



## ROLE DESCRIPTION

<b>Role Title:</b>	Genetic Counsellor
<b>Classification Code:</b>	AHP2
<b>LHN/ HN/ SAAS/ DHA:</b>	Women's and Children's Health Network
<b>Hospital/ Service/ Cluster</b>	Women's and Children's Health Network
<b>Division:</b>	Division of Paediatric Medicine
<b>Department/Section / Unit/ Ward:</b>	Paediatric and Reproductive Genetics Unit
<b>Role reports to:</b>	Medical Unit Head, Paediatric and Reproductive Genetics Unit via the Senior Genetic Counsellor.
<b>Role Created/ Reviewed Date:</b>	September 2024
<b>Criminal History Clearance Requirements:</b>	Working with Children Check (issued by DHS) National Police Check (issued by approved provider) If applicable - NDIS Worker Check (issued by NDIS Commission)
<b>Immunisation Risk Category</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Category A (direct contact with blood or body substances) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category B (indirect contact with blood or body substances)

## ROLE CONTEXT

### Primary Objective(s) of role:

- > Accountable to the Head, SA Clinical Genetics Service for the effective delivery of all aspects of the genetic counselling process to families who access the SA Clinical Genetics Service.

### Direct Reports:

- > Nil

### Key Relationships/ Interactions:

- > Reports to the Medical Unit Head, through the corresponding Senior Genetic Counsellor.
- > Works with his/her peer group of Clinical Geneticists and Genetics Counsellors within the South Australian Clinical Genetics Service.
- > Works closely with staff from Genetics and Molecular Pathology Directorate and other staff from SA Pathology.

### Challenges associated with Role:

Major challenges currently associated with the role include:

- > To ensure that services of the SA Clinical Genetics Service are delivered to best practice standard, and improve health outcomes.
- > To establish and maintain strong professional links within and external to WCHN and SA Pathology, and on a state-wide and national level.
- > To value and respect the needs and contributions of WCHN Aboriginal staff and clients, and commit to the development of Aboriginal cultural competence.
- > To value and respect the different cultural practices of our patients and parents from immigrant families as well as ensuring complete understanding of issues when they are not English speaking.

### Delegations:

- > As per Women's and Children's Health Network delegations.

### Resilience:

SA Health employees persevere to achieve goals, stay calm under pressure and are open to feedback.

## Performance Development

The incumbent will be required to participate in the organisation's Performance Review & Development Program which will include a regular review of the incumbent's performance against the responsibilities and key result areas associated with their position and a requirement to demonstrate appropriate behaviours which reflect a commitment to SA Health values and strategic directions.

## General Requirements:

Managers and staff are required to work in accordance with the Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector, Directives, Determinations and Guidelines, and legislative requirements including but not limited to:

- > *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)* and when relevant WHS Defined Officers must meet due diligence requirements.
- > *Return to Work Act 2014 (SA)*, facilitating the recovery, maintenance or early return to work of employees with work related injury / illness.
- > Meet immunisation requirements as outlined by the *Immunisation for Health Care Workers in South Australia Policy Directive*.
- > Equal Employment Opportunities (including prevention of bullying, harassment and intimidation).
- > *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)* 'Notification of Abuse or Neglect'.
- > Disability Discrimination.
- > *Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 (SA)*.
- > *Information Privacy Principles Instruction*.
- > Relevant Awards, Enterprise Agreements, *Public Sector Act 2009*, *Health Care Act 2008* and the *SA Health (Health Care Act) Human Resources Manual*.
- > Relevant Australian Standards.
- > Duty to maintain confidentiality.
- > Smoke Free Workplace.
- > To value and respect the needs and contributions of SA Health Aboriginal staff and clients, and commit to the development of Aboriginal cultural competence across all SA Health practice and service delivery.
- > May be responsible for supervision and oversight of volunteers assigned within the department, in collaboration with the WCHN Volunteer Unit. Refer to Volunteer Engagement and Management Procedure
- > Applying the principles of the *South Australian Government's Risk Management Policy* to work as appropriate.
- > All employees required to complete timesheets must forward their timesheet to their manager, within two weeks from the period worked, to enable their manager to authorise that this is a true and accurate record of hours worked by the employee.

The SA Health workforce contributes to the safety and quality of patient care by adhering to the South Australian Charter of Health Care Rights, understanding the intent of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and participating in quality improvement activities as necessary

## Handling of Official Information:

By virtue of their duties, SA Health employees frequently access, otherwise deal with, and/or are aware of, information that needs to be treated as confidential.

SA Health employees will not access or attempt to access official information, including confidential patient information other than in connection with the performance by them of their duties and/or as authorised.

SA Health employees will not misuse information gained in their official capacity.

