

Position Description

Spinal Consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine to Victorian Spinal Cord Service

Classification:	Medical Specialist (HN19-HN59)
Business unit/department:	Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS)
Work location:	Austin Hospital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify)
Agreement:	AMA Victoria - Victorian Public Health Sector Medical Specialists Enterprise Agreement 2022-2026 Choose an item. Choose an item.
Employment type:	Fixed-Term Part-Time
Hours per week:	17.5 hours per week as per approved roster. (Clinical sessions and after-hours/on-call participation are assigned via the roster to meet service requirements.)
Reports to:	Medical Director, Victorian Spinal Cord Service
Direct reports:	Nil
Financial management:	Budget: Nil
Date:	February 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 Spinal Consultant is a Senior Medical Specialist role providing consultant-level spinal medicine and rehabilitation care within the Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS), a designated statewide specialist service.

The position contributes to the delivery of safe, high-quality, and coordinated care for people with traumatic spinal cord injury and related conditions across acute, rehabilitation, and transition phases. The role supports multidisciplinary team functioning and provides specialist clinical advice and secondary consultation within Austin Health and to other health services, in accordance with agreed referral and consultation arrangements.

In addition to direct clinical care, the position includes participation in education, research, clinical governance, quality improvement, and other activities that support service delivery, capability building,

and best-practice care across the Victorian Trauma and statewide rehabilitation systems, consistent with a part-time appointment and the Enterprise Agreement.

About the Victorian Spinal Cord Service

The Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS) is Victoria's designated statewide specialist service for people who sustain traumatic spinal cord injury. The service provides coordinated care from the acute phase through rehabilitation and into the community, with lifelong involvement supported through structured face-to-face and virtual follow-up where clinically indicated.

As a statewide service, VSCS works in partnership with the State Trauma System, surgical and medical specialists, rehabilitation providers, general practitioners, and community care teams. The service provides secondary consultation and advice to clinicians across Victoria to support consistent, evidence-based care and to enable care to be delivered in local services with specialist support, where safe and clinically appropriate. VSCS also contributes to education, quality improvement and research, supporting system capability through teaching, guideline development and statewide collaboration to improve outcomes for people with spinal cord injury.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific:

Clinical Care

- Provide consultant-level assessment and management of inpatients and outpatients within the Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS).
- Participate in inpatient ward rounds, outpatient clinics, and multidisciplinary case conferences.
- Contribute to the management of acute spinal cord injury, complex rehabilitation programs, and readmissions.
- Provide specialist clinical advice and secondary consultation to clinical units within Austin Health and, where appropriate, to external health services regarding the management of patients with spinal cord injury and related conditions.
- Support continuity and co-ordination of care across the care continuum, including liaison with community services, referring clinicians, and statewide partners.

Statewide and Service Contribution

- Contribute to the VSCS role as a designated statewide specialist service through expert clinical advice, support for consistent models of care, and participation in agreed statewide clinical activities.
- Provide specialist input and secondary consultation to other health services as required and agreed, within credentialed scope of clinical practice and established referral and consultation arrangements.
- Participate in after-hours and on-call rosters in accordance with approved rostering arrangements for the service and the Enterprise Agreement.
- Work collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams.
- Undertake Clinical Support Time (CST) as assigned in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement and local rostering arrangements, with this work performed on site as required.



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Education, Training and Research

- Contribute to the supervision, teaching, and education of registrars, junior medical staff, students, and other members of the multidisciplinary team.
- Participate in undergraduate and postgraduate education relevant to spinal medicine and rehabilitation, including contribution to statewide education and knowledge-sharing where appropriate.
- Participate in, support, and where appropriate lead clinical research, audit, and evaluation activities relevant to spinal cord injury and rehabilitation and contribute to translation of evidence into practice.

Quality, Safety and Governance

- Participate in clinical audit, quality improvement, and clinical governance activities at unit, service, and statewide levels.
- Contribute to the development, review, and implementation of clinical policies, guidelines, and models of care supporting best-practice spinal services across Victoria.
- Support patient safety, quality, and risk management initiatives in accordance with Austin Health and VSCS governance frameworks.

All Employees:

- Comply with Austin Health policies & procedures as amended from time to time.
- Comply with the Code of Conduct and uphold our values, and diversity and inclusion commitments.
- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality & 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 centred care.
- Comply with requirements of National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.
- Comply with Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

Please contact the hiring manager if you require further information about this role.

Credentialing and Scope of Clinical Practice

For general accreditation, the following need to be satisfied

Ongoing scope is contingent on:

- Continuing professional development (college requirements met)
- Regular participation in audit/clinical review and quality activities
- Active participation in at least one of: teaching/supervision; research/evaluation; audit; clinical governance; college/committee roles; or relevant service roles



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Core Scope of Clinical Practice - Procedures, therapies, and competencies that a Fellow from the Australian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (RACP) would be competent in practicing. This only applies to practice at Austin Health and its campuses.

