

Position Description

Mental Health Officer

Classification:	Mental Health Officer Level 3
Business unit/department:	HOPE - Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal Engagement Team
Work location:	Austin Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (outreach)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2020-2024
Employment type:	Full-Time
Hours per week:	40hrs (38+ADO) rotating 7-day roster including day/afternoon shifts
Reports to:	HOPE Team Manager
Direct reports:	Nil
Financial management:	Nil
Date:	29/01/2026

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 HOPE Team is a multidisciplinary team that consists of Consultant Psychiatrist, Senior Mental Health Clinicians, Mental Health Officers (MHO), Family Therapist and Lived Experienced Workers. The HOPE Team provides tailored, holistic support to people post suicide attempt or people with ongoing suicidal ideation.

The Mental Health Officer (MHO) will work in collaboration with the clinical team to promote a consumer's wellbeing by supporting connectedness with the community, utilising a recovery and strengths-based approach. This role includes 1:1 mental health support with system navigation, service access and linkages and focusing on recovery goals that address the psychosocial stressors that contribute to suicidal thinking. Additionally, there is an opportunity to facilitate or be part of groups with our consumers that focuses on sensory modulation strategies, building internal resilience, distress tolerance and therapeutic coping strategies.

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. The Mental Health Division incorporates three program areas:

- Adult and Older Mental Health Services
- Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health Services and,
- Mental Health Specialty Services.

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 Hospital Outreach Post suicide attempt Engagement (HOPE) Program provides support for people aged 18+ years identified as at-risk of suicide who do not require Tertiary Mental Health services.

The aim of the program is to prevent avoidable suicide attempts and death by suicide by providing the target cohort with assertive, tailored post-vention and psychosocial support in the community for a period of up to three months. The program also supports the person's carers and families to identify and build the protective factors that reduce the risk of suicide attempt/completed suicide.

Position responsibilities

- The MHO will work in collaboration with a HOPE Mental Health Clinician to implement the goals and strategies developed in the Individualised Case Management Plan in partnership with consumers and their carers/families.
- MHOs on the HOPE team will work collaboratively with the Mental Health Clinicians to engage with consumers early – within 24 hours of receiving a referral.
- The MHO will assist consumers to navigate services, providing transport to appointments if available and appropriate; ensure linkage with appropriate health practitioners, community services and recreational groups.
- MHOs and Mental Health Clinicians will intervene via an approach that actively engages consumers in the assessment of their own risk and creation of their suicide prevention plan in order to minimise the risk of future suicidal behaviours.
- The MHO will promote a healthy lifestyle and through general problem solving, assist the client to take steps towards positive change in their lives and ability to more effectively manage their distress.
- The MHOs will receive line management from the HOPE team Manager and clinical supervision from within the MHD. All roles will be further supported by the AOAMHS Divisional Director and the discipline specific Allied Health leads.

Key Accountabilities:

- Liaise and consult with community service providers to build effective relationships that will benefit consumers.
- Engage/maintain relationships with internal Austin Health stakeholders.
- Fulfill all administrative requirements including recording on client contact hours in the CMI database.



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- Engage in a minimum of one formal performance appraisal per year, with a mid-year review of performance in relation to the goals identified in the appraisal documentation.
- Source relevant training opportunities, complete all Austin Health mandatory competencies and ATLAS training as required.
- Other duties as required.

Selection criteria

Essential skills and experience:

- The MHO level 3 will have 7 years of relevant experience or 5 years of relevant experience with an appropriate qualification; or equivalent.
- Recent experience working with individuals in crisis and with mental health issues.
- Understanding of the Area Mental Health Service and principles and practices of DHHS Recovery-Oriented Practice in Mental Health
- Understanding of The Victorian Mental Health and Wellbeing Act (2022) and other relevant legislation
- Demonstrated commitment to care for consumers and their families in the least restrictive and intrusive manner, respecting rights, privacy and dignity.
- Demonstrated experience in working under professional, clinical supervision
- Highly developed communication skills to effectively contribute as a positive team member and to support consumers.
- A current Victorian Driver's License and ability to drive a work vehicle

Desirable but not essential:

- Evidence of on-going professional development
- Dual diagnosis experience
- Fluency in a community language will be highly regarded
- Demonstrated capacity to undertake/support research, publication and public presentation.

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- The MHO level 3 will have 7 years of relevant experience or 5 years of relevant experience with an appropriate qualification; or equivalent.
- Highly desirable is qualification in related field such as Certificate IV in Mental Health, Diploma of Community Services or relevant degree in Health Sciences field.

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.

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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