management of mandatory training, staff performance and clinical education. Ensure all staff have a an annual Professional Development Plan each year
- Ensure a system of work planning and development is in place for all staff to receive regular feedback, coaching and professional development opportunities



Clinical expertise

- Lead and oversee high performing clinical teams
- Act to ensure workloads are manageable and other have opportunity to self-manage and regulate
- Develop, apply and promote appropriate and innovative models of care
- Enhance/optimize the consumer's experiences, outcomes and safety
- Capacity and demand are managed effectively and any risks are escalated appropriately
- The Unit/Ward Clinical Indicators are at target or above. For example:
- Incident reports to be actioned as per organisational procedure
- Falls per 100 Bed Days on acute wards are below 0.32
- Dashboards are utilised to develop actions to address areas for improvement and enhancement
- Development of strategies to reduce personal leave on the Unit/Ward to meet organisational target
- Ensure appropriate roster management in line with Western Health guidelines
- Ensure recruitment to vacancies happen expediently reducing reliance on agency and casual staff usage, and if agency shifts are used to support clinical care usage is at less than 1% of ordinary hours
- Achieve excess annual leave to established targets.
- Ensure an excellent standard of service is offered by partnering with consumers and the community at all levels of the health care provision, planning and evaluation
- Addresses all complaints generated from the ward in a timely manner
- Ensure all consumers are aware of and receive their patient rights of human dignity, confidentiality, privacy and informed consent at all times
- Positively impact the consumer experience including daily consumer rounding with all consumers on the ward

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- Attend Ward\Unit rounds with medical staff
- Communicate, work collaboratively and promote effective communication within the multidisciplinary team in the planning, implementation and evaluation of consumer management and administrative operation of the ward\unit
- Manage workforce metrics and meeting KPIs e.g. agency, excess leave, personal leave and vacancy rates
- Demonstrate an understanding of the current Enterprise Agreement and the Safe Patient Care Act
- Ensure all rosters comply with the Western Health roster guidelines
- Enter specific responsibilities here or delete

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.

Key Working Relationships

Internal:

- Divisional Directors
- Directors of Nursing & Midwifery
- Operations Managers
- Clinical Service Directors
- Other NUMs
- Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Unit
- Support Services
- People and Culture Services
- Medical and Allied Health staff relating to areas
- Heads of Units
- Associate Unit Managers
- Clinical Nurse Consultants
- Nurse Practitioners
- Unit/Ward team
- Best Care Coordinators
- Business analysts

External:

- NUMs from other health services in relevant clinical streams
- Department of Health
- Relevant clinical networks

Selection Criteria

Essential

Professional

- Current registration as a Registered Nurse with AHPRA
- Possesses relevant postgraduate qualification and/or relevant clinical experience
- Possesses excellent clinical skills, displaying clinical leadership, innovation
- Demonstrates commitment to high quality, safe and person centred care

Managerial

- Demonstrates high level management and operational skills including budget development and monitoring.
- Understands the key principles of financial and workforce management with necessary ability to navigate the required systems and documentation
- Possesses knowledge of relevant legislation, policies and human resource procedures
- Demonstrates strong computer literacy skills

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Leadership

- Brings confidence to the role, and strong influencing capability
- Can build, lead, nurture and empower impactful teams
- Demonstrates high level communication and interpersonal skills
- Engages with others with purpose and articulates vision to empower and lead effectively
- Understands the strategic imperatives of the health service and conveys this in meaningful ways to their staff
- Is innovative, resourceful and adaptive to change
- Ability to implement, evaluate and sustain change within an evidence based framework

Desirable

- Is active within their professional / clinical area through participation or representation on committees
- Post graduate qualification at Masters Level

Leadership Capabilities

Leadership Capability	Definition
Customer focus	Building strong customer relationships and delivering customer-centric solutions. 'Customer' may be a consumer, family, external agency or internal customer
Directs work	Providing direction, delegating, and removing obstacles to get work done
Ensures accountability	Holding self and others accountable to meet commitments
Interpersonal savvy	Relating openly and comfortably with diverse groups of people
Builds effective teams	Building strong-identity teams that apply their diverse skills and perspectives to achieve common goals
Communicates effectively	Developing and delivering multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences
Instils trust	Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity
Being resilient	Rebounding from setbacks and adversity when facing difficult situations

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

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- 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), 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 2023
- 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: [Click here to enter the Employee's name.](#)

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

[Click here to enter a date.](#)

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