

Position Description

Clinical Support Nurse - Mental Health

Classification:	Registered Psychiatric Nurse Grade 3 NP81-NP82
Business unit/department:	Mental Health Nursing Education & Training Team
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2024-2028
Employment type:	Full-Time
Hours per week:	40
Reports to:	Manager, Mental Health Nursing Education & Training Team
Direct reports:	Nil
Financial management:	Budget: N/A
Date:	April, 2026

Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate, 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 Support Nurse (CSN) is responsible for the delivery of practical and applied clinical support to early in career nursing staff and entry to practice students in the learning environment, in a manner consistent with achievement of the Best Practice Clinical Learning Environment (BPCLE). The role is responsive to local and organisational priorities and develops the foundational and specialty knowledge required to deliver high quality, contemporary mental health nursing care to consumers. The CSN provides direct expert clinical support, leadership and supervision to learners, with support of the wider Mental Health Nursing Education Training Team (MHNETT) and other key stakeholders. This role is based predominantly in the clinical environment.

About the Directorate/Division/Department

The Mental Health Division provides care and services through a comprehensive range of teams to meet the needs of mental health consumers and carers throughout Victoria. Services are located across Austin Health campuses and in the community.

All mental health services work within a clinical framework that promotes recovery-oriented practice and supported decision making. This approach to client wellbeing builds on the strengths of the individual working in partnership with their treating team. It encompasses the principles of self-determination and individualised treatment and care.

The Mental Health Division includes three Directorates:

- Adult and Older Adult Mental Health
- Speciality Mental Health Services
- Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health services

This role is to be working on the Acute Psychiatric Unit only.

In 2016, the Victorian Government introduced the Safewards model throughout all public mental health services. It is designed to create a safe and supportive environment; to improve therapeutic relationships and increase the potential for collaboration between staff and consumers. Austin Health is committed to the Safewards model through ongoing education and resourcing. All mental health clinicians are expected to have a sound understanding of the model and its application in clinical practice.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific:

- Provide direct expert clinical support, leadership, and supervision to learners, with support of the MHNETT and key stakeholders.
- Provide direct clinical instruction and supervision to develop high-quality care skills to early career nurses and entry to practice students
- Deliver educational support according to the BPCLE indicators, in conjunction with the Clinical Nurse Educators
- Displays highly developed skills in interpersonal relationships and communication, together with a knowledge of Mental Health Nursing practices, contemporary mental health nursing frameworks, procedures and ethics, anatomy and physiology, law, and pharmacology as it relates to mental illness.
- Assist in the orientation of early career nurses and entry to practice students to clinical areas, where relevant and in conjunction with key stakeholders.
- Monitor progress of early career nurses and entry to practice students and provide feedback to Clinical Nurse Educator(s), Early Career Nurse Coordinator, Clinical Nurse Consultant- APU, Nurse Unit Manager, and the ward leadership team in collaboration with the learner. This includes supporting and conducting assessments as required
- Provide educational input and assistance, into the performance management as deemed appropriate by the manager of MHNETT and other key stakeholders.
- Support the development and education of preceptors



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Direct Clinical Care

- Provide clinical leadership in mental health nursing practice, acting as a clinical expert and role model for recovery-oriented, trauma-informed, and evidence-based care.
- Promote and embed recovery-oriented, person-centred, culturally safe, and rights-based practice across all clinical environments.
- Lead others to develop skills in utilisation and interpretation of assessment information.
- Identify key nursing care priorities and propose nursing solutions within complex and challenging environments.
- Supports or supervises the provision of direct client care in order to act as role model or to support the learning and development of early career nurses and/or pre-qualification students
- Actively participates and supports nurses, in partnership with consumers, carers & support persons, to plan and adapt care according to their goals of care, and principals of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act (2022)
- Provide expert clinical knowledge to point of care nurses through communication, modelling, and teaching.
- Recognise scope and limitations of practice and seek advice from other experts where required.
- Participate in or provide leadership to local improvements to ensure care remains safe, contemporary, and effective.
- Support the sustainability of Safewards by role modelling, direct clinical education, or support of systems
- Can be mobilised across the 7-day working week, during exceptional circumstances, as directed by the Manager, Mental Health Nursing Education & Training Team

Education

- Actively engage and contribute to the education and professional development of self and others at ward/unit level.
- Offer feedback to others which is specific, supportive, non-judgmental, timely and reflective.
- Demonstrate use of a variety of educational strategies including reflective practice to further own professional development.
- Increase scope of practice by participating in core competencies relevant to specialty practice.
- Actively seek out learning opportunities to develop skills and knowledge of self and others.
- Actively participate in area of expertise by attending conferences, forums, Mental Health Division Grand Rounds, Nursing Grand Rounds.
- Utilise and maintain professional practice portfolio to plan for future continuing education, professional development and employment goals for self and others.
- Demonstrate self-initiative in undertaking further educational opportunities.
- Develop safe supportive relationships with learners in local environment.
- Understand, utilise and access resources within environments to assist in others learning.
- Identify opportunities for educational resources/strategies to assist in delivery of bedside teaching.
- Collaborate with others in local workplace to provide a safe supportive environment for learners.
- Understand learning needs of other staff.
- Identify environmental and cultural barriers to safe effective learning within clinical environment and escalate appropriately.

Research

- Practice within Austin Health evidence-based practice guidelines.
- Demonstrate sound knowledge of research evidence related to area of practice.



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- Promote and facilitate evidence-based care in local area.
- Understand importance of research in the development of nursing practice.
- Participate in research activity under direction/supervision.
- Share research outcomes within and external to the department, such as contributing to posters, presentations, Nursing Grand Rounds, Research Week, and in-services.

Support of Systems

- Support others to understand the Austin Health vision and strategic priorities.
- Support others to understand the Austin Health Nursing Vision: Austin nurses working alongside Austin nurses 24/7 to deliver reliable, safe, person-centred care.
- Support others to understand the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (NSQHSS) and the implications for practice.
- Model professional behaviours and actions when risk and incidents are identified.
- Communicate and lead changes to practice based on new and revised procedures and guidelines.
- Support others to identify and implement strategies to address any identified risk or incident.
- Lead quality improvement initiatives to address gaps at the local level.
- Support others to address any identified safety concerns.
- Actively create a culture of safety within the organisation.
- Develop others to be skilled in the ability to utilise all Austin Clinical informatics systems.
- Lead staff to adhere to organisational EMR policy and practice.
- Contribute professional nursing perspective to Austin Health Clinical Informatics systems.
- Demonstrate safe and ethical practice within health informatics systems.
- Work collaboratively with the lived experience workforce empowering them in their roles in providing a lived experience perspective to the service.

Professional Leadership

- Seek formal and informal education opportunities on leadership.
- Provide clinical leadership within nursing teams and utilise NMBA (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia) Decision Making Framework to provide clinical oversight of others.
- Demonstrate good self-awareness and adapt to changing situations.
- Critically reflect on feedback and adjust workplace behaviour accordingly.
- Support others to meet expected standards of behaviour and develop their leadership capability.
- Confidently move between different leadership and communication styles depending on circumstances.
- Practice high level communication and leadership skills consistently.
- Support others to reflect on feedback and assist with goal setting.
- Role model work ethic and provide support to others in the team in managing workload.
- Foster an environment where staff feel free to raise concerns and ask questions to ensure safe clinical practice.
- Lead by example in striving for excellence in safe patient care.
- Assist others to keep an open mind when considering different viewpoints.
- Recognise contributions of team members and the impact of teamwork on healthcare delivery.
- Role model and support others in the delivery of care through a teamwork model.
- Support others to work autonomously within scope of practice.

Selection criteria



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Essential skills and experience:

- Minimum of 2 years clinical experience as a registered nurse working in mental health nursing
- Excellent theoretical knowledge of the principles and practice of mental health nursing
- A consumer-focused approach to care including contemporary theories and techniques of practice that underlie mental health care and management of behaviours of concern.
- Demonstrated commitment to support early career nurses and/or entry to practice students and assist with assessments/learnings as required
- Expert knowledge of the regulatory frameworks which govern nursing practice and education
- A positive approach to ongoing self-education and skill development
- A flexible and team-oriented approach to service delivery
- Highly developed interpersonal, communication (written, verbal and electronic), liaison and negotiation skills
- High level of self-awareness and emotional intelligence
- High level of integrity, honesty, and commitment
- Ability to communicate effectively in both written and verbal form.
- Ability to problem solve in a variety of complex situations.
- Evidence of ongoing professional development
- Evidence in ongoing commitment to clinical supervision

Desirable but not essential:

- Demonstrated ability to provide educational opportunities in a supportive learning environment
- Demonstrated ability to align Austin Health policy, procedures, and quality into teaching practices
- Tertiary or vocational education qualification (or working towards), including Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- Post Graduate Qualification in Psychiatric or Mental Health Nursing or equivalent
- Registered Nurse, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (APHRA)

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.



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- Comply with 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 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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