

Position Description

Position title	Child Life Therapist
Department / Division	Department of Child Life, Music, Art and Garden Therapies, Division of Allied and Digital Health
Classification	Grade 1 Year 3 – Grade 1 Year 5 PT 63- PT 65
Position reports to	Manager, Child Life, Music, Art and Garden Therapies
No. of direct & indirect reports	N/A
Location	The Royal Children's Hospital, Flemington Road, Parkville
Risk category	Category A - works in a direct patient contact role and has or potential to have exposure to blood or body fluids.

The Royal Children's Hospital
The Royal Children's Hospital's (RCH) vision is <i>"A world where all kids thrive"</i>. RCH is located within the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct, with more than 45 world-class biomedical organisations and more than 50,000 of the brightest minds working together to make the Precinct number one in the Asia Pacific region for health, education, research, and training. Within this, RCH is also a cornerstone member of the Melbourne Children's Campus, partnering with Murdoch Children's Research Institute, The University of Melbourne Department of Paediatrics and The Royal Children's Hospital Foundation. Each organisation contributes to a paediatric academic health centre which is greater than the sum of its parts. RCH has cared for the children and young people of Victoria for more than 150 years since it was founded in 1870. A full range of paediatric and adolescent health services are provided plus tertiary and quaternary care for the most critically ill and medically complex patients in Victoria, Tasmania, southern NSW and other states around Australia and overseas. The RCH is the only provider of heart transplant services and CAR T-cell therapy for paediatrics in Australia. RCH is an effective advocate for patients and their families with a particular focus on vulnerable children and increasingly, mental health in young people. The hospital also supports many health promotion and prevention programs. The Hospital has more than 6,000 staff, a budget of \$850M, 12 wards and 350 beds. Annually, the RCH has 300,000+ Specialist Clinic appointments, 90,000+ Emergency Department presentations and 20,000 elective surgeries. We work collaboratively with hospitals to deliver the right care, in the right place, at the right time. The RCH is committed to the Child Safe Standards https://www.rch.org.au/quality/child-safety/. RCH enjoys high employee engagement and is committed to staff safety and a positive culture through enactment of our Compact. Further information on RCH is available at www.rch.org.au

ROLE CONTEXT
Child Life Therapists provide individualised support to children and young people to promote effective coping and assist in reducing distress and anxiety associated with medical procedures and the hospital environment. The Child Life Therapy department sits within the Allied Health Directorate. The team consists of the Manager of Child Life

Therapy, senior team leaders, stream leaders and clinical Child Life Therapists. Child Life Therapists work across all areas of the hospital to provide excellent clinical services to the RCH community.

ROLE PURPOSE

Child Life Therapists, engage children, young people and their families to support their understanding and help them cope with the stress and uncertainty associated with hospitalisation. They educate by using evidence-based, developmentally appropriate interventions including procedural preparation, distraction, medical and therapeutic play to empower children and young people to gain mastery of their hospital experience. The role also contributes to enhancing children's capacity to understand their health care journey providing distraction during procedures and promoting coping strategies in a developmentally appropriate way. This assists in reducing distress and anxiety associated with medical procedures and the hospital environment which in turn increases a child's resilience, wellbeing and ability to participate effectively with their treatment requirements.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Provision of Care

- Deliver excellent evidence-based practice Child Life Therapist various areas of the hospital as required.)
- Ensure timely provision of clinical services through appropriate prioritisation of own caseload and patient needs
- Be familiar with treatment protocols relevant to the individual Department and other designated units within RCH
- Maintain clinical documentation, records and data as per discipline specific guidelines and RCH procedures
- Provide clinical handover to required standard
- Actively contribute to continuous improvement

Lifelong Learning

- Participate in professional development activities to ensure that best clinical practice is maintained
- Identify personal and professional development needs, and plan and implement strategies for achieving them
- Achieve and maintain competency in relevant skills in line with departmental requirements relevant to the role

Collaborative practice

- Provide child centred, family focused care through partnership with parents/ families
- Work in collaboration with multidisciplinary teams
- Cooperate and work well with others in the pursuit of team goals
- Actively participate as part of a team to ensure ongoing excellence in service delivery and contribute to continuous improvement

Communication

- Apply well-developed verbal communication and interpersonal skills and attention to detail with the ability to interact with a variety of stakeholders
- Communicate effectively with patients and families to ensure their understanding and that their needs and views are included in plans and actions
- Recognise issues that may lead to conflict, and constructively address issues as they arise with escalation to senior clinicians as appropriate

Continuous Improvement

- With support, identify concerns about systems or processes and raises these with supervisor or manager

Supervision, Leadership and People Management

- Participate in clinical supervision in accordance with local standard operating procedures and/or the RCH Allied Health Clinical Supervision Guideline which are based on the DHHS Allied Health Clinical Supervision Framework

Organisation and Planning

- Apply developed organisational skills

Research

- Understand the principles of evidence-based practice
- Evaluate current practice with respect to the evidence
- Find, critically review, evaluate & interpret literature and apply to current role/service
- Support a research culture and agenda
- Share evidence appropriately (e.g., presents at journal club, special interest groups)

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Tertiary Qualification or equivalent in Education, Occupational Therapy, Social Work or current Child Life Specialist/Therapist status
- A minimum of 2 years continuous and relevant work experience is essential in a relevant discipline
- Thorough understanding of childhood development between the ages of 0-18 years
- Demonstrated commitment to work and contribute as part of a team

