



The new Stroke Nurse Practitioner candidate position at Austin Health

- The new Stroke Nurse Practitioner (NP) candidate position offered by Austin Health provides an exciting opportunity for a senior nurse with neurology experience and clinical leadership qualities to shape the role according to the needs of the Acute Stroke Care Unit.

The Stroke Nurse Practitioner (NP) candidate will work from the Stroke Prevention Outpatient Clinic, undertaking a liaison role and working to improve continuity of care from the Emergency Department to Outpatients, and from Outpatients on to primary care. The Stroke NP candidate will play a senior role in the multidisciplinary acute stroke team and develop into an active clinician in the clinic. The role will include providing assessment and treatment plans for stroke and TIA patients, including prescribing medications, ordering diagnostic investigations and direct referral of patients to other healthcare professionals, within a defined scope of practice, under the supervision of stroke unit medical staff.

- While the NP candidate will be expected to drive change within the unit, they won't have to go it alone. The Nurse Practitioner candidate will have access to a strong peer support network of other NPs. They will also be given close support from a clinical mentor, Associate Professor Helen Dewey, Head of Stroke Services, and a professional mentor, who will be either one of our existing Nurse Practitioners or another senior staff member in the department.
- Austin Health is a leader in the public health field in introducing innovative workforce models. CEO, Dr Brendan Murphy, is chair of the Victorian Health Service Management Innovation Council and is personally committed to health workforce reform and the Nurse Practitioner model. There is strong support for new clinical leadership roles at the executive as well as the medical, clinical service unit and Nursing Services directorate levels, including by relevant Nurse Unit Managers.

Austin Health is also playing a lead role in the state-wide implementation of the Stroke NP role and is convening representatives from other health services in the Stroke Care Collaborative, which coordinates forums several times a year to provide education sessions and opportunities for staff developing Stroke NP models to share their experiences.

- Austin Health's stroke unit gained an international reputation for its excellence in acute stroke management, under the leadership of past director, Professor Geoffrey Donnan and now with new Director Professor Richard Macdonell. It continues to be one of the largest and most innovative units in Victoria, and has been recognised for its early recognition and response time for acute stroke. The Stroke NP is expected to play a leading role in the continued growth of the unit's reputation for excellence and innovation.
- Candidates who do not yet have their Masters degree will also be supported to complete their studies and will have access to a study support package.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE	Stroke Nurse Practitioner Candidate
REPORTS TO	Professional – Director of Specialty Services CSU Clinical – Head of Acute Stroke Unit
AWARD/AGREEMENT/CONTRACT	Nurses (Victorian Health Services) Award 2008
POSITION TYPE e.g. Registered Nurse Div 1, Occupational Therapist Gr1, etc.	YX11 - Grade 4B Yr 1, Nurse Practitioner Candidate
HOURS PER WEEK	Part time, Permanent – 2 days / week (days and hours negotiable)

1. ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Austin Health is one of Victoria's largest health care providers.

Comprised of Austin Hospital, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre, Austin Health is a major teaching and research centre with numerous university and research institute affiliations.

Catering to diverse multicultural and veteran communities, Austin Health delivers vital state-wide services to Victorians and a vast array of specialty services to the people of Melbourne's north-eastern corridor in a safety-focussed, team-orientated and stimulating work environment.

Austin Health Values

The Austin Health values play a critical role in shaping how we operate as an organisation. They influence our performance planning, recruitment, training and development, and relationships with colleagues, work mates, our patients and their relatives and friends. The Austin Health values set standard that we expect all staff to live up to in the way they undertake their duties and responsibilities across the Hospital.

Our Values:

- ***Integrity***
We work in the spirit of collaboration and honesty to build effective working relationships across the whole organisation.
- ***Accountability***
We are transparent, responsible and build trust by fulfilling promises and communicating effectively.
- ***Respect***
We care about others and treat each other with consideration, equality and fairness.

- **Excellence**

We continually strive to advance patient focused care through innovation, research and effective stakeholder management.

2. LOCAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

The Department of Neurology is one of the largest units in Victoria, with an established international reputation particularly in stroke and epilepsy. All areas of neurology are covered by this comprehensive unit, which is staffed by 14 neurologists including 3 full time staff. There are 28 inpatient beds in Ward 6 East which includes 13 stroke unit beds (4 monitored acute beds) and 4 video epilepsy monitoring beds. Eight neurology outpatient clinics are run per week.

A comprehensive diagnostic investigation service is also maintained including EMG, EEG, Doppler Ultrasound and MRI. The Neurodiagnostic Laboratory is co-located with the Neurology ward on level 6 of the Austin Tower. The department has a major involvement in teaching, training and research at under-graduate and post-graduate levels, for both nursing and medical staff. This includes the clinical training of advanced neurology trainees and specialist neurology fellows.

The Neurology Department has close links with the on-site National Stroke Research Institute, Brain Research Institute and Epilepsy Research Centre. The Howard Florey Institute has amalgamated with the Brain Research Institute and the National Stroke Research Institute to form Florey Neuroscience Institutes (FNI). A new state of the art facility will be located at the Austin Hospital and building works will commence in 2009, with an expected completion date of 2011.

The head of department is Professor Richard Macdonell. A/Professor Helen Dewey is head of stroke services. The Neurology Department is part of the Specialty Services Clinical Service Unit, which also includes Cardiology, Cardiac Surgery, Thoracic Medicine, Thoracic Surgery, Neurosurgery, Vascular Surgery and Ophthalmology. Ms. Leanne Turner is the Director of Specialty Services CSU and Dr. Jennifer Johns, the Medical Director.

The Stroke Nurse Practitioner will work within the Department of Neurology but will have a strong presence in the Stroke Care Unit and in the Emergency Department.

