

Position description

Senior Medical Officer

Addiction Services

Last revised date: January 2026

About Pathways, Real and the Wise Group

At **Pathways**, we provide community-based mental health, addiction and wellbeing services throughout New Zealand. We support people to live well and be part of the communities of their choice by providing a range of support services around practical daily living, leading a healthy life, employment, and housing. Pathways was established in 1989, introducing a new model of care to the mental health sector. Today, with our inspirational purpose of 'supporting people to live full lives; hopeful and connected to what matters', we're continuing to lead, innovate and pioneer new ways of working.

We believe in upholding the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and recognise it as the founding document of Aotearoa. We have a rautaki Māori, this is the platform that sets our expectations and approaches for addressing equity. The articles of Te Tiriti inform how we develop and design our kawa to ensure the mana of kaimahi, tāngata whai ora, taiohi and whānau remain upheld. Te reo Māori me ona tikanga influences our organisation. This means our practices, approaches, organisational rhythms and celebrations are informed by Māori tikanga.

We believe everyone can recover and we're here to do everything we can to support them in their recovery. Our wairua or spirit of 'whatever it takes' is not just a slogan on the wall for us, our employees live this spirit every day. While mental health is our priority, total wellbeing is our goal. We work to strengthen whānau. We're all about hope, respect and providing personalised support that changes as people's needs change. We are committed to working in a trauma informed way, recognising the impact trauma may have had on people & working with them to build resilience and protective factors. Join us on our journey of helping people live a life they love. Today, Pathways is one of the largest NGOs in Aotearoa with over 1100 kaimahi.

Real provides the youth services of Pathways and has been delivering services since 2010. At Real we believe mental wellness and wellbeing are possible for every young person. We are inspired by the dream that every young person can feel great about their future and help shape their community. We support young people to build resilience and wellbeing in youth-oriented, flexible, fun, and optimistic ways.

The Wise Group

Pathways is part of the **Wise Group**, one of the largest non-government providers in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Wise Group is a family of charitable entities, all linked by a common dream – to create new opportunities for the wellbeing of people, vulnerable populations, organisations, and communities. Being part of the Wise Group gives Pathways access to a wealth of resources and support, both from our shared business infrastructure services and from other entities in the Group.

Join us on our journey of helping people live a life they love.

Position

Reports to:	Team Coach – Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) & Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST) Services
Location:	Wairarapa
Purpose:	The Senior Medical Officer is responsible for providing community-based alcohol and other drug (AOD) specialist services for tāngata whai ora in the Wairarapa. Specifically, this includes being the lead clinician for our opioid substitution treatment service, providing advanced clinical support to AOD Practitioners for tāngata whai ora with complex presentations, and medication oversight for tāngata whai ora undertaking social detoxification in our residential service. This role includes undertaking assessments, treatment and medication planning, as well as providing AOD support, education and training to AOD Practitioners, OST Case Managers, and other health professionals. You will work alongside a team of registered health professionals, such as registered nurses, AOD practitioners, social workers, and support workers.
Relationships (internal):	Clinical Director; General Manager – Central, Service & Relationship Manager, Team Coach (AOD/OST), on-call teams, Pathways kaimahi and Wise Group kaimahi.
Relationships (external):	Pharmacies, Emergency Department, Medical Surgical Ward Consultants, Other OST and Addiction Services, OST Clinical Leads, NAOTAP, Pain Clinic, and General Practitioners.

Ohia nui *Inspirational Purpose*

We support people to live full lives;
hopeful and connected to what
matters to them



Wairua

Spirit

Ahakoā te aha
*Whatever
it takes*



Tūmanako tangata

Character Attributes

Aroha *Loving*
Whakahonohono *Connected*
Harikoa *Joyful*
Tika *Authentic*
Manako *Hopeful*
Māia *Courageous*
Māhorahora *Generous*
Pou Piripono *Reliable*



Mātāpono *Beliefs*

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi drives us to be pro-equity
- Living well is our goal, mental health and addiction is our priority
- We are part of great partnerships that deliver to people
- Peer support and lived experience are integral to what we do
- Helping everyone we support to have somewhere to live, something to do, something to hope for and someone to love
- Connected, diverse and compassionate communities build strength and resilience
- Our staff make the difference
- Sustainability influences our actions
- Evidence-based practice, tikanga and mātauranga underpins our mahi
- We invest in finding out 'What do you need right now?'

