

# Position Description

## Senior Social Worker – Older Adult Mental Health Service Grade 3

<b>Classification:</b>	Senior Social Worker Grade 3
<b>Business unit/department:</b>	Older Adult Mental Health Service Mental health Division
<b>Work location:</b>	Austin Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Burgundy Street
<b>Agreement:</b>	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2020-2024
<b>Employment type:</b>	Full-Time
<b>Hours per week:</b>	40 hours plus ADO
<b>Reports to:</b>	Program Manager – Older Adult Mental Health Service Professional: Discipline Lead – Social Worker
<b>Direct reports:</b>	Nil
<b>Financial management:</b>	Budget: Nil
<b>Date:</b>	November 2025

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 Senior Social Worker works collaboratively with multidisciplinary staff across older adult, community settings. This role provides advanced psychosocial assessments and contributes to the development and implementation of person-centred recovery and wellbeing plans for older adults experiencing mental health challenges.

As a senior clinician, the Social Worker leads complex care planning, including coordination with families, carers, community services, aged care providers, and relevant government agencies such as My Aged Care and ACAS. The role requires expertise in navigating aged care systems, advocating for consumer needs, and formulating sustainable community support frameworks that promote dignity, autonomy, and social inclusion.

The Senior Social Worker acts as a discipline-specific resource for other clinical staff, supporting best practice in psychosocial care and contributing to service development, quality improvement initiatives, and staff education. The role also involves participation in multidisciplinary case reviews, discharge planning, aged care assessments, and service planning meetings, with a focus on enhancing outcomes for older adults with complex psychosocial and mental health needs.

## About the Mental Health Division

Austin Mental Health Division (MHD) provides care and services through a comprehensive range of teams to meet the needs of mental health consumers and carers throughout Victoria. Services in the Mental Health Division are located across Austin Health and the community. Employees may be redeployed within the MHD.

All mental health services work within a clinical framework that promotes recovery-oriented practice and supports 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.

Austin Health's Older Adult Mental Health Community Team provides person-centred, recovery-oriented care to older adults experiencing, or at risk of, serious mental illness. The multidisciplinary team—including clinicians, medical staff and Lived and Living Experience (LLE) experts—works collaboratively to deliver trauma-informed, evidence-based support that includes families, carers, and kin.

The team fosters a culture of collaboration, shared learning, and mutual respect to ensure holistic, high-quality care that promotes recovery, dignity, and wellbeing in the community.

## Position responsibilities

- Work effectively and collaboratively within clinical teams and provide discipline-specific leadership.
- Lead and be proficient in undertaking psychosocial assessments of consumers, determine suitable and effective social work interventions according to need and expected outcomes for consumers
- Provide clinical leadership and supervision to team members, supporting discipline-specific development and fostering a culture of continuous learning and collaboration
- Engage community services such as ACAS and My Aged Care.
- Request individual and appropriate support from the My Aged Care for allied health assessments, support work, suitable accommodation, and other services available to enable safe and supported discharge from hospital
- Provide a local My Aged care/ACAS reference point for the Mental Health Division.
- Undertake VCAT applications as appropriate, and provide support and oversight for other clinicians submitting VCAT applications
- Provide support to, and opportunities for, families, carers, and support people to be heard and involved ensuring that their perspectives are incorporated into service plans where appropriate



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- Lead discipline specific input to ensure that therapeutic interventions are aimed at enhancing the psychosocial functioning of consumers
- Develop effective linkages with community service providers through networking, liaison, and advocacy
- Be proficient in the delivery of social work interventions to assist clients to engage in meaningful social activities relevant to the Older Adult Mental Health Service
- Maintain up-to-date comprehensive information on community agencies which can provide services to enhance the well-being of consumers involved with the Older Adult Mental Health service and the wider Mental Health Division.
- Record appropriate information and outcomes in an accurate and timely manner
- Provide written reports to relevant outside organisations as required
- Practice within relevant professional and ethical standards
- Record computer-based statistical data
- Demonstrate active participation in working in a multi-disciplinary team
- Actively participate in quality improvement and accreditation processes
- Possess an understanding of the structural and financial constraints of the public health system, the importance of KPIs and the relationship between these factors and service delivery
- Actively participate in supervision as per the departmental protocols
- Support Early Career education and training including supervision of students and Graduates
- Able to apply the principles of evidence-based practice
- Utilise opportunities to increase professional knowledge and skill base and promote this culture in the department
- Other duties as required.

## Selection criteria

### Essential skills and experience:

- A commitment to Austin Health values
- Demonstrated clear knowledge of recovery principles in clinical mental health
- Demonstrated commitment to consumer-focused care
- Commitment to collaborative clinical practice, working in a multi-disciplinary team
- Understand mental illnesses that affect the older adult population and their impact on social functioning and health
- Experience in undertaking comprehensive psychosocial assessments, intervention, community engagement to collaboratively develop long-term recovery intervention leading to optimal outcomes for clients
- Commitment and ability to work autonomously and collaboratively with mental health clients and carers presenting complex mental health needs with comorbid physical health needs.
- A sound understanding of the appropriate services and legislation relative to health social work including ACAS/My Aged Care/ VCAT processes/criteria
- Sound knowledge of relevant community resources and information for clients



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- High level verbal and written communication skills
- Well-developed interpersonal and advocacy skills
- Demonstrated negotiation and conflict resolution skills
- Ability to educate, support and supervise Grade 1 and 2 Social Workers and SW students
- Sound knowledge of the Mental Health & Wellbeing Act 2022 and other relevant legislation and policies
- Commitment to working to embed recommendations of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System
- Demonstrated understanding of the inpatient and community mental health supports/systems
- Ability to be flexible in accordance with the clinical care drivers and consumer needs and rapidly determine priorities
- Possesses and demonstrates a commitment to high levels of customer service, both internal and external to Austin Health
- Pursues and demonstrates a commitment to professional development to maintain, strengthen and broaden clinical knowledge and expertise
- Has an undertaking to actively and independently participate in clinical supervision with a disciplined senior
- Understanding of cultural diversity within the community
- Competent computer skills, particularly in word processing and Internet use and the ability to learn dedicated software
- Current Victorian Driver License – No restrictions

#### Desirable but not essential:

- A sound understanding of information technology including clinical systems, applications relevant to the Management of risk management reporting or as required for the role and/or department

### Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- An approved tertiary qualification in Social Work and eligibility for membership with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)
- Minimum 7 years' professional social work experience, preferably in a mental health care setting and experience in working with the older adult population.

### Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:



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- 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 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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