3. POSITION OBJECTIVE

Background

The Stroke Nurse Practitioner role is innovative, progressive and patient centred within the clinical area of stroke. The Stroke Nurse Practitioner is an integral member of the nursing team working to achieve nursing excellence in that area.

Nurse Practitioners are Registered Nurses who practice at an advanced level and are authorised by the Nurses Board of Victoria to use the title "Nurse Practitioner".

In Victoria a Nurse Practitioner is defined as "a registered nurse educated for advanced practice who is an essential member of an interdependent health care team and whose role is determined by the context in which s/he practices." www.nursing.vic.gov.au/furthering/practitioner.htm August 2005

Position Objective

The Stroke Nurse Practitioner aims to maximise the continuity of care for patients within the stroke service in accordance with the department/CSU objectives. The Stroke Nurse Practitioner practises within a multidisciplinary framework to maximise recovery and promote optimum outcomes for stroke and TIA patients.

The Stroke Nurse Practitioner reports to Ms Leanne Turner, Specialty Services CSU Director and A/Professor Helen Dewey, Head of Stroke services.

4. POSITION REQUIREMENTS

Position specific

The Stroke Nurse Practitioner is directly involved in the provision of expert patient centred clinical care. This extends to the care of family, carers and other health professionals.

CLINICAL CARE

- Ability to conduct an advanced, comprehensive and holistic health assessment of acute stroke and TIA patients.
- Ability to utilise assessment skills to develop a comprehensive treatment plan for stroke and TIA patients, including the need for organ imaging and laboratory studies, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and prescribing medications that are evidence based and informed by specialist knowledge.
- Ability to instigate acute and follow-up investigations according to existing stroke care protocols e.g. CT imaging, carotid duplex ultrasound
- Ability to monitor and follow up diagnostic results and organise further patient care in the inpatient and outpatient setting.
- Ability to refer patients to other specialties as required.
- Facilitate admission and discharge planning with medical staff and the multidisciplinary team.
- Undertake a key liaison role between ED and stroke unit staff, providing expert advice and continuing education to ED and stroke unit staff
- Adopt a case management approach to service delivery.

BEST PRACTICE

- Involved in clinical data collection and stroke unit audit and quality assurance activities as necessary.
- Demonstrates a commitment to quality management.
- Evaluates NP service delivery in accordance with key performance indicators.
- Participates in the development and delivery of specialist research programs.
- Adapts and applies related scientific research to clinical area.
- Clinical decisions are informed by evidence based practice.

MANAGEMENT

- Documents extension of practice in Clinical Practice Guidelines which are supported by the multidisciplinary team.
- Formulates a sound communication strategy with multidisciplinary team, medical staff, nursing staff, patients and significant others.
- Participates in the service planning process to identify future directions for the acute stroke unit to maximise patient outcomes and resource management.

ADVOCACY

- Provides a resource role to patients, families, General Practitioner's and community groups.
- Assists with the provision of health promotion activities.
- Provides psychosocial support to patients and significant others.

CLINICAL LEADERSHIP

- The nurse practitioner will join the stroke multidisciplinary team as a senior member and work closely with stroke interns, stroke registrars and consultants.
- Acts as a nursing role model and an expert clinician in the setting of acute stroke.
- Assists the development of the acute stroke unit, by assuming a nursing leadership role in specialty clinical groups at State, National and/or International level.
- Participates in the development and delivery of specialist education programs.
- Participates in formal and informal education programs.
- Awareness of the latest research literature, equipment and treatment and utilisation of knowledge in practice.
- Disseminates clinical practice and research findings via education and publications.
- Initiates and conducts nursing research relevant to acute stroke.
- Advocates for the development of nurse practitioner practice.
- Monitors own practice as well as participating in peer supervision and review.

Generic

- Abide by Austin Health corporate policies and practices as varied from time to time.
- Participate in Austin Health performance appraisal program as required.
- Undertake not to reveal to any person or entity any confidential information relating to patients and employees, policies, processes and dealings and not to make public statements relating to the affairs of Austin Health without prior authority of the Chief Executive Officer.
- Participate in the emergency incident response activities, as defined within the Emergency Response Manual, as and when required, at the direction of management.

5. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Essential for Performance of the Position

- A commitment to Austin Health values: Integrity, Accountability, Respect and Excellence.
- Registered Nurse Division 1 (Vic State Award)
- Endorsed Nurse Practitioner / or working towards NBV endorsement
- Masters post-graduate nursing studies or working towards
- Extensive and recent clinical experience in the neurology clinical specialty
- Advanced level of therapeutic management skills
- Demonstrated excellent collaborative, leadership, teaching, and interpersonal skills.
- Well developed communication skills.

- Ability to work as a team member and achieve projected goals and targets.
- Ability to evaluate practice at an advanced level.
- Demonstrated educational skills and basic computer knowledge.
- Experience in nursing research and research skills

Desirable but not essential for Performance of the Position

- Knowledge of case management models and theories
- Experience in change management
- Experience in report writing

6. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Pre-Existing Injury

Prior to any person being appointed to this position it will be required that they disclose full details of any pre-existing injuries or disease that might be affected by employment in this position.

7. DOCUMENT REVIEW DETAILS

Date Position First Documented (if known): _____/_____/_____

Date of this Position Description Review: November 2009

Signature of Manager: _____ Date: _____/_____/_____

Signature of Employee: _____ Date: _____/_____/_____

"Austin Health promotes a healthy work environment. Effective from 1 July 2009, Austin Health is now entirely smoke free. Smoking is no longer allowed on any Austin Health site, including buildings, vehicles or on the grounds of Austin Hospital, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre."