



Job Title: Senior Mental Health Practitioner
Function: Service Delivery
Reports to: Perinatal Wellbeing Service Manager
Last review date: August 2026

*Ngā hapori pakari. Ngā whānau māia. Ngā tamariki houkura.
Strong communities. Confident whānau. Thriving children.*

Whānau Āwhina Plunket – who we are and what we are about

Whānau Āwhina Plunket is a charity organisation and the largest service supporting the health and wellbeing of tamariki under-five and their whānau in Aotearoa. We're proud to visit over 80% of all newborn babies in Aotearoa and to support pēpē, tamariki and their whānau.

We aim to be a cohesive and effective national organisation grounded in evidence and best practice, with the needs of New Zealand whānau/families at the centre of everything we do.

Our Whānau Āwhina Plunket Goals are:

Pae Ora: Healthy Futures:

- **Mauri Ora:** Healthy babies and children
- **Whānau Ora:** Healthy confident families
- **Wai Ora:** Healthy environments and connected communities

We are on a pro-equity journey where we strive to give life to Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of Tino Rangatiratanga, partnership, active protection, equity and options in our mahi/work to ensure healthy tamariki, confident whānau and connected communities.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket Values

In this role you will be expected to operate in a way that embodies and demonstrates Whānau Āwhina Plunket values as follows:

- **Māia** – to be courageous and lean into discomfort and challenge as we walk the path of pro-equity
- **Tūhono** – to connect and stand in relationship in calm and safe spaces (āhuru Mōwai)
- **Manaaki** – to care, love, nurture, support and mana enhancing. Respects mana atua, mana tīpuna, mana whenua, mana tangata
- **Māhaki** – to be humble as we share our knowledge experience to understand and learn from each other and foster trust.

Overview of the Service Delivery Function

This role is part of the Service Delivery team which delivers Whānau Āwhina Plunket services to whānau right across New Zealand. As a member of the Service Delivery team, you will help families and whānau to reach their goals and contribute to national and local initiatives that improve our performance. We want to make sure we're here to support families and whānau for another 100 years.

Service Delivery team members work as part of one Whānau Āwhina Plunket team and are skilled and passionate, drive performance improvement and work with others to deliver services to families and whānau and delivery equitable health outcomes so that every child in Aotearoa New Zealand has the chance to be the best they can be.

Purpose of the Position

Our perinatal wellbeing services aim to support mental health wellbeing, encourage parenting confidence and resilience; strengthen self-regulation, and improve the quality of the parent-infant relationship.

This role is in a new online service focussed primarily on the Waikato area. This is a pilot programme to test the virtual service delivery model and understand sustainability and scalability of Plunket's mental health service offering more broadly.

You will work within a multi-disciplinary team to support whānau with children aged 0-5 years, who are experiencing mild to moderate distress, anxiety or depression. Interventions are evidence-based and may include individual and whānau-based therapeutic sessions, health promotion, referrals and service navigation support, and group programmes.

As a registered and experienced mental health professional, you will lead the triage and risk assessment of referrals, provide comprehensive assessment, planning and case management. You will manage the support workers in the team, providing guidance, supervision and support to ensure their work is safe, effective and high-quality. You will facilitate workshops and group programmes and support whānau through therapeutic conversations.

All team members are encouraged to draw on their knowledge, language, culture, skills and experiences to provide inclusive and culturally safe services for all whānau.

Key Dimensions of the Position

Responsible for:	The position is responsible for 2-3 direct reports
Delegations:	The position's full delegations are set out in the Schedule of Delegations and may be amended from time to time.
Functional relationships:	<i>To follow are the main positions that this role will coordinate with; they are not meant or intended to be exhaustive, exclusive or limiting:</i>
Internal:	External:
- Local Plunket community and clinical service teams - PlunketLine - Head of Service Development - Chief Nurse and clinical team	- Health New Zealand - PHO's, primary care, secondary and tertiary mental health services - Community and social services

- Iwi and Hauora Māori, as well as Pacific service providers

Key Accountabilities

Client Enrolment & Assessment:

- Triaging referrals, assessing presenting needs and risk to determine appropriate prioritisation and allocation of support
- Reach out to potential clients, and follow-up referrals within 5 days to promote the service and support whānau decision about engagement
- Obtain informed consent, and enrol clients to the service and record data accurately to establish a client record
- Ensure priority needs are identified respecting client choice and independence; uplift the mana and decision-making rights of the client throughout the service.
- Complete a comprehensive assessment and ensure measurable action plans are developed collaboratively with the family, implemented and reviewed regularly. Action plans may include:
 - Individual therapeutic sessions
 - Participation in group programmes
 - Referral to Plunket services such as lactation or sleep consultation or community groups
 - Support to navigate other social and health services
- Take case management responsibility for clients, ensuring interventions and resources are appropriately identified to assist and meet the needs of the family

Service Delivery

- Provide individual or whānau focussed therapeutic sessions using evidence-based therapeutic models such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), or Solution-Focused Therapy.
- Facilitate group programmes e.g. Circle of Security and Getting to Know You, to increase peer support and shared learning among service users, and to increase the reach, scale and impact of the service. Content may be delivered in an individual setting to best meet client needs.
- Ensure timely, appropriate referrals are made, advocating for clients' needs to ensure they receive the highest quality of care. Follow up referrals where necessary to ensure continuity of care and/or collaborative care.
- Provide health promotion messages, tools and resource to support whānau wellbeing and positive parenting
- Utilise (develop or adapt where necessary) a range of models, resources and content to engage with diverse cultures, learning styles and demographics.