SA Health employees will maintain the integrity and security of official or confidential information for which they are responsible. Employees will also ensure that the privacy of individuals is maintained and will only release or disclose information in accordance with relevant legislation, industrial instruments, policy, or lawful and reasonable direction.

### Special Conditions:

- > It is mandatory that no person, whether or not already working in SA Health, may be appointed to a position in SA Health unless they have provided a satisfactory current Criminal and Relevant History Screening, as required by the SA Health Criminal and Relevant History Screening Policy Directive.
- > For appointment in a Prescribed Position under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act (2016)*, a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) is required from the Department for Human Services Screening Unit, and must be renewed every 5 years from the date of issue
- > For 'Risk Assessed Roles' under the *NDIS Worker Screening Rules 2018*, the individual's NDIS Worker Check must be renewed every 5 years from the data of issue (or are required to be compliant with transitional arrangement for South Australia).
- > Failure to renew required criminal history screenings prior to nominated expiry will require your absence by way of approved leave until a renewal is obtained.
- > A satisfactory National Police Certificate (NPC) assessment is required.
- > Appointment is subject to **immunisation risk category requirements** (see page 1). There may be ongoing immunisation requirements that must be met.
- > As a state-wide service, WCHN employees may be required to undertake work at various locations in metropolitan Adelaide, and provide outreach to other parts of South Australia (the latter in consultation with the incumbent of the role).
- > Depending on work requirements the incumbent may be transferred to other locations across SA Health to perform work appropriate to classification, skills and capabilities either on a permanent or temporary basis subject to relevant provisions of the Public Sector Act 2009 for Public Sector employees or the SA Health (Health Care Act) Human Resources Manual for Health Care Act employees.
- > The incumbent may be required to participate in Counter Disaster activities including attendance, as required, at training programs and exercises to develop the necessary skills required to participate in responses in the event of a disaster and/or major incident.
- > This Role Description provides an indication of the type of duties you will be engaged to perform. You may be lawfully directed to perform any duties that a person with your skills and abilities would reasonably be expected to perform.

### Zero Tolerance to Racism:

The Women's and Children's Health Network has zero tolerance to racism. The Network is committed to ensuring its staff, volunteers, consumers and visitors are able to work or access health services in an environment that is culturally safe and free from any form of racism or discrimination.

Our staff are supported to address any form of racism in all environments, in line with our Corporate Procedure: ***Zero Tolerance to Racism – Identifying, Responding, and Managing in the Workplace.***

### White Ribbon:

SA Health has a position of zero tolerance towards men's violence against women in the workplace and the broader community. In accordance with this, the incumbent must always act in a manner that is non-threatening, courteous, and respectful and will comply with any instructions, policies, procedures or guidelines issued by SA Health regarding acceptable workplace behaviour.

## Key Result Area and Responsibilities

Key Result Areas	Major Responsibilities
<p><b>As part of a team, delivery under supervision and with increasing levels of responsibility of a comprehensive and confidential genetic counselling service directly to individuals couples and families to ensure that:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; They understand the medical and genetic aspects of the disorder and the emotional and social effects on affected individuals, carers, those at-risk and other family members.</li> <li>&gt; They have all the information they need to make informed choices with regard to healthcare, reproductive options, and life plans.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The role of the genetic counsellor in the genetic counselling process includes:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Establishing a relationship with the client and eliciting the client's concerns and expectations.</li> <li>&gt; Eliciting and interpreting appropriate medical, family and psychosocial history.</li> <li>&gt; Maintaining appropriate documentation and computer-based records.</li> <li>&gt; Making appropriate and accurate genetic risk assessment.</li> <li>&gt; Conveying clinical and genetic information (verbal and written) to clients appropriate to their individual clinical needs.</li> <li>&gt; Acknowledging the implications of individual and family experiences, beliefs, values and culture for the genetic counselling process.</li> <li>&gt; Making a psychosocial assessment of client's needs and resources and provide support, ensuring referral to other agencies as appropriate.</li> <li>&gt; Using a range of counselling skills to facilitate clients' adjustment and decision making.</li> <li>&gt; Assisting in organising tests and collection of samples.</li> <li>&gt; Working cooperatively and collaboratively with members of other disciplines, both clinical and laboratory.</li> <li>&gt; Providing follow-up for clients in relation to both genetic and psychosocial issues.</li> <li>&gt; Coordination of counselling and genetic testing in a client's extended family.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assist with the organisation of, and attend as required, clinics of the SA Clinical Genetics Service in metropolitan Adelaide and country South Australia.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Represent the unit as a participant of multidisciplinary clinics &amp; meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supervision of counsellors:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; For a Genetic Counsellor with two or more years of clinical experience, provide counselling supervision to less experienced Genetic Counsellors and oversee the supervision of counselling students on placement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promote appropriate use of genetic services by:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Participating in the education of professional and community groups with regard to genetic disorders and genetic counselling, and act as a resource person on these matters.</li> <li>&gt; Liaising with referring practitioners and agencies, and with community groups.</li> <li>&gt; Participating in the establishment and facilitation of relevant support groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maintain high standards of genetic counselling practice by:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Keeping abreast of information, resources and research in the area of genetic counselling.</li> <li>&gt; Evaluating own practice.</li> <li>&gt; Participating in quality assurance, continuing education, staff development and research programs.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Maintaining administrative records and statistical data.</li><li>&gt; Participating in Departmental staff meetings.</li><li>&gt; Participating in the activities of relevant professional groups, including attendance at relevant conferences.</li><li>&gt; Participating in supervision (individual and/or group as required).</li><li>&gt; Participating in the HGSA Maintenance of Professional Standards program (MOPS).</li></ul>
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## **Knowledge, Skills and Experience**

