

Austin Health Position Description



Position Title: Senior Speech Pathologist

Classification:	Senior Speech Pathologist
Business Unit/ Department:	Child and Youth Mental Health Service (ICYMHS) Mental Health Division
Agreement:	Victorian Public Mental Health Services Enterprise Agreement 2020 - 2024 Victorian Public Health Sector (Medical Scientists, Pharmacists and Psychologists) Enterprise Agreement 2021 - 2025
Employment Type:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	0.4
Reports to:	Nurse Unit Manager
Direct Reports:	N/A
Date:	March 2025

About Austin Health

Austin Health is one of Victoria's largest health care providers. We deliver services for patients across four main sites in Melbourne, in locations across our community, in people's homes, and within regional hospitals across Victoria. We are an internationally recognised leader in clinical teaching, training, and research, with numerous university and research institute affiliations.

We employ approximately 9,500 staff and are known for our specialist work in cancer, infectious diseases, obesity, sleep medicine, intensive care medicine, neurology, endocrinology, mental health, and rehabilitation.

Our vision is to shape the future through exceptional care, discovery, and learning. This is supported by our values which define who we are, shape our culture and the behaviours of our people.

We aim to provide an inclusive culture where all staff can contribute to the best of their ability and strive to develop further. We recognise that our people are our greatest strength. We want them to thrive, be their best selves and feel engaged, safe, and empowered. To achieve this, diversity and inclusion is essential to our culture and our values. You can view our current Diversity and Inclusion Plan [here](#).

Position Purpose

To provide speech therapy to children and families who are admitted within the Child Inpatient Unit, through the provision of targeted, discipline specific assessments and treatment interventions.

The Senior Speech Therapist will integrate speech therapy knowledge of and experience in how speech and language abilities and skills impact children's and families' experiences, development, and functioning. The role will use this information to facilitate recovery and an improvement in child and family communication and connection.

Working within a trauma informed, multidisciplinary team the Senior Speech Therapist is an integral part of the team, collaborating on groups, formulations, discharge planning, capacity building, program planning, quality improvement and service development. They will be leaders in building and contributing to knowledge in their area of expertise.

About the Mental Health Division

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.

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.

About ICYMHS

The Infant, Child & Youth Mental Health Service (ICYMHS) provides tertiary mental health services to the north-eastern catchment of Melbourne (currently the local government areas of Banyule, Boroondara, Darebin, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, and Yarra). Young people eligible for the service are predominantly aged 0-18 years with only several teams currently available or those aged up to 25 years. It is an exciting time for 3 Austin as the ICYMHS directorate will be expanding in response to the recommendations from the Victorian Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Services (2021). ICYMHS currently have two inpatient units (a child and an adolescent one), with future projects for residential programs - YPARC and Child and Family Centre.

At present there are outpatient community teams and a number of specialist youth outreach teams. There are also several specialist roles such as Senior Clinician (Child Specialist), Carer Consultant and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Network Coordinators. There is an anticipated expansion of the Lived Experience Workforce to be embedded with the ICYMHS directorate.

Alongside ICYMHS, and relevant to this role, are other teams in the directorate responsible for Triage, Assessment and Planning Service (TAPS). Particularly relevant to ICYMHS are the Under 18 Triage Team, Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessment Program, and Consultation and Liaison team.

Whilst our community teams are based primarily at the Heidelberg Campus of Austin Health with the exception of one based in Epping, it is anticipated there will be a number of teams located in the community in the future.

About the Child Inpatient Unit

- The Child Inpatient Unit (CIPU) is part of Austin Health's Infant Child and Youth Mental Health Services (ICYMHS). It services children from metropolitan and regional Victoria, NSW and Tasmania at present. It is one of two Child Units in the state – the other is the OASIS Unit, based at Monash Health. Our community teams are currently based primarily at the Heidelberg Campus of Austin Health, Heidelberg site and in Epping. It is anticipated there will be a number of teams located in the community over time
- The CIPU is a 12 bed unit which:
- Provides specialist inpatient psychiatric assessment and treatment for young people up to the age of 12 years with severe emotional and/or behavioural disturbance,
- Provides two types of admission: Crisis and Planned – during which both assessment and treatment can be accommodated,
- Children are admitted on a voluntary basis and with a primary care giver
- All members of the household are encouraged to attend and flexible arrangements are made for anyone who has a caregiving role.
- There is an associated Austin Hospital School administered by the Department of Education and Training.
- All mental health services work within a clinical framework that promotes recovery oriented practice and supported decision making and works strongly with families carers and the community systems around the child.
- This approach to client wellbeing builds on the strengths and improving the developmental trajectory of the child and focusing strongly on working in partnership

