

Position Description

Clinical Nurse Consultant – Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health Services

Classification:	Registered Mental Health Nurse Grade 5
Business unit/department:	Mental Health Education and Training Team
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2020-2024
Employment type:	Full-Time
Hours per week:	40 (Including ADO)
Reports to:	Manager of Nursing Education Mental Health (Operational Report) NUM Adolescent Inpatient Unit NUM Child Inpatient Unit
Direct reports:	Nil
Financial management:	Nil
Date:	September 2025

Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Austin Health operates, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Position purpose

The Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) is a senior registered mental health nurse (RPN 5) who provides specialist clinical expertise across both the Child and Adolescent Inpatient Units. Working in partnership with the Nurse Unit Manager (NUM), the CNC contributes to the development, implementation, and evaluation of specialist bed-based programs to enhance consumer outcomes and service quality.

The CNC does not hold direct line management responsibilities but provides consultancy, guidance, and high-level clinical advice to the NUM and the inpatient nursing workforce. The role requires advanced and consolidated clinical skills, with a focus on promoting best practice, recovery-oriented care, and the ongoing development of clinical nursing services.

A key component of the role is supporting workforce capability by mentoring the early career workforce and new nurses to the area, fostering professional development, and addressing practice priorities on the wards related to the care of vulnerable, high-risk consumers with complex needs. The CNC works collaboratively with the multidisciplinary team to promote clinical quality, manage risk, and uphold care standards in high-acuity environments.

This position also plays a critical role in the implementation of Department of Health and Human Services initiatives, including Safewards, the Mental Health Intensive Care Framework, and strategies to reduce restrictive interventions. The CNC provides expert advice, contributes to research and practice development projects, and participates in departmental communities of practice to advance service improvement, consumer experience, and recovery outcomes.

About the Directorate/Division/Department

The Mental Health Division provides a comprehensive range of inpatient and community-based services across Austin Health to support the needs of consumers and carers throughout Victoria. All services operate within a recovery-oriented framework that promotes supported decision-making, self-determination, and individualised, strength-based care in partnership with consumers, families, and the multidisciplinary team.

This position is located across the Child Inpatient Unit (CIU) and the Adolescent Inpatient Unit, which form part of Austin Health's Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health Service (ICYMHS). Both units provide specialist assessment and treatment services to children and young people from metropolitan and regional Victoria, as well as interstate referrals from NSW and Tasmania.

The Child Inpatient Unit is a 12-bed service that admits children aged 12 years and under, often with parents, carers, or family members. Admissions may occur under planned circumstances—typically lasting two to four weeks—or in response to crisis situations requiring short-term (up to 72-hour) intensive support.

The Adolescent Inpatient Unit is an 11-bed service for young people aged 13 to 17 years, providing assessment and treatment for adolescents experiencing significant emotional, behavioural, and social difficulties. While some admissions are planned, the majority occur in crisis circumstances requiring acute care.



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Together, these inpatient units provide safe, supportive, and family-inclusive environments where evidence-based treatment, recovery-focused practice, and multidisciplinary collaboration are central to improving outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

Position responsibilities

Clinical Practice Leadership

- Provides high level consultancy to the NUM in the assessment, planning and delivery of recovery focused nursing care of consumers on the inpatient unit.
- Collaborates with the NUM and ANUMS to address priority issues on the inpatient unit which are related to the vulnerable and high-risk consumers presenting with complex needs.
- Holds substantial responsibility and works in partnership with the CNC – Framework lead in the implementation of clinical frameworks such as Safewards, Mental Health intensive care framework and reducing restrictive interventions on inpatient settings.
- In collaboration with the NUM, provides mentorship and positive role modelling to staff through the maintenance of high standards of professional ethics and clinical competence.

Quality and Safety in Clinical Settings

- Contributes to the quality of care through the implementation and evaluation of OCMHN initiatives, overseeing the development of high-quality clinical care plans, effective discharge plans, the provision of appropriate consumer and family/carer intervention, education and referral to appropriate continuing care providers.
- Provides high level advice to the NUM on quality improvement programs that facilitate improved clinical outcomes for consumers presenting with acute mental health needs.
- Contributes to the timely and effective management of critical incidents and emergency situations, including team and individual debriefing processes.
- Participates in the incident review processes and collaborates with the NUM to ensure that recommended policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to on the units.
- The role complies with occupational health and safety and legislation and associated legislations and all policies and procedures.
- Always adheres to the principles of confidentiality and treats with the strictest confidence, information in relation to the treatment of consumers.