Wero nui

Greatest Imaginable Challenge

Every person using our
services achieves equitable
access and outcomes

pathways
ahakoā te aha

June 2024

Aronga matua

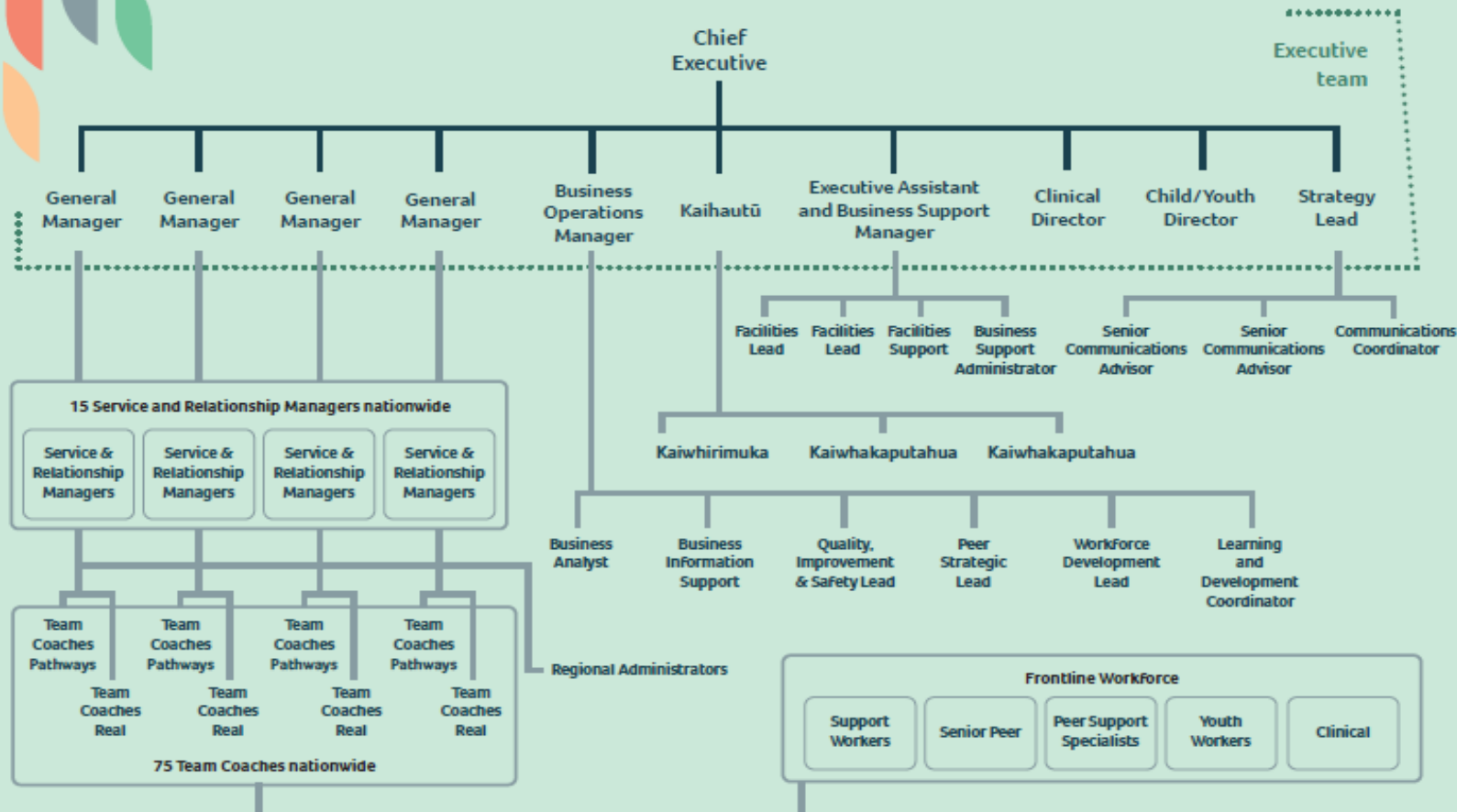
Focus

Front of mind,
every day

Pathways and Real leadership structure

pathways
ahakoa te aha

real
ahakoa te aha



November 2025

Requirements of the position

Focus	Activities	Outcomes
Clinical responsibility	- To provide assessment, diagnosis and appropriate treatment for tāngata whai ora within the clinical setting. - To advise, consult and educate tāngata whai ora and relevant others about treatment options. - Ensure effective identification of co-existing conditions in tāngata whai ora and arrange further specialised assessment with other disciplines as necessary. - High risk behaviour and potential to harm self or others are assessed and tāngata whai ora are effectively supported to manage these risks alongside the OST Case Manager or AOD Practitioner - That each new referral accepted into the service receives a comprehensive assessment of mental health and physical health problems. This includes physical health screening, basic observations and liaison with their General Practitioner. The aim of this is to identify significant issues that may impact on tāngata whai ora treatment (especially the prescription of medication) - All referrals to the OST programme are assessed to meet the guidelines supporting opioid substitution treatment, either for initiation or maintenance of medication management - Review and adjust OST dosages as per the OST guidelines (reflecting tāngata whai ora risk and needs, both voluntary and involuntary) - Management of care is undertaken in a safe and