

Position Description

Public Health Officer

Classification:	AHP1 Grade 2
Business unit/department:	North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU)
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☐ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☒ (TBC)
Agreement:	Allied Health Professionals (Victorian Public Health Sector) Single Interest Enterprise Agreement 2021-2026
	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.
Employment type:	Fixed Term Full-Time or Part-Time
Hours per week:	Up to 38 hours (or 40 hours with ADO)
Reports to:	Team Leader – NEPHU Communicable Diseases
Direct reports:	0
Financial management:	Budget: 0
Date:	April 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 Public Health Officer (PHO) works to effectively and efficiently prevent and respond to notifications and/or outbreaks of notifiable conditions in the North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU) catchment. The PHO will provide outbreak and/or public health management and response which may include, but is not limited to, conducting case interviews; contact follow up; site assessment, support and environmental management; liaison with healthcare professionals and stakeholders; and other public health duties ensuring evidence-based public health recommendations are provided and applied.

The PHO works in alignment with standardised systems, processes and procedures and is supported in their daily duties by the Team Leader – Communicable Diseases, and Medical Officers.

About the North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU)

The NEPHU is one of nine public health units in Victoria: three in metropolitan Melbourne and six covering regional Victoria. Together these units form a coordinated network, working in partnership with the Department of Health to deliver a comprehensive public health program for Victoria.

The NEPHU is hosted and supported by Austin Health with responsibility spanning approximately 1.81m people living in the northeast of metropolitan Melbourne. We work collaboratively to improve the health and wellbeing of the NEPHU population through health promotion, prevention and protection activity. We do this through evidence informed population and place-based responses to current and emerging health needs and emergencies. In this way we contribute to a vision of active connected and safe communities for all - with healthy places, healthy people and a healthier tomorrow.

The NEPHU is proud of its diverse multidisciplinary team who provide a service across extended hours seven days per week. Participation in a 7-day roster during periods of public health emergency may be required of all staff.

Position responsibilities

The Public Health Officer will:

- Provide a high standard of response to notifications and outbreaks of notifiable conditions according to NEPHU Communicable Disease procedures, guidelines, and workflows
- Undertake the required disease follow up of conditions through case interviews, contact follow up and provision of public health information and advice to individuals
- Liaise with healthcare professionals, laboratory staff, other local public health units, other NEPHU functions and other stakeholders to ensure appropriate management and linkage to care pathways
- Investigate at risk workplace, community or other settings and provide public health information and advice to stakeholders to identify and prevent communicable disease transmission in the environment
- Follow up and escalate risks and issues of concern for advice to the Team Leader - Communicable Diseases and/or Medical Officer.
- Participate in preparedness and prevention activity in collaboration with stakeholders as directed
- Keep accurate and complete records of work activities in accordance with legislative requirements, information security and privacy policies and requirements
- Ensure timely and accurate recording of data to support surveillance and control objectives and reporting requirements
- Assist with data management - maintain, review and clean data to ensure it accurately reflects information known about cases, contacts and outbreaks including cases classification and epidemiological links
- Employ dynamic communication and interpersonal skills, being culturally sensitive, tactful and empathetic during interactions and interviewing to build rapport and maintain trust with individuals in our community
- Participate in training, regular communicable disease meetings, identify and raise opportunities for improvement and participate in design, implementation and monitoring of improvement activities to ensure and enhance response program outcomes
- Complete Authorised Officer training if required and work appropriately within regulatory, Department of Health and NEPHU policy requirements
- Undertake projects or other duties as directed by Team Leaders and/or Senior Manager at NEPHU
- Participate in incident, issue, outbreak or emergency management activities in Health Protection and across the NEPHU



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- Undertake case, contact or outbreak management with, or on behalf of, corridor or network public health partners when required
- Provide supervision, advice and training to students and/or Contact Tracing Support Officers as relevant
- Participate in the on-call roster.

Selection criteria

Essential skills and experience:

- Tertiary qualifications in public health, environmental health or other health sciences related field
- Demonstrated experience in public health, including the prevention and control of communicable diseases and notifiable conditions
- Demonstrated experience in collecting, managing and reporting notifiable communicable disease data
- Strong attention to detail and ability to support development, improvement and strict adherence to established processes; confidently able to work with stakeholders to ensure all processes are maintained
- Commitment to quality, best practice and environmental safety
- Sound technology literacy, including O365 suite and the ability to quickly learn and master online data reporting and record management tools
- An ability to identify and escalate risks and issues as required
- Knowledge of professional standards, legal and ethical requirements
- Demonstrated ability to interact in an empathetic and sensitive manner with culturally diverse populations and persons experiencing a wide range of social conditions
- Strong problem-solving skills, with attention to detail and the ability to use sound judgment in responding to client issues and concerns
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills including active listening.
- Willingness to adapt to changing business needs and priorities and able to work effectively in a fast paced and dynamic environment
- Ability to use discretion, maintain confidentiality, and practice according to ethical standards
- Ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team with different levels of staff, other stakeholders and community members, establishing and maintaining collaborative professional relationships
- Strong time management and organizational skills with the ability to prioritise multiple demands
- Ability to work a rotating roster, 7 days a week, morning and afternoon shifts if required.
- Ability to participate in a 24 hour on-call roster
- Current Working with Children Check

Desirable but not essential:

- Previous experience in communicable diseases or environmental
- Nursing or allied health qualifications and experience
- Previous experience in community, primary or public health care
- Post graduate qualifications in public health or related field
- health
- Familiarity with Department of Health reporting platforms and information systems



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Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- Tertiary qualifications in public health, environmental health or other health sciences related 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.
- 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



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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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