

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Clinical Nurse Consultant / Occupational Therapy Clinical Specialist / Social Work Clinical Specialist
Business Unit/Department:	Specialist Dementia Care Program
Division:	Mental Health & Wellbeing Services
Award/Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2020-2024
Classification:	RPN Grade 5 (NP51) OT Grade 4 - Year 1 to 4 (HR9 to HR12) SW Grade 4 – Year 1 to 4 (HR25 to HR28)
Reports To:	Program Manager
Direct Reports:	Nil
Date Prepared/Updated:	18 September 2025

Position Purpose

The Specialist Dementia Care Program (SDCP) is an initiative of the Commonwealth Department of Health, delivered through a partnership agreement between the Australian Government and the State and Territory governments. Clinical support for the program is provided by relevant state services, in this case Western Health Older Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Division. Approved residential aged care providers can apply for program grants to establish dedicated SDCP units within their facility.

The SDCP is grounded in a psychosocial, person-centred and goal-oriented philosophy and approach to care. This model builds on and maintains the strengths and capacity of individuals, guided by service delivery principles. There will be a focus on understanding the person in care, their life story and how this may contribute to their behavioural expressions.

A restraint-free philosophy underpins all service-level policies, procedures and provision of care. Consistent with standard residential aged care practice, use of restrictive practices will be minimised. Any form of restraint will be used as a last resort in response to an adverse event to ensure safety, and always with the intent to return to restraint free care.

The SDCP objectives are to:

- deliver care to people exhibiting very severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), also referred to as responsive behaviours associated with dementia, who cannot be effectively cared for by mainstream aged care services.
- enable residential aged care providers to deliver care in a dedicated dementia friendly environment, typically in a dedicated unit.

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- provide intensive, specialised residential care focused on stabilising and reducing symptoms over time, with the goal of enabling transition to a less intensive care setting
- complement the existing Australian Government-funded Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS) and Severe Behaviour Response Teams (SBRTs)
- strengthen the existing health and aged care service systems for people with very severe BPSD, including complementing state and territory government services and supports
- generate evidence on best practice care for people exhibiting very severe BPSD that can be adapted for use in mainstream settings to benefit all people with dementia.

Role of the Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) / Allied Health Clinical Specialist

The Clinical Specialist provides expert clinical support within a participating aged care facility, working directly with individuals experiencing severe BPSD (typically behaviours consistent with Tier 6 of the Brodaty et al. model).

These individuals:

- Cannot be appropriately supported within standard aged care settings, and
- Do not require care more appropriately provided in acute or specialist health services.

The Clinical Specialist role focuses on delivering intensive support, with an emphasis on stabilising and reducing symptoms over time to facilitate the individual's transition to a less intensive setting. Key responsibilities include:

- Demonstrating advanced clinical skills and delivering evidence-based, best-practice care.
- Applying a person-centred, life-story-informed approach to understand and respond to behavioural expressions.
- Upholding a restraint-free care philosophy, minimising restrictive practices in line with aged care standards.
- Maintaining an up-to-date understanding of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Standards, ensuring that all care aligns with national expectations and regulatory requirements.

Business Unit Overview

Western Mental Health and Wellbeing Services provide a comprehensive range of specialist mental health services to people who reside in the local government areas of Brimbank, Melton and parts of Hume (Sunbury/Bulla). We deliver specialist clinical programs through Adult and Older Persons Mental Health and Wellbeing Community Services, including: hospital bed-based services (including the Western Women's IPU), Community Mental Health Programs, Emergency Mental Health, Consultation Liaison Psychiatry, Prevention and Recovery Centres (including Yanna Yanna Women's PARC), St Albans Community Care Unit, Adult Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit and Dual Diagnosis services. Our services are expanding rapidly with the additional Mental Health services in the new Footscray Hospital.

Our recovery-oriented approach to care is provided by a multidisciplinary workforce comprising skilled clinicians, consumers and carers providing services for adults, older adults, children and adolescents who are experiencing, or are at risk of developing a serious mental illness. The Division of Mental Health and Wellbeing Services collaborates across a number of 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.

