

Position Description | Te whakaturanga ō mahi Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

Title	Executive National Director, People, Culture and Health and Safety		
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer		
Location	Wellington/Auckland		
Department	Executive Leadership Team		
Direct Reports	8	Total FTE	c. 850 FTE
Budget Size	Opex	\$276M	Capex \$3.9M
Delegated Authority	HR	Tier 2	Finance Opex \$1m Capex \$500k
Date	May 2026		
Job band	Exec 3		

Health New Zealand is a delivery organisation and has a focus on the delivery of more and better health services to communities and patients. As resources are moved closer to our patients, families and communities waiting times are expected to rapidly decrease, access increase and the quality of care delivered improve. This needs to occur within an environment that maximises the value obtained from all expenditure and within the resources allocated to Health NZ.

About the role

This role leads the national People, Culture and Health and Safety business unit, sitting on the executive leadership team and reporting to the Chief Executive of Health NZ. People are at the heart of what we do as a healthcare system; this role leads the development and delivery of high quality and efficient national people strategies, policies, systems, employment negotiations, workforce plans and governance.

Immediate deliverables are:

1. The design, development and implementation of the Health NZ People Strategy, including a separate and clear approach to industrial and employment relations, in alignment with Health NZ priorities and goals.
2. Leads out discussion and changes to workforce employment models, enabling us to meet current and prepare for future models of care across the country; key work includes Senior Medical Officer remuneration models, ways of working across districts and regions, a digitally enabled workforce (with Digital Services) and effective agile rostering.
3. Ensures collective agreements are negotiated and resolved in a timely manner, in line with Public Service Commission expectations.
4. Leads a refresh of and the development of a compassionate culture for the organisation that delivers patient care that is responsive to individual and community services.

With delivery of people services, recruitment, industrial relations, culture and health and safety services undertaken through operational regional and local People Leads reporting to their national or regional executive leads, this role sets and monitors the frameworks, standards and processes used by the operational teams.

This role is crucial in driving innovation in people, culture, health and safety systems and will work closely with ELT colleagues to ensure delivery of the Government's Health targets and priorities.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators – Position Specific
Strategic Workforce Initiatives	- Is responsible for the development and implementation of the Health NZ People strategy. - Is the lead executive for the Board sub committee for People (Culture and Remuneration). - Designs people processes that support excellent leadership and provide an environment where the employee experience, development and performance management drive achievement of the organisation's strategic and business goals and support our people to thrive. Such strategies and processes are implemented and delivered by the operational P&C leads and their teams. - Creates the foundation of a compassionate culture where people have a collective sense of connection and belonging. - Creates an environment of high overall staff engagement and collaboration with approaches focussing on timely, transparent, targeted initiatives that lift and achieve organisational priorities and metrics. - Leads the development of strategic health system workforce plans and initiatives to ensure the health system including health NZ has a pipeline of capability and capacity necessary to deliver the Government's Health targets. The plan will include actions that grows health NZ's clinical workforces aligned to current and future models of care. - Facilitates two governance groups: the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee whose focus is on methods and actions that support excellence in health and safety, and the People and Culture Expert Advisory Group whose focus is on developing and designing people and culture systems. - Establishes P&C peer review systems for major investigations and performance and discipline processes, ensuring ongoing excellence in managing complex people practices. - Ensure through audit and verification activities that P&C policies are met across the system in particular recruitment, health and safety and remuneration. - Establishes regular connection with the Legal Team- Employment, ensuring standards, templates, escalation pathway and delegations are set for complex legal people matters.
Remuneration	- Sets the remuneration approach for Health NZ including remuneration benchmarking and delegations. - Responsible for setting the collective and IEA bargaining approaches, in consultation with the Public Service Commission. - Is the Executive lead for co-ordinating and publishing employee services such as sustainable transport and external discounts.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	- Is the accountable Executive for Health and Safety, including developing the organisational wide strategy, setting systems, policy, process and frameworks aligned to the Health & Safety at Work Act. - Leads the ELT governance session on health and safety including reporting, training and legislative assurance.

	Ensures sound reporting systems for Board, ELT, incident management and WorkSafe. This includes reporting major events and WorkSafe notifiable events to the CE and Board chair.
Emergency Management	- Sets the national emergency management systems that Health NZ uses across the country, including escalation pathways from local to regional to national events. - Provides assurance that emergency management drills occur and that regular CIMS and other emergency management training occurs and sufficient numbers of staff are trained.
HR Information, Processes and Automation	- Maintains compliant personnel records for all staff of Health NZ. - Ensure the effective implementation a national people and culture system (also called a human capital system) with the operational delivery leads that provides a 'single source of the truth' for information held on all staff and positions for the entirety of Health NZ and which provides the information managers require to manage their teams and enable the P&C teams to support the implementation of policy and processes. - Establishes online people processes, forms and advice that enable managers to complete their people management responsibilities simply and efficiently. - Establishes regular, accurate, insightful reporting on Health NZ's personnel by the end of 2026.
Payroll	- Manages payroll services nationally that pay individuals correctly, on time and every time for NZ's largest workforce. - Modernises and rationalises the multiple payrolls inherited from the DHBs and Shared Services organisations to provide a compliant, robust and accurate national payroll service including backup and disaster recovery. - Complete the Holiday's Act remediation and rectification for current staff in 2026 and former staff in 2027.
National Recruitment Systems	- Sets one recruitment policy, relevant position and offer templates as guidance for operational teams to use. - Establishes one E Recruitment system in the 2027/28 financial year. - Provides a one stop shop for international recruitment campaigns and rapid recruitment and onboarding.
Industrial Relations	- Ensures the organisation maximises value from our investment in our bargaining outcomes. - Leads the development of the Health NZ industrial relations strategy and engagement. - Builds trusted relationships with unions and professional bodies to ensure that our people feel that they have meaningful representation and engagement with management. - Ensures sound, early and timely bargaining including consultation with the Public Service Commission.
Collaboration and Relationship Management	- With colleagues, support the development and management of systems which addresses inequity, reduces need, promotes wellness, and recognises people and whānau as leading their own care - Models good team player behaviour, working with colleagues to not allow silo thinking and behaviour at decision making level to get in the way of doing our best and collegially supports others to do the same

