



Position Description: Occupational Therapist — Child Trauma

Job Title: Occupational Therapist

Location: Northern

Reports To: Kahukura Ora Service Leader

Position Type: Full-time/Part-time

Job Overview: The Occupational Therapist (OT) in the Child Trauma Setting will provide specialized therapy services to children and adolescents who have experienced psychological or physical trauma. The therapist will focus on helping these children regain functional independence, emotional regulation, and developmentally appropriate skills. The OT will work as part of a multidisciplinary team that includes psychologists, social workers, and educators, ensuring holistic care that addresses both the physical and emotional aspects of trauma recovery.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Assessment and Evaluation:

- Conduct comprehensive assessments of children's physical, emotional, cognitive, and sensory needs, considering the impact of trauma.
- Develop individualized therapy plans that address developmental delays, motor skills deficits, and sensory processing challenges caused by trauma.
- Utilize trauma-responsive care approaches to assess each child's environment and adapt interventions accordingly.

2. Intervention and Treatment Planning:

- Design and implement therapeutic interventions to support the child's ability to engage in meaningful activities and daily routines.
- Provide interventions to improve fine and gross motor skills, sensory integration, self-regulation, and cognitive functions affected by trauma.
- Use play-based and creative approaches to facilitate engagement, reduce anxiety, and foster emotional healing.

3. Collaboration with Multidisciplinary Team:

- Work closely with psychologists, social workers, therapeutic care workers, and medical professionals to coordinate care and ensure that therapy aligns with the child's emotional and psychological needs.
- Attend case conferences and contribute to collaborative treatment planning and progress review.
- Provide guidance and training to family members and caregivers on how to support the child's recovery in daily environments.

4. Family and Caregiver Education:

- Educate families and caregivers about trauma-responsive strategies they can use at home to support the child's emotional and physical needs.
- Offer resources and training to promote a safe and supportive environment for the child outside of therapy sessions.
- Provide emotional support and coaching to family members who may also be affected by the child's trauma.

5. Documentation and Reporting:

- Maintain accurate and timely documentation of assessments, treatment plans, progress notes, and outcomes.
- Report on the child's progress during team meetings and contribute to the development of discharge plans.
- Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, and ethical standards related to child trauma care.

6. Professional Development:

- Stay current on the latest research, practices, and trauma-informed care models relevant to pediatric occupational therapy.
- Participate in ongoing training and professional development opportunities, particularly in the area of trauma care.
- Actively contribute to program development and the advancement of child-centred trauma rehabilitation approaches.

Qualifications/Experience:

Relevant NZ qualification in Occupational Therapy.

Experience working with children in a clinical setting.

Experience in trauma-responsive care or working with children affected by trauma is strongly preferred.

Certifications: Professional registration with approved body and current practising certificate

Skills:

- Strong understanding of child development and the impact of trauma on physical, cognitive, and emotional functioning.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, especially in working with children, families, and interdisciplinary teams.
- Competence in play-based therapy, sensory integration, and emotional regulation interventions.

Key Competencies:

- Empathy and Sensitivity: Ability to work compassionately with children who have experienced trauma, understanding their emotional needs and creating a safe therapeutic environment.
- Problem-Solving: Strong analytical skills to assess needs and create individualized, adaptable treatment plans.
- Collaboration: Effective team player who works well in a multidisciplinary environment.
- Adaptability: Flexibility in adjusting treatment plans based on the dynamic needs of the child.
- Resilience: Capacity to handle emotionally challenging situations and provide consistent, compassionate care.

Physical Demands:

- Regular interaction with children, including floor activities, lifting, and positioning.
- Periods of standing, sitting, and physical activity throughout the day.
- Includes travel to homes, schools, or community centres as part of therapy outreach.

Work Environment:

- Primary work will be in clinical settings with a focus on child trauma.
- Regular interaction with children, families, and interdisciplinary staff.
- May occasionally be exposed to emotionally intense situations due to the nature of the work.

- May work in child's home or external meeting place (e.g. schools).

This is a first iteration of an OT role, which is new to Stand Tu Maia Northern. Maybe subject to modification.