Purpose and Accountabilities

Role Specific

Direct Care

- Independently and actively collaborate and promote evidenced-based speech therapy in a multidisciplinary context, providing high quality, evidence-based speech therapy assessment, treatment and consultation.
- Provide specialist Speech Pathology consultation and recommendations for children admitted to the Child Inpatient Unit (CIPU) on issues related to communication, learning and neuro diversity and provide written reports
- Contribute to the understanding of the child's strengths and difficulties from a speech pathology perspective and support the understanding of language abilities and the role of language interventions in the treatment of trauma related behaviours, providing recommendations to support co-and-self-regulation awareness and self-regulation strategies at an individual / group / family / staff / school level.
- Interpret previous speech therapy reports, liaise with community supports, and provide feedback and recommendations to staff and family.
- Display a clear understanding of, and sophisticated practice in, the principles of recovery-orientated, trauma-informed, family-centred and collaborative care and expertise in engaging children and their families within a range of settings.
- Provide high quality, evidence-based clinical assessment, risk formulation and

treatment at an individual or systems level as indicated by clinical need. Treatment modalities may include: individual, parent, family and group therapy.

- Rigorously assess the clinical risk of each child and effectively manage this risk through planning and intervention in conjunction with the Consultant Psychiatrist.
- Provide discipline specific and / or clinical specialist expertise and assessments that both contributes to excellent clinical outcomes for children and their families as well as the team's capacity to provide a comprehensive formulation and diagnostic clarity.
- Provide high quality and evidence-based family and/or carer support including their active involvement in treatment and discharge planning.
- Consider the child's needs, safety and wellbeing in all aspects of practice and ensure the child's voice is heard in situations that directly affect them and provide care that is physically, emotionally, socially, culturally, and spiritually safe.
- Demonstrate understanding of diversity.
- Demonstrate understanding of and commitment to Austin Health's Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Demonstrate appropriate clinical independence, seeking support when necessary.
- Demonstrate excellent interpersonal and negotiation skills in supporting the management of the most complex of cases in the team, in interagency case meetings and discharge planning.
- Strive towards continuous improvement, by initiating, participating, and continuously evaluating the quality and outcomes of service design and intervention.
- Work collaboratively with the lived experience workforce empowering them in their roles in providing a lived experience perspective to the service.
- Comply with relevant professional and mental health sector legislative and statutory requirements.

Professional Leadership

- Supports the leadership team in providing direction and leadership, based on expert clinical knowledge and experience, in a multidisciplinary team environment.
- As a senior clinician actively contribute to enhancing a positive CYMHS culture; helps to create a team environment which promotes opportunity for learning and development, safety and welfare of staff and fosters collaboration and innovation in practice.
- Contribute discipline specific specialist knowledge to the development of evidence-based practices, policies, and procedures to inform the provision of service delivery, education, and consultation activities.
- Reflects on and in practice, in line with Austin Health values applies these when interacting with others.
- Communicates information and expectations in a way that builds effective and collaborative working relationships with others.
- Maintain an awareness and practice of safety issues, the safe practice policy and procedures of the service, and relevant legislation to ensure that risks to consumers, carers, families, staff and the community are minimised.
- Work collaboratively with the team's Consultant Psychiatrist(s)
- Hold relevant portfolios to support CYMHS and MHD initiatives and priorities.

Teaching

- Provide input into department policy and procedures regarding training and education for staff, students and other health professionals
- Participate in undergraduate and postgraduate student training in the designated clinical stream
- Initiate and provide teaching/clinical guidance to other members of the department utilising expertise through, for example, direct teaching, team meetings and continuing education forums

Consultation Liaison

- Provide primary, secondary, and tertiary consultation to government and non-government organisations, young people and family primary health care services, education providers, etc and network with these to enhance service delivery.
- Demonstrate excellent interpersonal and negotiation skills, supporting the management of the most complex cases in the team, interagency case meetings and discharge planning.
- Support and enhance understanding and identification of social, emotional and behavioural problems in order to reduce impact of mental health difficulties during admission.

Information Management

- Appropriately use information and communication systems that support the effective and efficient clinical and administrative operation of the position and safe and effective care.
- Complete a high standard of accurate and timely clinical documentation and data entry in an efficient manner and in accordance with CYMHS / MHD and relevant professional / mental health sector statutory requirements.
- Comply with Austin Health data collection standards.

Support of Systems / Safe Practice Environment

- Maintain an awareness and practice of safety issues, the safe practice policy and procedures of the service, and relevant legislation to ensure that risks to consumers, carers, families, staff and the community are minimised.
- Be aware of and adhere to safety and other procedures within CYMHS, MHD and sites you visit.
- Undertake roles and other duties as directed appropriate to your experience and training that are necessary for the efficient functioning of the team and the service.

Education / Ongoing Professional Development

- Actively participate in regular supervision (clinical, operational, and professional) and performance development and review processes and provide professional supervision to relevant disciplines in the Division.
- Participate in both internal and external continuing education programs and demonstrate a commitment to improving professional performance and development to satisfy Continuing Professional Development requirements.
- Contribute to team, discipline and CYMHS operational activities, portfolio-management, service planning, research and evaluation activities so that the team's

and service's performance and culture is safe, healthy and productive with a view to continual improvement.