Consumer Service Experience

- Contributes to the delivery of recovery-oriented practice, flexible, personalised and consideration of consumer self-determination in care delivery.
- In collaboration with the NUM, ensures that consumers and carer complaints and compliments are reported and responded to within identified timeframes.
- Contributes to the active provision of the Your Experience of Service surveys to consumers on the inpatient unit.



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Collaboration and teamwork

- Works collaboratively with the multidisciplinary teams to ensure delivery of efficient, effective and responsive services.
- In collaboration with the NUM facilitates the incorporation of the roles of Consumer and Carer Consultants and Peer Support Workers into the clinical processes of the inpatient program.
- Contributes to transparent and principled conflict resolution processes amongst the multidisciplinary team.
- Works to provide group and/or individual supervision as appropriate to nursing staff.

Education

- Identifies clinical education and professional development needs and in collaboration with the NUM, and nurse educators utilises formal and informal opportunities to improve the team's knowledge and capacity to deliver high quality consumer care.
- Contributes to the planning and implementation of the clinical education programs to meet the needs of inpatient unit nursing team.

Research

- Promotes incorporation of contemporary mental health nursing practices that utilise evidence-based approach which encourages creativity, critical thinking and effective practice.
- Collaborates with NUM to initiate, conduct and disseminate findings of locally based research on the inpatient unit

Selection criteria

Essential skills and experience:

- Current Authority to Practice from AHPRA as a Registered Nurse with a minimum of 5 years full time equivalent post registration experience in mental health nursing.
- Experience in Child and Youth Mental Health inpatient nursing
- Demonstrated commitment to evidence-based practice, research and quality improvement activities in a work setting
- Strong organisational and time management skills as shown by a dynamic and flexible approach to time management and clinical demands
- Master's qualification in psychiatric/mental health nursing or be willing to work towards.



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- Sound knowledge of relevant legislation and practice frameworks, such as the Mental Health and wellbeing Act 2022; the Child, Youth and Families Act 2005; the Privacy Act 1988; and the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017.
- Demonstrates a positive approach to diversity both in patient populations and in staff groups.
- Proficiency in keyboard skills and information technology systems (Microsoft Office, search engines, databases etc,)

Desirable but not essential:

- Demonstrated significant problem-solving activities that may require considerable understanding and interpretation of facility and departmental policy.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain clinical problems which have implications for all nursing services within the inpatient unit.
- Demonstrated ability to provide expert clinical consultancy and dissemination of key messages across a range of key internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated clinical leadership within mental health with proven ability to mentor and develop the mental health nursing workforce with a coaching framework.
- Evidence of knowledge and application of contemporary theories and techniques of practice that underlie mental health care and management of challenging behaviours.
- Demonstrated expert level clinical expertise to initiate and lead evidenced based nursing practice in the care of delivery to consumers with complex mental health needs, including drug and alcohol and disability.
- Demonstrated commitment to the recovery approach in mental health treatment and support, with a focus on working collaboratively with consumers and carers to promote self-determination and enable progress towards reaching consumers personal recovery goals.
- Demonstrated expert level clinical expertise to initiate and lead evidence-based nursing practice in the care delivery to consumers with complex mental health needs, including drug and alcohol and disability.
- Significant experience in the areas of Solution Focussed Therapy, Sensory Modulation, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy or subject areas relevant to inpatient setting.
- Demonstrated ability to set objectives and negotiate their acceptance with the nursing executive, and report in terms of progress towards these objectives.
- Research, publication and public presentation experience.
- Training and experience in developmental psychiatry.
- Demonstrated commitment to reflective practice, with a focus on promoting reflective practice in the nursing workforce.

Professional qualifications and registration requirements



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- Current Authority to practice from AHPRA as a Registered Nurse.
- Master's qualification in Mental Health Nursing or Advanced Practice Nursing or be willing to work forwards.
- Current Working with Children Check

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.
- Comply with the requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care; we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*
- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

General information

Cultural safety

Austin Health is committed to cultural safety and health equity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise cultural safety as the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or



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Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.



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