For Social Work applicants only:

- Eligible for membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers
- Meet AASW accreditation standards for Continuing Professional Education

For Occupational Therapist applicants only:

- Recognised graduate-entry qualification in Occupational Therapy (Bachelor, Masters or Doctorate)
- Current registration as an Occupational Therapist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

For teacher applicants only

- Current VIT Registration (registered teacher)

Desirable

- Experience with children and families from diverse backgrounds and with complex needs.
- An understanding of the healthcare sector
- Experience working in health or related field

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Thorough understanding of childhood development 0 - 18 years
- Excellent professional, interprofessional, interaction and self-reflection skills to enable effective work with people of different personalities and backgrounds
- The ability to engage children of different ages and abilities
- Ability to advocate for patients and their families
- An ability to balance sometimes competing and conflicting priorities

- Excellent computer literacy skills
- Ability to be calm in stressful situations

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Employees are required to undertake a National Criminal Record Check and a Working with Children Check prior to commencing employment
- Employees are required to maintain a valid Working with Children Check throughout their employment
- Employees are required to maintain compliance with RCHs "Staff Immunisation - Prevention of Vaccine Preventable Diseases" procedure.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

All employees are required to adhere to the Royal Children's Hospital Values:

- Curious - We are creative, playful and collaborative
- Courageous - We pursue our goals with determination, ambition and confidence
- Inclusive - We embrace diversity, communicate well, build connections and celebrate our successes together
- Kind - We are generous, warm and understanding

RCH COMPACT

All new and existing employees commit to the RCH Compact to contribute to a strong and respectful culture.

- We do better work caring for children and families when we also care for each other
- I bring a positive attitude to work – I share, I laugh, I enjoy other's company
- I take responsibility for my behaviour and its impact on others
- I am curious and seek out ways to constantly learn and improve
- I celebrate the good stuff, the small stuff, the big stuff – it all matters
- I speak up when things aren't right
- I value the many different roles it takes to deliver great patient care
- I actively listen because I want to understand others and make better decisions
- I am inclusive and value diversity
- When it comes to teamwork, I don't hold back – I'm all in

QUALITY, SAFETY AND IMPROVEMENT

RCH employees have a responsibility and accountability to contribute to the organisation's commitment to Quality, Safety and Improvement by:

- Acting in accordance and complying with all relevant Safety and Quality policies and procedures
- Identifying risks, reporting and being actively involved in risk mitigation strategies
- Participating in and actively contributing to quality improvement programs
- Complying with the requirements of the National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards
- Complying with all relevant clinical and/or competency standards
- Complying with the principles of Patient and Family Centred Care that relate to this position

The RCH is committed to a diverse and inclusive workforce. We encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, all members of the LGBTQI community and people with disability.

INHERENT REQUIREMENTS OF THIS ROLE

There are a number of critical work demands (inherent requirements) that are generic across all positions at The Royal Children's Hospital. The generic inherent requirements for this position are detailed below. These may be added to with more specific inherent requirements, if required, by your manager and Workplace Health & Safety.

Physical Demands		Frequency
Work Hours	This role is typically performed during standard business hours	Choose an item.
	This role requires shift work, including day, afternoon, night & weekends	Yes
	This role is required to participate in an on-call roster	No
Sitting – remaining in a seated position to complete tasks		Occasional
Standing – remaining standing without moving about to perform tasks		Frequent
Walking – floor type even, vinyl, carpet		Frequent
Lean forward/forward flexion from waist to complete tasks		Frequent
Trunk twisting – turning from the waist to complete tasks		Frequent
Kneeling – remaining in a kneeling position to complete tasks		Occasional
Squatting/crouching – adopting these postures to complete tasks		Occasional
Leg/Foot movement – to operate equipment		Rare
Climbing stairs/ladders – ascending/descending stairs, ladders, steps		Rare
Lifting/Carrying	Light – less than 5 kilos	Prolonged/Constant
	Moderate – 5-10 kilos	Occasional
	Heavy – 10-20 kilos	Not Applicable
Push/Pull of equipment/furniture	Light forces – less than 10 kilos	Frequent
	Moderate forces - 10-20 kilos	Occasional
	Heavy forces – over 20 kilos	Not Applicable
Reaching – arm fully extended forward or raised above shoulder		Occasional
Head/Neck Postures – holding head in a position other than neutral (facing forward)		Frequent
Sequential repetitive actions in short period of time	Repetitive flexion & extension of hands, wrists & arms	Frequent
	Gripping, Holding, twisting, clasping with fingers/hands	Frequent
Driving – operating any motor-powered vehicle with a valid Victorian driver's licence		Not Applicable
Sensory Demands		Frequent
Sight – use of sight is integral to most tasks		Prolonged/Constant
Hearing – use of hearing is integral to most tasks		Prolonged/Constant

Touch – use of touch is integral to most tasks	Prolonged/Constant
Psychosocial Demands	Prolonged/Constant
Observation skills – assessing/reviewing in/outpatients	Prolonged/Constant
Problem solving issues associated with clinical and non-clinical care	Prolonged/Constant
Attention to detail	Prolonged/Constant
Working with distressed patients and families	Prolonged/Constant
Dealing with aggressive and uncooperative people	Frequent
Dealing with unpredictable behaviour	Frequent
Exposure to distressing situations	Frequent

Position description last updated	August 2026
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