- Management of acute spinal cord injury
- Management of readmissions with spinal cord injury and the associated medical conditions (including respiratory conditions)
- Understand the pathophysiology of spinal conditions
- Understand the impact of spinal conditions on a broad range of other medical conditions (for example, but not limited to pulmonary emboli, urinary tract conditions)
- Understand and manage the impact of lifelong changes as a result of spinal cord conditions, including liaison with community programs and outreach services
- Understand and manage the psychosocial impacts of spinal cord injury and impact on the family
- Manage elective treatments for surgical rehabilitation to assist patient to increase mobility or function in the community (e.g., tendon transfers)

This core scope applies to practitioners with Fellowship of the AFRM (RACP) or equivalent and ongoing practice in this specialty

Extended Scope of Clinical Practice - Extended scope comprises procedures or therapies that require additional training, experience and specific credentialing beyond the core scope. Approval is documented and granted by the Director, Victorian Spinal Cord Service (or delegate/Divisional Medical Director) in accordance with Austin Health policy and relevant college/state/international guidance. Examples include:

1. Dry needling for trigger points
2. Management of intrathecal analgesia/devices (intrathecal device interrogation/ pump refills/ dose adjustment roles- as credentialed)
3. Peripheral nerve/muscle injections (US guided or EMG guided), including botulinum toxin, within approved indications

Minimum evidence for extended scope typically includes:

- Relevant supervised training program/fellowship or completion of a recognised course(s)
- Satisfactory completion of any external credentialing requirements
- Recent experience demonstrating competence (e.g., supervised logbook and competency sign-off), and
- Alignment with applicable guidelines and Austin Health policy.

Emergency/Life threatening situation - In a medical emergency, Austin Health-credentialed medical staff may provide necessary care outside their defined scope to prevent serious harm or preserve life, consistent with hospital policy and professional obligations, and must escalate/hand over as soon as practicable.

Introduction of new competencies

Practitioners seeking to introduce a new practice/technology must consult the Director VSCS and follow Austin Health's 'Introduction of a New Technology/Clinical Practice' policy prior to credentialing.



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Selection criteria

Essential – Knowledge, Experience and Capabilities

- Registration & Qualification: Registration as a Medical Practitioner with AHPRA, and Fellowship of the Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (FAFRM(RACP)) or equivalent.
- Clinical Expertise: Demonstrated expertise in the management of traumatic spinal cord injury across the continuum of care (acute, rehabilitation, transition, and follow-up), with the ability to provide specialist clinical advice and secondary consultation to other clinicians and health services.
- Patient Care & Austin Values: Demonstrated commitment to high-quality, patient-centred care and to Austin Health values, with evidence of engagement, teamwork and collaboration in multidisciplinary settings.
- Communication: Well-developed written and verbal communication skills appropriate to consultant practice, with the ability to communicate effectively at all levels (patients, families, colleagues, external services and statewide partners).
- Education & Supervision: Involvement in teaching and training of medical, nursing, allied health and other staff, including at undergraduate and postgraduate levels; attendance and active involvement in relevant departmental, organisational and external professional meetings (e.g., college, association, national/international bodies).
- Clinical Governance, Quality & Safety: Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, clinical governance, with ongoing activity in research and/or clinical audit, and participation in quality improvement, guideline development or service evaluation.
- CST (Clinical Support Time): Demonstrated ability to undertake Clinical Support Time (CST) activities, including teaching/supervision, CPD, clinical governance, research/evaluation, service development and associated administrative activities.
- System Contribution: Demonstrated ability to work within a designated statewide specialist service, partnering with trauma and surgical teams, rehabilitation providers, general practitioners and community services, and supporting care in local services.

Desirable

- Experience working in a designated statewide or tertiary spinal cord injury service.
- Experience contributing to research, guideline development, or service improvement relevant to spinal cord injury.
- Information systems capability: sound understanding of clinical information systems and applications relevant to clinical practice, rostering, and risk/incident management reporting as required for the role and department.

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- Must be a registered Medical Practitioner in Australia with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)
- Current Fellowship of Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (FAFRM (RACP)) or its equivalent

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.



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- 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.

Key Conditions of Employment

Roster

- An indicative roster (refer table below) outlines the allocation of ordinary hours across a four-week roster cycle. This roster is provided for illustrative purposes only and does not represent a fixed or guaranteed pattern of work beyond an initial three-month trial period.
- Each appointee will undertake six months per annum in Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS) outpatient clinics (Austin Campus) and six months per annum providing spinal rehabilitation inpatient medical cover at Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre.
- Ordinary hours include clinical duties, clinical administration, and Clinical Support Time (CST), in accordance with the applicable award and local arrangements.
- Ordinary hours may vary from week to week by mutual agreement to meet service requirements. Ordinary hours are averaged over the roster cycle to meet a 0.5 FTE appointment (17.5 hours per week).
- After-hours on-call duties are not included in ordinary hours and are separately claimable in accordance with the applicable award. A Saturday morning ward round is usually required during on-call periods and is claimable as recall.

Week	Roster week type	Day	Start	Finish	Ordinary hours
1	Oncall & 3N ward service	Monday	10:00	17:00	7
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Tuesday			
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Wednesday	13:00	17:00	4
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Thursday	13:00	17:00	4
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Friday			
Week 1 – total ordinary hours					15
2 & 3	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Monday	13:00	17:00	4
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Tuesday			
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Wednesday	13:00	17:00	4
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Thursday	13:00	17:00	4
	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Friday			
Weeks 2 & 3 – total ordinary hours					12
4	Not oncall/ not on 3N service	Monday	13:00	17:00	4
	Oncall/ 3N ward service	Tuesday	09:00	17:00	8
	Oncall/ 3N ward service	Wednesday	09:00	17:00	8
	Oncall/ 3N ward service	Thursday	09:00	17:00	8
	Oncall/ 3N ward service	Friday	09:00	12:00	3
Week 4 – total ordinary hours					31



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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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