Governance and Ownership	Ensure delivery by the Business Unit against the key accountabilities as outlined in the Government Policy Statement as agreed.
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	- Actively supports kaimahi Māori by improving attraction, recruitment, retention, development, and leadership - Remains focused on the pursuit of Māori health gain as well as achieving health outcomes for Māori.
Culture and People Leadership	- Lead, nurture and develop our team to make them feel valued - Prioritise developing individuals and the team so Health NZ has enough of the right skills for the future, supporting diversity of leadership to develop – Māori, Pacific, people with disabilities and others - Provides leadership that shows commitment, urgency and is visibly open, clear and innovative whilst building mutually beneficial partnerships with various stakeholders both internally and externally - Implement and maintain people strategies and processes that support provide an environment where employee experience, development and performance management drive achievement of the organisation's strategic and business goals
Innovation & Improvement	- Actively supports and galvanises new ideas and create a culture where individuals at all levels bring their ideas on how to 'do it better' to the table - Model an agile approach –tries new approaches, learns quickly, adapts fast - Develops and maintains appropriate external networks to support current knowledge of leading practices
Health & safety	- Exercises leadership and due diligence in Health and Safety matters and ensures the successful implementation of Health and Safety strategy and initiatives - Taking all reasonably practicable steps to eliminate and mitigate risks and hazards in the workplace that could cause harm, placing employee, contractor and others' health, safety, and wellbeing centrally, alongside high-quality patient outcomes - Lead, champion, and promote continual improvement in health and wellbeing to create a healthy and safe culture
Compliance and Risk	- Takes responsibility to ensure appropriate risk reporting, management and mitigation activities are in place - Ensures compliance with all relevant statutory, safety and regulatory requirements applicable to the P&C Business Unit - Understands, and operates within, the financial and operational delegations of the role, ensuring peers and team members are also similarly aware

Matters which must be referred to the CEO

Judgement should always be used when referring matters to the CEO, but should include:

- Significant issues with or risk to delivery of the people work programme
- Any matter that may affect the reputation of the organisation
- Any significant risk in the areas of Health and Safety or Industrial Relations

Relationships

External	Internal
Ministry of Health Public Service Commission	Health NZ Board and any relevant sub-committee CE and ELT peers

Treasury
Other Government Agencies as relevant
Unions
Professional Bodies
Tertiary Institutes
Providers and vendors

Teams across the P&C Business Unit

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- A tertiary qualification in a relevant area i.e. Human resources management, ER or a psychology related discipline and /or a relevant graduate and post graduate qualification in a related business subject
- A genuine passion for improving the health system for the benefit of all New Zealanders and a strong understanding of the important role that people leadership has to play in the transformation of the health sector
- Significant experience in People, Culture, HR related practises at an executive leadership level within large public facing multi-faceted or complex environments with multiple consumer and political interests and expectations
- Demonstrable system-wide experience in leading and managing through transformational system change, both within the organisation and externally
- Demonstrable experience in leading and managing an HR or people and culture/capability workforce within an organisation where a high level of organisational acumen and political nous was required to create and deliver a strategic plan together with a multi-layered operating model
- Demonstrable experience successfully ensuring employee engagement through change and leading cultural transformation of an organisation
- Significant experience of leading relationships with unions and leading industrial relations strategies working across central agencies
- Experience managing large budgets of public funding
- Experience operating in a confidential/secure environment with access to sensitive information
- Proven experience in successfully developing and maintaining a structured approach to managing a wide range of stakeholder and professional relationships both internally and externally
- Proven experience successfully leading large diverse teams through change and achieving improved results while navigating a highly nuanced and complex system
- Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including how to apply Te Tiriti principles in a meaningful way in your role

You will be able to

Essential:

- Maximise the quality and contributions of individuals and teams to achieve the organisation's vision, purpose and goals
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with people at all levels within the public and private sectors, related industry and community interest groups and the wider national and international communities
- Demonstrate a strong drive to deliver and take personal responsibility
- Demonstrate self-awareness of your impact on people and invests in your own leadership practice to continuously grow and improve
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal, professional and institutional behaviour through commitment, loyalty and integrity

This position description is intended as an insight to the main tasks and responsibilities required in the role and is not intended to be exhaustive. It may be subject to change, in consultation with the job holder.