professional manner meeting core competencies of medical officers. - To provide professional leadership in clinical decision making. - Provide education and support to Pharmacists who dispense OST medications and General Practitioner who support OST prescribing in primary care.	- The tangata whai ora understands their rights, informed consent, medication choices, how to include their whānau or supports, and proposed treatment plan (including prescribing) - All medication plans sit alongside comprehensive treatment plans developed by OST Case Manager or AOD Practitioner. - The Ministry of Health practice guidelines for Opioid Substitution Treatment 2025 are followed to ensure safe practice - Co-existing mental health disorders medical problems are supported and addressed in treatment planning - Liaison with other health professionals and appropriate external agencies. - Details recorded comprehensively, timely and clearly showing mana, on tāngata whai ora files. - That controlled drug prescriptions are completed for all tāngata whai ora within an agreed time frame. - Input is sought from the Director for Mental Health and the Area Director of Mental Health and Addictions when required. - Providing specialist consultations to our health partners, such as General Practitioners, pharmacists, the hospital emergency ward, and the medical and surgical ward. - Regular education is provided to pharmacists and General Practitioners involved in tangata whai ora OST - To provide education to health professionals to reduce the stigma associated with severe AOD use. - Advise Waka Kotahi (NZTA) Transport of tāngata whai ora whose substance use is creating concern for the safety of other road users.

