

Position Description

Fellow in Clinical Toxicology

Classification:	Doctors in Training Registrar year 6
Business unit/department:	Emergency Department
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	AMA Victoria - Victorian Public Health Sector - Doctors in Training Enterprise Agreement 2022-2026
Employment type:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	20
Reports to:	Director of Toxicology
Direct reports:	Director of Toxicology
Financial management:	B0002
Date:	03/09/2025

Austin Health acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Austin Health operates, the Wurundjeri 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

Aim of Fellow in Clinical Toxicology Position:

To gain clinical and academic expertise in the specialty of clinical toxicology as it relates to human exposures in the following domains:

- Resuscitation
- Decontamination
- Provision of specific antidotes
- Provision of appropriate supportive care
- Utilisation of extracorporeal techniques
- Recognition of the contribution of patient co-morbidities
- Assessment and initial management of psychiatric co-morbidities
- Disposition planning
- Management of the poisoned patient requiring care in a critical care setting including the Intensive care Unit
- Management of victims of chemical exposures including terrorist attacks
- Management of chronic poisoning including environmental and occupational exposures

- Management of envenomation
- Management of drug and alcohol withdrawal states

About the Directorate/Division/Department

The Victorian Poisons Information Centre (VPIC) commenced operation in 1962. It was located at the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), Melbourne from 1976 to 2008. In August 2008, the centre relocated to the Emergency Department at the Austin Hospital, to integrate with the Austin Toxicology Service (ATS). VPIC is directed administratively as part of the Austin Hospital Pharmacy Department.

VPIC provides members of the Victorian public with information and advice about:

- First aid in the event of poisoning, suspected poisoning, bites and stings, mistakes with medicines etc.
- The need for medical assessment
- Prevention of poisoning
- Referral to other information sources as indicated

VPIC provides health professionals with information and advice about:

- The ingredients in products involved in poisoning or exposure
- Assessment of the severity of a poisoning or exposure
- Potential toxic effects from a poisoning or exposure
- Treatment and management.

VPIC is one of four Poisons Information Centres within Australia. It operates Monday to Friday (0800 to 2130 hours), and Saturday and Sunday (0800 to 2100 hours). Outside these times, calls are diverted to the New South Wales Poisons Information Centre, which operates on a 24-hour basis. VPIC works approximately 80 overnight shifts (12 midnight to 0600 hours) per year, to assist the other Poisons Information Centres in taking calls from across Australia.

VPIC enjoys a close day-to-day working relationship with the toxicology registrar, toxicology fellow and the clinical toxicology consultants. VPIC staff refer difficult or complex cases to the toxicology registrar, fellow or the on-call clinical toxicology consultant for advice. Call escalation follows established referral criteria.

VPIC also has access to a range of other consultants (clinical pharmacologists, mycologists and botanists), who can provide specialist advice if needed.

The Austin Toxicology Service (ATS) provides consultative and inpatient care for over 600 acutely poisoned patients per year.

The ATS is based within the Austin Hospital Emergency Department (ED), and works closely with ED Physicians, nurses and ancillary staff and the Victorian Poisons Information Centre. ATS patients receive care within the ED, the ED short stay ward, the Intensive Care Unit and the Austin Hospital medical wards.



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Position responsibilities

The Fellow in Clinical Toxicology is a medical specialist who will undergo a defined period of training (typically 6 months – 2.5 years) in clinical toxicology.

Duties include:

- Exposure to acute toxicology cases (ED patients, admitted patients, VPIC referrals).
- Being readily contactable by telephone at all times when rostered on-call.
- Responding promptly, within 10-15 minutes, to the health professional who contacted VPIC.
- Documenting advice given in all clinical consultations (received from VPIC or direct calls via Austin Hospital switchboard) using OneNote prior to the end of any on-call period.
- Providing advice, clinical leadership and mentoring to VPIC and the Toxicology Registrar as required.
- Participating in the Toxicology Journal Club, Toxicology Forums and other educational meetings.
- Participate in bedside teaching rounds and other dedicated teaching sessions.
- Self-directed learning.
- Assist in teaching the pharmacology component of FACEM Part 1 training.
- Attend the Toxicology Outpatient Clinic as required.
- Assisting in the development of protocols and guidelines with respect to the management of poisoned and exposed patients.
- Participating in and promoting research within VPIC, AHCTS and collaboratively with other areas of Austin Health and other health services.
- To assist the Medical Director in administrative duties as required including the development and review of policies and procedures for the provision of services, updating as needed to reflect best practice and evidence-based medicine.
- To assist in the evaluation of the delivery of services and in implementing appropriate quality and risk management initiatives.

Credentialing and Scope of Clinical Practice

Core Scope of Clinical Practice under supervision of a VPIC Fellow in Clinical Toxicology – Procedures, therapies and competencies that a Fellow from the respective specialist medical college would be competent in practicing. This only applies to practice at Austin Health and its campuses.

1. Provision of expert care for the management of poisoned patients
2. Management of the poisoned patient requiring care in a critical care setting
3. Management of chronic poisoning including environmental and occupational exposures
4. Management of victims of chemical exposures including terrorist attacks
5. Management of envenomation
6. Management of drug and alcohol withdrawal states

Emergency/Life threatening situation – In a medical emergency situation, any medical staff member who is credentialed at Austin Health is permitted to provide necessary patient care, as best able, and outside their defined scope of clinical practice in order to provide life-saving measures and/or to prevent serious harm.

Please note – Recognising the dynamic and rapidly advancing nature of medical practice, if you believe a novel competence, practice or procedure should be included within your specialty's scope of



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clinical practice, please speak to your Head of Unit and refer to the 'Introduction of a New Technology / Clinical Practice' policy on the HUB (<http://eppic//Document/1193>).

For general accreditation the following need to be satisfied

- Demonstrated continuing professional development
- Regular attendance at audit
- Participation in one or more of the following
- Teaching or research
- Organising audit
- Clinical governance
- Other role within Austin Health but outside of the unit/specialty College role

For each area where special expertise needs to be demonstrated

Some or all of the following criteria will be used to assess accreditation

- Specialist training or a specific fellowship
- Significant accumulated total experience in the field
- Recent experience (adequate number of cases per year in previous years)
- Satisfactory completion of an acceptable outside organisations credentialing requirements.

Selection criteria

Essential skills and experience:

- Registered medical practitioner in Victoria.
- Possesses sound interpersonal and communication skills and the ability to work co-operatively with others.
- Commitment to ongoing personal and professional development, including credentialing with respect to the maintenance of professional standards.
- Relevant visa / entry requirements to Australia if non-Australian resident

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- Registered medical practitioner in Victoria
- Registered with specialist Australasian College

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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