

Position Description

Palliative Care Physician

Classification:	As per contract
Business unit/department:	Palliative Care
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
Employment type:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	As per contract
Reports to:	Director, Palliative Care Services
Direct reports:	0
Financial management:	Budget
Date:	September 2025

Austin Health acknowledges 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

Palliative Care Physicians are expected to provide high level specialist palliative medicine services to patients at Austin Health within their approved scope of clinical practice and as a member of the interdisciplinary team.

The position may also involve participation in the Austin Health Palliative Care Service after-hours and weekend roster providing advice to medical and nursing staff of the Palliative Care Unit (PCU), Austin Health and Banksia as required.

About the Directorate/Division/Department

Palliative Care Services at Austin Health are part of the division of Medical and Cancer Services. This includes General Medicine as well as specialist medical services. Palliative Care sits in the Olivia Newton John Cancer Wellness and Research Centre, which also provides medical oncology, clinical haematology, radiation oncology and wellness and supportive care programs, with strong links to the surgical oncology units.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific:

- Provide specialist palliative medicine support to multi-disciplinary team members of the Austin Health and Banksia Palliative Care Services, including the coordination and leadership of multi-disciplinary team meetings as required.
- Undertake patient assessments across Austin Health hospitals as required by the Austin Health Palliative Care Consultancy Service.
- Attend outpatient sessions as required.
- Provide educational support, supervision, pastoral care and advice to registrars and hospital medical officers on rotation to the Palliative Care Unit (PCU).
- Supervision of junior medical staff in the maintenance or completion of clinical records, reports and letters within acceptable time frames.
- Participate in Unit meetings and activities.
- Provide an on-call service as required.
- Provide a consultative service to other Units as required.
- To assist the 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.
- Demonstrate a commitment to working as a team member with peer medical, junior medical, nursing and other clinical staff to provide efficient, safe and quality care across the continuum.

General:

- Participate in family meetings as requested by junior medical or senior clinical staff.
- Take a leadership role in the resolution of conflict with patients or families, working with the Office for Patient Experience as required.
- Provide specialist liaison with general practitioners, community palliative care services and other health practitioners, to support the continuum of care.
- Provide medico-legal reports relating to patients who have received care on the palliative care unit or Banksia Palliative Care Service in a timely and professional manner.
- Ensure all clinical practice is evidence based and aligned with relevant standards, policies and guidelines (e.g. National Palliative Care Standards, Department of Health Palliative Care policy).
- Other duties as directed by the Director of Palliative Care Services, Austin Health, Executive Officer and Clinical Operations Manager, Banksia Palliative Care Service.

Service quality and development:

- Pursue excellence and participate in the maintenance of a high quality service by implementing incremental improvements on a continuing basis:
- Promotion of best practice systems and processes.
- Assist in the development and maintenance of high-quality clinical protocols.
- Assist in the development and implementation of policies and procedures that will allow for benchmarking against comparable services.
- Promote and participate in auditing and the review of clinical practice to improve clinical outcomes, including participation in quality and risk management programs at Austin Health.



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- Assistance with achievement of negotiated quality targets including activity targets, waiting time for assessment, inpatient length of stay, outcomes of symptom management, discharge status and destination, operating within defined budgetary parameters.
- Actively promote palliative care within Austin Health:
- Promote and attend clinical and research meetings of the Palliative Care Unit and Cancer, Spinal and Outpatient CSU as required.

Information management:

- Collect and maintain Palliative Care Consultancy Service data and Community Palliative Care data as required by the Department of Health or as evidence of quality systems (including, but not limited to, VINAH, PCOC and NSAP).
- Utilise Austin Health's and Banksia's IT systems to ensure accurate development and maintenance of clinical documentation in a timely manner and consistent with organisational policies and procedures and regulation and legislation.