	- Assess the medical fitness to drive for tāngata whai ora with substance abuse and/or dependence under Section 18 of the Land Transport Act 1998. - Providing end of life care liaison to support prescribing.	
Administration/Planning	- Record keeping and documentation is undertaken in alignment with Pathways policies and procedures. - Keeping the authorisations under Misuse of Drugs Act (MODA) up to date - Provide documentation to support tangata whai ora who are travelling overseas. - To be accessible to support tangata whai ora in custody who are on the Wairarapa OST programme and deportees on OST medications who may be residing in the Wairarapa - All scripting follows safe prescribing and dispensing of doses, including takeaways. - Assisting with the preparation for AOD and OST audits - Be involved in local service planning and review.	- Ensuring accurate and timely case notes are recorded in tāngata whai ora files Pathways' clinical record system and DAPO approach to record keeping (describe; assessment; plan; outcome). - All legal requirements providing direction on Substance related matters are adhered too. - General Practitioner and other health professionals kept informed about tāngata whai ora treatment plans. - Providing appropriate correspondence about tangata whai ora care.
Assist in providing a safe environment which promotes health and wellbeing	- Participate in multidisciplinary hui, providing leadership and clinical best practice advice for AOD and OST. - Provide education and training to AOD Practitioners, Clinical Nurse Specialist, OST Case Managers, General Practitioners, and other AOD stakeholders. - Following the 2021 Te Pou substance withdrawal management guidelines, the 2025 Ministry of Health NZ Practice Guidelines for Opioid Substitution Treatment and all legislation relating to substance abuse and dependence. - Provide medication plans with tāngata whai ora, their AOD Practitioner or OST Case Manager, and their whānau or support people. - Understand Health and Disability Code of Rights and actively engage in Pathway's Safety and Wellbeing practices, including reporting hazards or incidents. - Engage in team and individual development opportunities, including attending Pathways training, and completing	- Tāngata whai ora are treated with respect and their comfort, privacy and dignity is maintained. - Medical oversight and clinical review of treatment planning ensure risk assessments and management plans are incorporated in the care planning process in consultation with case managers and the multi-disciplinary team. - The Health and Disability code of tāngata whai ora rights is applied in practice - Treatment outcomes are monitored through consultation, tāngata whai ora satisfaction surveys and other appropriate outcome measures. - Effective advocacy skills and relationships support tāngata whai ora, their whānau and caregivers.

	foundation plans, 90 day plans and wellbeing plans. Show behaviours that reflect the shared purpose statements for Pathways and Real.	
Supervision and liaison	- Attendance and participation in team meetings for the purpose of case and risk management. - Attendance and participation in peer review group for half a day at least twice yearly. - Attend face-to-face supervision individually at least quarterly. - Develop and maintain strategic relationships with clinicians from Te Whatu Ora. - Identify opportunities to work with GPs and primary care and support pathways to develop relationships with primary care providers.	- NAOTAP meetings attended either in person or via an online platform) - Supervision occurs at least quarterly. - Request input from a consultant psychiatrist or physician as indicated. - Attend cultural supervision provided for by Pathways.
Act within the boundaries set out by Pathways	- To work to the standard required under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 - Eligible to be an approved 'specified medical practitioner' (lead clinician) prescribing controlled drugs for dependence, as per section 24A(7)(a) MODA.	- Ensure records are maintained accurately and in accordance with legislation and Pathways policies. - Provide appropriate information in accordance with the Privacy Act and other relevant legislation and Pathways policy - Ensure clinical practice and the specialist nurse role is acting within appropriate legislation and Pathways Policies. - Compliance with Code of Health and Disability Service's Consumers Rights. - Practice and performance demonstrate knowledge and application of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. - Ensure own and kaimahi compliance with the Health and Safety in Employment Act and regulation and the Pathways Policy. - Practice demonstrates working knowledge and competent application of the Mental Health Act 1992 and subsequent amendments, and understanding and liasing when required
Work in a culturally safe & respectful manner incorporating the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and be mindful of the	- Demonstrate knowledge and application of the articles of Te Tiriti. - Undertake all interactions in a respectful and culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.	- Demonstrates behaviour that recognises and is consistent with equity principles and practices. - Contributes to a positive, inclusive team environment.