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Key Responsibilities

- The Clinical Specialist will exercise a high degree of personal and professional autonomy, have an ability to reach complex and critical judgements and have decision making skills to satisfy the expectations and demands of the job.
- The Clinical Specialist will provide professional leadership; communicate and support the delivery of a vision for high quality care for residents/ their families. They will adhere to and influence professional practice developments.
- Demonstrate competency in applying relevant areas of expertise strategically. This will include the use of analytical thinking, decision making, leadership and other specialist skills to work with others towards the goal of improving the quality of the experience of people with dementia and their family/ carer's.
- Deliver complex evidence based therapeutic interventions to people with BPSD and their family/carers in a manner which they will understand and relate to.
- Lead and participate in a range of committees and meetings.
- Demonstrated ability to provide expert clinical consultancy and dissemination of key messages across a range of key internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated expert level clinical expertise to initiate and lead evidence-based practice in the care delivery to residents with BPSD with the appropriate outcome measure to quantify efficacy.
- Evidence of knowledge and application of theories and techniques of practice that underlie behaviour management in dementia care.
- Demonstrated expert level in the ethical principles in working in Aged Care and Dementia care
- Deliver evidenced based treatment and interventions that support consumers with complex needs and their families/carers
- Achievement of portfolio specific KPI targets as they apply to your area
- Successful completion of required mandatory training activities, including training related to the National Standards
- Acceptance of accountability for all reasonable care to provide a safe working environment within your area of responsibility and ensure compliance with legislative requirements concerning Occupational Health and Safety, anti-discrimination, and equal opportunity.
- Compliance of clinical governance, legislative and documentation requirements, (e.g. Clinical Review discussions, completion of relevant documentation compliant with requirement of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022
- Accept accountability to ensure that all clinical information is documented and stored in compliance with the Victorian Health Records Act (2001).
- Participation in formal performance and professional Development Plan review processes.
- Engage with the multidisciplinary team.
- Demonstrate behaviours and approach that supports a recovery approach to care.
- Communicate effectively with consumers, families/carers, colleagues and other service providers.
- Change priorities to meet the needs of the consumer or team and adjust quickly to new tasks.
- Support the team and other staff in their clinical decision making.
- Accurately prepare documentation in a timely manner.
- Present strong organisational and time management skills.
- Implement new initiatives within the team and provide education and consultation within the broader Western Health mental health and Wellbeing Division.
- Assist in building a positive culture.

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:

- Manager, BASICS, ICT & SDCP
- Consultant Psychiatrist of Older Persons assigned to the SDCP
- Direct team members

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Commented [PR2]: replace nursing with healthcare

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- Operations Manager, Community Services
- Divisional Director Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Director of Nursing Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Area Senior Nurse Consultant
- Senior Mental Health Nurse
- Chief Occupational Therapist
- Chief Social Worker

External:

- Approved Providers Residential Care Facility Staff
- Contracted Allied Health Providers
- Residents and their families/carers
- Consumer/carer consultants/peer workers
- General Practitioners
- Staff from the SBRT (Severe Behavioural Response Team) and other Health professionals as required

Selection Criteria

Formal Qualifications

Mental Health Nurses:

- Current registration with AHPRA as a Registered Nurse
- Bachelor's degree in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing or equivalent, or, Bachelor Degree in Nursing plus a Postgraduate diploma or master's degree in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing
- Minimum of 5 years mental health nursing experience

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 Occupational Therapy Australia
- At least 10 years post-graduate experience

Social Workers:

- Qualifications for SW degree with post graduate Master qualifications completed or working towards
- Registered with AASW or eligible for registration with AASW
- Registered with AASW or eligible for registration with AASW
- Min 10 years or more experience in health sector, particularly in acute / subacute health with preference in mental health

Additional Essential Criteria

- Current drivers licence
- The incumbent will exercise a high degree of personal and professional autonomy, have an ability to reach complex and critical judgements and have decision making skills to satisfy the expectations and demands of the job.
- The incumbent will provide professional leadership; communicate and support the delivery of a vision for high quality nursing care for residents/ their families. He/she will adhere to and influence professional healthcare practice developments.
- Demonstrate competency in applying relevant areas of dementia care expertise strategically. This will include the use of analytical thinking, decision making, leadership and other specialist skills to work with others towards the goal of improving the quality of the experience of people with dementia and their family/ carer's.
- Deliver complex evidence based therapeutic interventions to people with BPSD and their family/carers in a manner which they will understand and relate to.
- Lead and participate in a range of committees and meetings.

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Desirable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated ability to provide expert clinical consultancy and dissemination of key messages across a range of key internal and external stakeholders. • Demonstrated expert level clinical expertise to initiate and lead evidence-based practice in the care delivery to residents with BPSD with the appropriate outcome measure to quantify efficacy. • Evidence of knowledge and application of theories and techniques of practice that underlie behaviour management in dementia care. • Demonstrated expert level in the ethical principles in working in Aged Care and Dementia care
Additional Requirements <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 (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 <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

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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.