Teaching, Training and Research:

- Supervision of Advanced Trainees in accordance with Chapter of Palliative Medicine requirements.
- Ongoing supervision and training of junior medical staff including education of registrar and resident at Austin Health.
- Act as a clinical leader and mentor for staff regarding palliative care.
- Ongoing involvement in undergraduate and postgraduate medical education at Austin Health.
- Regular attendance at program, hospital and specialty educational meetings and forums.
- Maintain optimal clinical management skills through continuous medical education.
- Actively participate in provision of relevant internal and external education programs related to palliative care as requested by the Director of Palliative Care Services.
- Participate in the auditing and review of clinical practices to improve clinical outcomes.
- Commitment to facilitate, conduct and participate in clinical and service research.
 - Presentation of papers at specialty meetings.
 - Publication of findings/articles in journals.
 - Participation in approved program initiatives/research

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.



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People Management Roles:

- Maintain an understanding of individual responsibility for safety, quality & risk and actively contribute to organisational quality and safety initiatives
- Ensure incident management systems are applied and a response to local issues and performance improvement occurs
- Support staff under management to comply with policies, procedures and mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements

Credentialing and Scope of Clinical Practice

Core Scope of Clinical Practice – 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. Pathophysiology, symptom management, clinical pharmacology, and range of medical and non-medical options available for the management of palliative care patients.
2. Making appropriate clinical decisions to provide medical care that is structured around patients' and families' needs, understandings and priorities, with the aim of maximising quality of life, relieving suffering and supporting the family using patient-centred approach.
3. Management of patients in the home, as well as in the hospital/hospice.
4. Describing the natural history and role of disease-specific treatments in the management of advanced cancer and other progressive life-limiting illnesses.
5. Establishing therapeutic and supportive relationships with patients and their families, based on understanding, trust, empathy and confidentiality.
6. Practicing culturally responsible medicine with an understanding of the personal, historical, contextual, legal, cultural and social influences on health workers, patients and families.
7. Confidently discussing end-of-life issues with patients and their families.
8. Communicating effectively with patients, their families and other health professionals involved in the patients' care.
9. Ensuring maintenance of appropriate, correct and complete clinical records that document patient management decisions.
10. Managing his/her own time and resources effectively in order to balance patient care, professional development, managerial and administrative duties, learning needs and personal life.
11. Working effectively and efficiently in a healthcare organisation.
12. Managing human resource, financial, quality assurance, data management and administrative aspects of his/her own practice or palliative care service.
13. Allocating finite healthcare and health education resources effectively.

This will be assumed if the Palliative Care Physician has a Fellowship of the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine (FACHPM) or equivalent and an ongoing continuous practice in this specialty.

Extended Scope of Clinical Practice – Procedures, therapies and competencies that a Fellow from the respective specialist medical college would be competent in practicing after additional training, qualifications and experience as determined by the Head of Unit* has been completed. This only applies to practice at Austin Health and its campuses.

*The Head of Unit is expected to apply guidelines from the respective specialist medical college and appropriate state, national and international guidelines.

None Identified



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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 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 Knowledge and skills:

- A commitment to Austin Health values.
- Current membership of a medical indemnity organization.
- Appropriate training and experience in the field of Palliative Medicine, Community Health and medical oncology.
- Proven record of excellence in palliative care service delivery with a demonstrated commitment to continued improvement.
- Demonstrated understanding of patient-centred care.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate at all levels.
- Demonstrated engagement, teamwork and collaboration.
- Demonstrated and ongoing commitment to education of themselves and members of the interdisciplinary team and GPs.
- Demonstrated and ongoing commitment to activities that improve patient care.
- Computer skills including use of email and the internet.
- Demonstrated understanding of Clinical Governance.
- Current and ongoing Victorian driver's licence.
- Experience in community and hospital palliative care services.
- Demonstrated commitment and ongoing activity in research and/or clinical audit activities.
- Attendance and active involvement in relevant departmental, organisational and external meetings (i.e. College, Association and National/International bodies).

Desirable but not essential:

- Membership of Australia and New Zealand Society of Palliative Medicine.



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- A sound understanding of information technology including clinical systems.

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- Must be a registered Medical Practitioner in Australia with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).
- Current Fellowship of the Fellowship of the Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine (FACHPM) or 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.
- 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.



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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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