cultural diversity of our community	• Seek guidance regarding tikanga and culturally specific models/ approaches/behaviours from kaiwhakaputahua and kaihautū. • Attend cultural le Attend cultural learning and development courses for all kaimahi and leaders. • Apply co-design principles when designing services for Māori.	
Provision of other related duties within capability, as assigned by your manager	• Performs other related duties within individual's capability as assigned by your manager.	• "Can do" attitude - operates as a team player and willing to perform any task required to support the organisation, business partners and other key stakeholders
Be your very best	• Plan regular uninterrupted times to meet with the Team Coach to review your 90-day plan and seek feedback on performance. • Actively develop personal leadership skills. • Develop a learning and personal development plan with your manager and implement this plan as agreed. • Share knowledge gained from professional development experiences. • Work in a culturally safe and respectful manner incorporating the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and be mindful of the cultural diversity of the community served. • Role model a healthy lifestyle. • You will be a champion of peers, integrated mental health and addiction services, trauma informed practices and wellbeing. • Undertake other growth opportunities such as becoming best practice auditor and undertaking training and approval process to become the SACAT specialist assessor. • Work as a team, providing best practice leadership and training opportunities for AOD and OST clinicians.	• You are well prepared for any forums and meetings, sharing what's working and what's not and bringing solutions for improvement. • Your skills are current, and your innate curiosity means that you are always seeking new learning opportunities. • You demonstrate behaviour that is consistent with equitable practices. • Evidence of Te Tiriti principles are reflected in everyday practice and future organisational planning. • "Whatever it takes" and "what do you need today?" are part of your kawa.
Think and act as one	• Participate in creating a culture of think and act as one. • Actively participate in and contribute to leadership forums and regional meetings.	• The services of the Wise Group organisations feel connected to each other and to their work. • You are highly regarded by the organisation for your

	• Represent Pathways and the Wise Group in a professional manner. • Take responsibility for executing assigned tasks and projects in accordance with agreed performance standards.	contribution you make to the organisation and this specialist practice area. • The service continually repositions itself to meet perceived future need. • Projects and tasks are completed within agreed timeframes and to agreed standards
Be committed to safety and wellness in the workplace	• Take responsibility for personal wellbeing and health management within the workplace. • Comply with legal obligations and safety and wellbeing policies and procedures. • Role model excellent safety and wellbeing practices by reporting identified workplace incidents, near misses and/or hazards through the safety and wellbeing system as per Wise Group safety and wellbeing policy and procedures. • Be committed to safety and wellbeing by following the Wise Group roles and responsibilities table (located on The Well).	• Work practices are safe for self and others. • Policies and procedures are understood and followed as designed. • All safety and wellbeing reportable events are accurately reported within specified timeframes.

Accountabilities

Authority	- Financial – nil - Operational - nil
Direct reports	Nil; however, the mentoring of OST Case Managers is an expectation of this role

Know how

	Essential	Preferred
<i>Practical and technical Knowledge</i>	- Full registration as a medical practitioner in New Zealand with current annual practicing certificate and experience working in Addiction Services - Working knowledge of Microsoft Office suite - Knowledge of the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights - An understanding and commitment to the principles of harm reduction and recovery - Understands the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act and requirements of the Act as this applies to registered health professionals. - Familiar with Ministry of Health Documents, relevant standards, and legislation. - All relevant legislation - Working understanding of principles of recovery and trauma informed care. - Working knowledge of article of Te Tiriti. - Digital capability and ability to utilise AI and digital tools to complete role.	Postgraduate Qualification in Addictions

<i>Experience</i>	• Experience in alcohol and other drug assessment and treatment and knowledge of alcohol and other drug issues • Proven ability to working with community groups, agencies and other health professionals • Proven ability to be able to understand patient's issues and to have credibility with the patient group. • Knowledge of and adherence to New Zealand Practice Guidelines for Opioid Substitution Treatment 2025 • Evidence of experience in providing opioid substitution treatment	• A working knowledge of the Mental Health Act 1992 • A working knowledge and understanding of integrated clinical pathways.
<i>Personal</i>	• Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal. • Strong alignment with our Peak Performance Organisation (PPO) character attributes • Demonstrable influencing and engagement skills • Commitment to continuous learning.	• A recognised leader in AOD and OST services.