

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
Te Whare Wananga o Otago

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Occupational Mental Health & Wellbeing Advisor
DEPARTMENT: Health and Safety Compliance
DIVISION: Human Resources

PRIME FUNCTION

The Occupational Mental Health Advisor position is a new position designed to provide specialist advice and support in the area of mental health and wellbeing, as part of the University's Occupational Health and Safety Team service. The focus of the position is to provide education, support and professional advice, including about rehabilitation, to the University and staff in the area of mental health in the workplace.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

The University is currently undertaking a review of administrative and operational processes that support academics in the achievement of their research and teaching goals. The University recognises that this review, the Support Services Review (SSR) is creating uncertainty for staff. This position is specifically targeted to support the organisation and all staff during the SSR and the implantation of changes agreed to by the Steering Group. Alongside this change, it is recognised that mental health prevalence within NZ impacts on the working population as well. It is the University's intent to assist and support those experiencing mental health issues in the same manner as physical health issues, including return to work rehabilitation support. Occupational health and safety includes the psychosocial hazards in the workplace which can cause harm. The advisor will provide advice and support on the continued development of systems to improve the identification and management of psychosocial hazards and the prevention of harm.

KEY TASKS

- Provide professional mental health and wellbeing advice and support to the wider HR team in the development and delivery of mental wellbeing and related workshops/training/education.
- Identify, or assist others in HR (e.g. Divisional HR Managers and Advisers) to identify, those areas and staff within the organisation at risk, and establish support programmes to promote mental health wellbeing and appropriate responses by the organisation.
- Liaise with the Change Manger, SSR regarding information that would be pertinent for communication from the project team to the University community.
- Provide feedback regarding support being provided to staff by the SSR, particularly identification of the type and/or frequency of support being provided.
- Contributing specialist mental health support to individual case management activities in the workplace (e.g. rehabilitation and stay at work programmes) providing professional advice and support to HR, line managers and employees.
- Provide professional health advice and implement occupational mental health-related policies and procedures within the University environment.
- Provide specific mental health expertise for the investigation of health-related incidents, near misses or hazards for the improvement of hazard management and control in conjunction with the H&S Team.
- Co-ordinate and/ or work in collaboration with Divisional HR Managers in rehabilitation plans for mental health related issues through University rehabilitation management processes.

RELATIONSHIPS

Directly responsible to: Andrea McMillan, Head, Health & Safety Compliance.
Functional Relationships with: Occupational Health Nurse.
Occupational Physician.
ACC/H&S Administrator.
H&S Team.
Human Resources staff, particularly DHRM and HR Advisors.
Change Manager, Support Services Review.
Student Health Services.
Staff and Students of the University of Otago.
External government departments and health service providers.

BUDGETARY RESPONSIBILITY

- Nil.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A specialist resource that is accessible and engaged with staff on mental health in the workplace.
- Rehabilitation plans and practices in place enabling staff to stay at work or return to work congruent with mental health requirements and the needs of the workplace.
- Specialist input into the course development and delivery in conjunction with the Professional development team on mental health & wellbeing across the University.
- Support strategies incorporate mental health and wellbeing aspects throughout the SSR process, and effectiveness reports.
- Mental health and wellbeing strategies and/or policies are developed from an evidence base, for implementation within the University.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Must be a Health Professional with a current Practising Certificate (e.g.: Comprehensive Nurse, Psychologist, etc.)
- At least 5 years' post-graduate experience.
- Ideally experience or knowledge of occupational health and safety and rehabilitation.
- Evidence of training skills and experience in health education.
- Knowledge of relevant legislation.
- Strong interpersonal skills; the ability to build effective professional relationships and work collaboratively and collegially as part of a multidisciplinary team.
- Computer literate, highly competent in a range of software packages particularly word, excel and databases.