

AUT

A FUTURE IN
**HEALTH
MANAGEMENT**

WHAT IS HEALTH MANAGEMENT?

When people think of health careers, they usually think of people in clinical roles – of nurses, physiotherapists, doctors. However, behind the clinical face of hospitals and healthcare, there's an army of health managers and administrators who make sure the wheels of health sector organisations keep turning in an informed and professional way.

Health managers manage a network of frontline workers, administrative staff and service suppliers within healthcare organisations. This could be state, private, community, aged and specialist health services.

These health organisations have considerably increased in size and complexity as they respond to higher and higher levels of compliance. These organisations need managers that understand the intricacies of the healthcare system, and have the ability to deal with operations and engage and manage staff. There is also a strong social responsibility involved in health management career paths.

Typically graduates enter co-ordinator roles in a wide range of areas, such as diabetic retinal screening, Māori research, suicide prevention, recruitment and allocation. They move on to advisory, team and programme leader roles, then management roles.

Are you interested in the business side of public health and organisational structure? Do you enjoy problem-solving and helping people? Are you someone who is good at leading people? Are you confident in working with a diverse range of people? Do you want to improve the health sector?

If so, a career in health management might be just the pathway for you.



OUTLOOK AND TRENDS

Need for financial sustainability – There is increasing pressure to ensure health systems are financially sustainable. This requires health managers to efficiently manage the complexity and costs of delivering healthcare while financing high-quality and effective care for patients. A global consortium, under the International Hospital Federation, is calling on governments and the international healthcare community to recognise that healthcare performance and improvement are significantly dependent on the existence and quality of professional management of healthcare organisations.

Integrated care growing – The Ministry of Health is promoting integrated care, especially for chronic conditions such as diabetes. This requires management and clinical professionals to work together in teams, removing operational barriers and standardising front-end interactions. As a result, managers with a solid understanding of the complexities of health services are becoming more attractive to organisations.

Population health management – Public and private health systems are working to improve and optimise the health outcomes of patient populations (population health management) for individuals, families and communities. Population health management challenges include rising incidence and prevalence of multiple chronic conditions, alongside advances in technology and therapies that help people live longer. Professional health managers can make a difference.

Digital transformation and disruption – Advances in digital technologies are changing and reshaping the way health services are delivered, offering new care delivery models and driving cheaper, more precise and less invasive treatment and therapies. This offers opportunities for skilled health managers to manage this change.

Opportunities for Māori and Pacific graduates – Māori and Pacific people are over-represented amongst those requiring community and hospital health services. Yet there is a large shortage of Māori and Pacific health leaders and managers that is creating strong employment opportunities for those graduates.

WORK SETTINGS

Graduates usually start their careers in entry roles as co-ordinators in district health boards, public hospitals and primary health organisations. They also find work in private clinics and hospitals and retirement facilities, community-based services and non-profit organisations (eg Cancer Society and Alzheimer's NZ), as well as in health education. Statutory bodies and crown entities, such as ACC and the Health Quality & Safety Commission (HQSC), also offer work opportunities.

Team leader and mid/senior managerial roles may open up to graduates with 3–5 years' experience.

POTENTIAL CAREER ROLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Healthcare compliance and quality manager

Provide quality processes and improving patient engagement and satisfaction while ensuring compliance, according to organisational directives. Looks after the daily implementation of compliance policies, reviews and analyses results, co-ordinates audit responses and communicates these internally and externally.

Graduates typically enter associate or quality co-ordinator roles. Team leader/management opportunities usually require at least three years' experience.

Health programme manager

Manage the overall health programmes of an organisation. Designs plans and administers policies and programmes that promote health and wellbeing. This could be managing particular healthcare programmes such as diabetes care, or the general health and wellbeing of an organisation's workforce.

Graduates typically enter an assistant or advisor role. Team leader or management opportunities usually require at least three years' experience.

Support service co-ordinator/manager

Co-ordinates day-to-day operations and delivery of quality support services, working with people with high and complex rehabilitation and support needs. Ensures work practice standards are understood and services are maintained efficiently and responsively.

Team leader and management opportunities usually open up for graduates after three years' experience.

Project and programme manager

Works with regional groups to support and co-ordinate the implementation of strategies and management of contracts.

Is experienced in setting up project structures, governance, processes and the requirements/needs of the health system.

Team leader or management opportunities usually require at least three years' experience.

Graduates may move into this role once they have at least three years of experience at coordinator and/or team leader level.

Health services manager

Responsible for day-to-day running of a hospital, primary health organisation (PHO), clinic, community health service or a private health provider. Helps develop and review strategic plans and liaises with other health providers, district health boards and funding bodies, to ensure their service is meeting government health policy requirements and local health needs. Prepares funding applications to district health boards and the Ministry of Health for new services.