Quality Assurance

- Ensure quality, timely and accurate recording of data and information to to comply with legal, ethical and reporting requirements. Documentation is completed for all client contacts via case notes.
- Contribute data and insights to monthly and quarterly reports as requested by the Service Manager
- Actively contribute to team meetings, training, case reviews and peer supervision
- Seek outside expertise and supervision as required, with approval of the Service Manager
- Actively maintain collaborative relationships with Plunket colleagues to enable wrap-around service provision
- Collect feedback and satisfaction surveys and contribute to evaluation projects as required
- Stay up-to-date with literature, evidence, and practice for professional development and to support continuous improvement of the service
- Ensure concerns regarding safety, suspected family violence and/or child abuse is promptly managed (as per Plunket Policy)

Relationships, Referrals And Networking

- Collaborate with the team to maintain up to date community profiles / stakeholder maps
- Continue to build relationships and networks to benefit whānau, share learning, build community, and promote Plunket's reputation and reach
- Provide programme information and promote the service internally and externally to community groups, health professionals and clients to improve awareness and access to the service
- Ensure relationships with key referral stakeholders are supported and developed, and that their ideas and feedback are incorporated into service planning and delivery.

Leadership

- Role models a culture of collaboration to get the best capability out of colleagues
- Embeds One Plunket principles as an integral part of the wider Service Delivery team
- Supports the Service Manager in leading and building a positive, internal and external client focused culture
- Role models desired culture and way of working
- Coaches and develops support workers to achieve their goals and improve performance

General:

- Adhere to Whānau Āwhina Plunket operational guidelines, policies and protocols, relevant standards and comply with legislation e.g. Privacy Act, Code of Rights, and HPCA Act 2003
- Actively uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and work to ensure culturally safe care for clients and build self-determination for all service participants.
- Share ideas and feedback to ensure the service is responsive to the needs of Māori, Pacific and other priority populations.
- Demonstrate Plunket's values – manaaki, māia, māhaki and tūhono.
- Actively contribute to building a collaborative, solution-focussed team culture and way of working.

Health & Safety

- Manage own personal health and safety, and takes appropriate action to deal with workplace hazards, accidents and incidents.
- Ensures safety for own and others at all times and observes health and safety practices in all workplace activities.
- Understand the responsibility individuals and their manager play in health and safety.
- Team training is up-to-date and all team members can demonstrate actions in an emergency that are specific to the workplace and are designed to keep individuals safe.
- Comply with relevant safety legislation, policies, procedures, safe systems of work and event reporting.
- Identify and report all incidents, accidents, and near misses in accordance with policy.

Position Description and Scope of Duties

The job holder is expected to perform such other duties as can reasonably be regarded as incidental to the position description, and such other duties reasonably within their experience and capabilities as may be from time to time assigned following consultation.

Once appointed a programme of work will be developed with the appointee that will set out the specific tasks and time frames to achieve the key deliverables for this position. Progress will be monitored through Whānau Āwhina Plunket's performance and development programmes.

Person Specification

You will ideally possess the following technical skills/knowledge and personal attributes:

- Eligible to work in New Zealand
- A recognised and relevant level 7, degree qualification in psychology, nursing, occupational therapy, social work, counselling or a related field
- Professional certification and registration in accordance with registration board requirements and legislation e.g. New Zealand Psychologists Board, Social Workers Registration Act 2003 or Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003
- A current, full NZ driver's license and clear Police check.
- At least five years practical experience in mental health service delivery. Speciality in perinatal or infant mental health preferred.
- Experience in management or demonstrated leadership capabilities
- Experience utilising technology especially in virtual service delivery is desirable
- Experience using evidence-based therapeutic models such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), or Solution-Focused Therapy.
- Experience coordinating and facilitating groups
- Strong communication skills, and demonstrated ability to engage authentically and positively across a range of cultures and demographics to support wellbeing and development of whānau
- Demonstrated knowledge and commitment to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi, ethical standards and promoting the rights and wellbeing of clients including setting appropriate professional boundaries
- This is a new service – so important to be a team player, optimistic, proactive, flexible, and innovative, and motivated to achieve outcomes

I have read and understood the above position description and accept all the above responsibilities incorporated herein.

Senior Mental Health Practitioner

Date

Perinatal Wellbeing Service Manager

Date