



Position Description

Principal Advisor

Team	Addiction and Suicide Prevention policy
Group	Public Health Agency and Mental Health Group
Manager	Samuel Andrews
Location	Wellington
Job band (indicative)	19G
Security clearance	N/A
Date	June 2026

About the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) – Manatū Hauora

The Ministry of Health is the lead advisor to the Government on health and is responsible for ensuring the health system meets the current and future needs of all New Zealanders.

We fulfil this role through three key functions:

Policy: We support the Government to set health system priorities and develop policies. We collect evidence to understand the system and to get the best health outcomes for New Zealanders.

Regulation: We design rules and regulations for health services, products, and pharmaceuticals to protect public health and safety. We ensure health regulations are proportionate, effective and safe.

Monitoring: We monitor the performance of the health system by collecting data, checking performance and reporting to the Government. If issues arise, we work with others to address them. We assess both health outcomes and financial efficiency.

Group description – Tō mātou nei aka

Public Health Agency and Mental Health Group | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui is a branded business unit of the Ministry of Health. They provide national leadership in public and population health strategy, policy, regulation, intelligence, evaluation and monitoring. They are the government's lead advisor on public and population health. The Public Health Agency also houses key functions including Emergency Management, Pacific Health and Global Health

Position purpose – Kōrero mō te tūranga



The Principal Advisor provides expert analysis, strategic advice, and leadership on key programmes of work within their area of responsibility, in this case primarily focused on suicide prevention. This role contributes to the design and delivery of high-quality, evidence-informed advice, supports decision-making across the Ministry, and ensure all work supports the Ministry's functions.

What you'll do – Ko tōu ake mahi

- Support the Programme Director of Suicide Prevention to deliver on the Suicide Prevention Action Plan through: secretariat functions; supporting engagement with communities, providers and agencies; and ensuring timely and high quality reporting.
- Work in partnership with clinical, lived experience and policy colleagues within the Mental Health, Addiction and Suicide Prevention Unit.
- Lead and influence cross-Ministry and sector-wide initiatives, ensuring alignment and successful delivery of key programmes.
- Develop and maintain effective stakeholder communication strategies using a range of channels to build trust and engagement.
- Oversee complex projects and workstreams, applying strategic and tactical approaches to achieve high-quality outcomes.
- Strengthen team capability through coaching, mentoring, and promoting continuous improvement in practice and performance.
- Foster strong, collaborative relationships across the Ministry, health sector, government agencies, and external partners.
- Ensure all work upholds equity principles and reflects Treaty of Waitangi obligations.
- Drive innovation by identifying emerging trends, risks, and opportunities, and recommending proactive responses.
- Represent the Ministry in forums, negotiations, and working groups to influence policy and sector outcomes.
- Lead the development of robust frameworks, standards, and methodologies to support consistent and effective delivery.
- Champion organisational priorities by providing authoritative advice to senior leaders and contributing to strategic planning.

This position description is intended as an insight to the main tasks and responsibilities required in the role and may be subject to change in consultation with the job holder.

What you'll bring to the role – Ko ngā pukenga ōu

- Experience workign in a suicide prevention related context at a health system or cross-agency level.



- Understanding of mental health and/or suicide prevention services and programme delivery
- Experience in performance and system level monitoring including oversight of Budget initiatives.
- Strong technical leadership skills to support project design, development, and implementation.
- Demonstrated ability to apply critical thinking and sound judgement to develop options and provide high-quality advice.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to convey complex issues clearly and concisely to diverse audiences.
- Strong relationship management capability and experience engaging with a wide range of sector groups and agencies.
- Experience working within central government and a thorough understanding of the machinery of government.
- Significant experience providing advice to Ministers and driving work programmes to deliver high-quality outcomes.
- A deep understanding of, and commitment to, Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.
- Commitment to improving equity in health outcomes.
- Ability to operate effectively in complex environments and collaborate with diverse internal and external stakeholders.
- Political awareness and strong risk management skills, with an understanding of what matters to key stakeholders.

Leadership Success Profile – Angitūtanga

The Te Kawa Mataaho Leadership Success Profile (LSP) describes what effective leadership looks like across the New Zealand public sector. All roles at the Ministry are assigned to one of four leadership categories. Each category draws on selected capabilities, which combine both leadership competencies and character traits from the LSP, to reflect different types of leadership.

This role is assigned to the **‘Technical Leader’** category, and the following capabilities outline what is required to be successful in this category:

Leading strategically	<i>Develop and implement strategies that position your technical area to meet future needs, aligning initiatives with organisational priorities and engaging others in a clear and compelling vision.</i>
Leading with influence	<i>Communicate with authority and clarity to influence decisions, inspire confidence, and gain buy-in for complex technical initiatives across teams and stakeholders.</i>



Enhancing organisational performance	Drive innovation and continuous improvement within your technical area to strengthen organisational performance and deliver sustainable outcomes.
Engaging others	<i>Build strong relationships by connecting with stakeholders, listening actively, and adapting your approach to foster collaboration and trust across technical and non-technical audiences.</i>
Achieving ambitious goals	<i>Show determination and optimism to achieve challenging technical objectives, focusing on opportunities and solutions that deliver significant impact.</i>
Curious	<i>Show curiosity, flexibility, and openness in analysing and integrating ideas, information, and differing perspectives; to make fit-for-purpose decisions.</i>

Your health, safety, and wellbeing – Oranga me te haumarū

At the Ministry of Health, we expect all of our people to:

- Ensure health and safety is integrated into business-as-usual activities
- Promote employee participation in health and safety by actively supporting employee health and safety representatives (HSRs)
- Acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters including the hazards and risks associated with operations
- Ensure staff are informed of and trained in safe practices and procedures in their specific areas of work

Diversity and inclusion – Kanorau me te whakauru

The Ministry of Health welcomes and supports people of all gender identities, ages, ethnicities, sexual orientations, disabilities, and religions. To support this we:

- Foster inclusive workplaces that value diverse perspectives and lived experience
- Attract and retain diverse talent by creating accessible, welcoming environments
- Apply the merit principle fairly, ensuring equitable opportunities for all