Opportunities for health manager roles may open up after at least five years' experience.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of the provision of health services, including multiple health and wellness needs and social, cultural and economic factors.
- Work effectively in interprofessional teams to provide culturally appropriate co-ordinated support and practical administrative, management and negotiating skills to healthcare clients, providers and institutions.
- Analyse and interpret health-related information for the appropriate creation, use, storage and release of health records and other information.
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of appropriate technologies to locate, access and present information.
- Identify and discuss administrative needs within the context of the health sector and health organisations.
- Communicate and mediate with clarity and empathy between clients, health sector providers and institutions.
- Advocate in a culturally appropriate manner for access to coordinated services and wellness initiatives for individuals.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- A decision maker and problem-solver
- Skills in engaging with diverse communities
- Strongly interested in New Zealand's healthcare system
- Excellent communicator, verbally and written
- An effective organiser and planner

SALARY GUIDE

Salary levels vary depending on whether the role is in the private or health sector.

Support services co-ordinator	\$44,472 (graduate role) \$70,000–\$75,000 (five years plus)
Compliance and quality co-ordinator	\$46,000–\$73,000
Health services manager	\$65,000–\$88,000 (starting) \$90,000–\$125,000 (approximately five years' experience)
Quality assurance manager	\$57,000–\$110,000 (minimum of five years' experience)

Sources: PayScale, Careers NZ. Salary range is indicative of the New Zealand job market at the time of publication (early 2021) and should only be used as a guideline.

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION

Bachelor of Health Science in Health Management graduates are eligible to join the Aotearoa branch of the industry body Australian College of Health Service Management (ACHSM). The college offers two levels of professional certification – Certified Health Manager (CHM) and Certified Health Executive (CHE).

THE AUT APPROACH

The Bachelor of Health Science in Health Management is the only NZ qualification offering undergraduate study in health management. The degree was set up in response to Ministry of Health calls for training in health management at undergraduate level.

The programme is run in collaboration with AUT Business School that delivers courses in Managing and Organising, and HR Management. Courses include Health Records Management, Health Economics and Medical Terminology.

All students do 150 hours of placement in their third year, in organisations such as District Health Boards (DHBs), ACC, Auckland Council, Health Quality & Safety Commission and not-for-profit entities, such as Framework Trust.

FURTHER STUDY OPTIONS

Further study is available at postgraduate level in health management, including master's and PhD level study. Examples of current research include healthcare ethics, health policy, digital health, data mining and social networking.



RAKHI JAISON

Practice Manager – Waitakere Union Health Centre
Bachelor of Health Science in Health Administration
(now Health Management)

EMPLOYER COMMENT

Health management is a role where you can make a tangible difference to the health outcomes of the population the centre serves. It offers many career opportunities in a complex and rapidly changing funding environment. There are a range of practices with different goals, populations and sizes and experience in primary care often provides a stepping stone to work within the DHBs or Ministry of Health.

We look for a range of skills including experience with the complex claim systems in primary care, the ability to see the nuances of complex staffing situations and strategies, knowledge of the wider primary care environment, a vision which fits with the Centre's philosophies – and an open friendly attitude.

Take time to learn from the team you work with – but also be confident that your new voice may bring valuable new insights even though other staff may sometimes see authority as equating to experience and age.

Dr Siobhan Trevallyan,
Clinical Director and General Practitioner for
Waitakere Union Health Centre

"I studied health management because I wanted to help people and make a difference to their lives and I really believe I'm doing that at Waitakere Union Health Centre where we offer free nurse and doctor consultations to children, people 65 and older and Union members and family.

A big part of this job as practice manager is finding ways to run the practice through other funding streams so I do a lot of assessing of systems and processes and helping with negotiations with the PHO, MOH and DHB.

My role also focuses on managing my team in areas such as human resources, health and safety, finance, property etc. For example, if a team member is sick, everyone's workload increases so we have to make sure our service levels are maintained and staff are looked after.

I started here as practice manager in January (2021) and work with a team of 14, including six doctors, four nurses, two front desk people, and a registrar. Before that I worked for 18 months at National Hauora Coalition, a PHO, providing business advisory support. When I first graduated, I worked as clinical co-ordinator for the NZ College of Chinese Medicine.

Advice for new graduates

Success comes from taking challenges and being open to an adventure. Even as a new graduate, don't underestimate the value you can bring to your organisation."

USEFUL WEBSITES

Health Navigator NZ

www.healthnavigator.org.nz

Australasian College of Health Service Management (ACHSM)

www.achsm.org.au

ACHSM – Aotearoa

www.achsm.org.au/about-us/branch-councils/new-zealand

FURTHER INFORMATION

For the most up-to-date information on health management programmes, visit:
www.aut.ac.nz/health-management

EMPLOYABILITY & CAREERS

For other Future Career Sheets visit:
www.aut.ac.nz/careersheets


For employability and career support, AUT students can book an appointment through
<https://elab.aut.ac.nz/>

CURRENT AUT STUDENTS

Contact the Student Hub Advisors team for more information: 0800 AUT UNI (0800 288 864)

www.aut.ac.nz/enquire


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FUTURE STUDENTS

Contact the Future Student Advisory team for more information: www.aut.ac.nz/enquire

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The information contained in this career sheet is correct at time of printing, early 2021.