Research and Quality

- Strive towards continuous improvement, by initiating, participating and continuously evaluating the quality and outcomes of service design and intervention.
- Lead discipline specific improvement activities in a clinical team of care.
- Identify potential risks and implement systematic prevention strategies in the designated clinical stream in accordance with Austin Health policy and procedures.
- Supports and actively participates in research and implements findings into clinical practice.
- Aware of and adherence to ethical research practices.
- Maintain an awareness and practice of safety issues, the safe practice policy and procedures of the service, and relevant legislation to ensure that risks to consumers, carers, families, staff and the community are minimised, and environments are well maintained.
- Demonstrates a capacity to undertake/support research, publication of work and public presentation within the local, national and international healthcare community.

All Employees:

- Comply with Austin Health policies & procedures, as amended from time to time, which can be located on the intranet (The Pulse):
<https://austinhealth.sharepoint.com/sites/OPPIC>.
- Report incidents or near misses that have or could have impact on safety - participate in identification and prevention of risks.
- Comply with the Code of Conduct.

Ongoing professional development

- Actively participate in operational, clinical and professional supervision and performance development and review processes.
- Seek out and attend relevant professional development and training, ensuring up-to-date knowledge of best practice in mental health for young people and families.
- Participate in both internal and external continuing education programs and demonstrate a commitment to improving professional performance and development to satisfy Continuing Professional Development requirements.
- Instigate appropriate research or evaluation studies following ethical practice guidelines and contributing to the sharing of outcomes either through education opportunities or conference-type presentations or academic publications.

Safe Practice and the Environment

- Maintain an awareness and practice of safety issues, the safe practice policy and procedures of the service, and relevant legislation to ensure that risks to consumers, carers, families, staff and the community are minimised.
- Be aware of and adhere to safety and other procedures within CYMHS, MHD and sites you visit.

Selection Criteria

Mandatory Qualifications

- Relevant professional qualification in speech pathology with current Registration with Speech Pathology Australia.
- Must meet the minimum years of clinical experience and registration to be eligible for a senior Grade 3 role according to the Enterprise Agreement.
- A current, unrestricted Working with Children's Check.
- A current, unrestricted Driver's License.

Essential Knowledge and skills:

- A senior clinician, with at least 7 years of experience as a Speech Pathologist with extensive experience and demonstrated expertise in working with complex child and youth mental health presentations requiring of speech pathology assessment and treatment.
- Demonstrated understanding of the role of communication in child development.
- Demonstrated knowledge of recovery and collaborative clinical practice.
- Knowledge of, and experience in delivering, a range of psychotherapeutic interventions for both individuals and groups.
- Demonstrated ability to provide secondary consultation to families, and to primary and other specialist service providers on behalf of the team (at a senior clinician level).
- Excellent interpersonal, communication (written and oral) and negotiation skills.
- Strong organisational and time management skills as shown by a dynamic and flexible approach to time management and clinical caseload demands.
- Demonstrated commitment to evidence based practice research and quality improvement activities in a work setting.
- Demonstrated cultural sensitivity when working with young people and their families from diverse backgrounds.
- Ability to work well under direct supervision and more independently.
- Demonstrated capacity to work with the interpersonal challenges, difficulties

and conflict that may arise in any professional team environment.

- Proficiency in key board skills and information technology systems and applications (Microsoft Office, search engines, databases, etc.) as required by the role.
- A commitment to Austin Health values.
- Training in Clinical Supervision (relevant to your discipline or area of practice) and experience in providing high quality supervision to other clinical staff.
- Willingness and ability to work outside business hours and in an outreach capacity, including early morning and evening shifts.

- Training in, or willingness to complete training in Mentalization Based Treatment for Children and Families.

- Knowledge of the Mental Health Act 2014 and other relevant legislation and conventions, especially: Child, Youth and Families Act 2005; the Privacy Act 1988; the UNICEF Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989); the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017; Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

Desirable but not essential:

- Post-graduate training and experience in child and youth mental health, family therapy.
- Training and experience in developmental psychiatry.

All Employees

- Comply with Austin Health policies & procedures, as amended from time to time, which can be located on the intranet (The Pulse).
- Report incidents or near misses that have or could have impact on safety - participate in identification and prevention of risks.
- Comply with the Austin Health and professional Codes of Conduct.

Austin Health is a Child Safe Environment

Austin Health is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy, and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. Austin Health has zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously in line with legal obligations and our policies and procedures.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Austin Health is committed to diversity and inclusion in employment and is proud to encourage applications from people of different backgrounds, abilities, ages, genders, gender identities and/or sexual orientations.

Austin Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we work on and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We welcome applications from people with disability and aim to provide an inclusive and accessible workplace. If you need any help with the application process or would like to discuss your reasonable adjustments during interviews, please let us know.

We welcome applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For any support throughout the recruitment process or further information about working at Austin Health, please follow this link to Aboriginal Employment on our [website](#).

Document Review Agreement

Manager Signature	
Employee Signature	
Date	