### **ESSENTIAL MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Educational/Vocational Qualifications**

- > You will hold an undergraduate degree or equivalent qualification such as Nursing, Social Work or Science with a postgraduate Masters in Genetic Counselling or equivalent, and be eligible and committed to completion of Certification in Genetic Counselling as required by the Board of Censors for Genetic Counselling, Human Genetics Society of Australasia.

#### **Personal Abilities/Aptitudes/Skills:**

- > A high level of communication skills.
- > Ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively as a member of a team.
- > Enthusiasm and a high level of self-motivation.
- > The ability to work independently.
- > Flexibility and ability to work effectively in an environment of organisational change.
- > Effective time-management skills.
- > Ability to cope with stressed individuals and families.
- > Advocacy and negotiation skills.
- > Computer literacy and competence in word processing and use of databases.
- > Ability to display integrity, sound judgement, and respect for confidentiality.

#### **Experience**

- > Experience in the delivery of genetic counselling services to individuals and families.

#### **Knowledge**

- > Knowledge of the social and emotional effects of genetic disorders on families.
- > Knowledge of the principles of genetics and genetic testing sufficient to understand and interpret genetic risks to individuals and families.
- > Knowledge of the principles of genetic counselling.
- > Knowledge of the ethical issues associated with genetic counselling and testing.

### **DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **Educational/Vocational Qualifications**

- > Additional qualifications and/or training in a relevant area.

#### **Personal Abilities/Aptitudes/Skills:**

- > An ability to innovate.
- > An interest in research.
- > Problem solving abilities.

#### **Experience**

- > Employment in a clinical genetics service or a community or hospital based health service
- > Provision of counselling, either genetic or other counselling
- > Liaison with community groups
- > Other clinical or counselling experience relevant to the position and role of a genetic counsellor

#### **Knowledge**

- > Knowledge of the operation of health care services in Australia
- > Knowledge of the management of genetic disorders
- > Other knowledge relevant to the position and role of a genetic counsellor

## Organisational Context

### Organisational Overview:

Our mission at SA Health is to lead and deliver a comprehensive and sustainable health system that aims to ensure healthier, longer and better lives for all South Australians. We will achieve our objectives by strengthening primary health care, enhancing hospital care, reforming mental health care and improving the health of Aboriginal people.

SA Health is committed to a health system that produces positive health outcomes by focusing on health promotion, illness prevention and early intervention. We will work with other government agencies and the community to address the environmental, socioeconomic, biological and behavioural determinants of health, and to achieve equitable health outcomes for all South Australians

### Our Legal Entities:

SA Health is the brand name for the health portfolio of services and agencies responsible to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing.

The legal entities include but are not limited to Department for Health and Wellbeing, Central Adelaide Local Health Network, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network, Southern Adelaide Local Health Network, Women's and Children's Health Network, Country Health SA Local Health Network and SA Ambulance Service.

### SA Health Challenges:

The health system is facing the challenges of an ageing population, increased incidence of chronic disease, workforce shortages, and ageing infrastructure. The SA Health Care Plan has been developed to meet these challenges and ensure South Australian's have access to the best available health care in hospitals, health care centres and through GPs and other providers.

### Health Network/ Division/ Department:

The Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN) was established to promote, maintain and restore the health of women, children and young people in South Australia. The Service plans, develops and coordinates health services as part of an integrated health system.

The Women's and Children's Health Network efficiently conducts and manages, within its identified resources, health services for children, young people and women, including:

- Specialist hospital services.
- Primary health care and population health programs.
- Integrated community care services.
- Services to address the health and wellbeing of particular populations, including Aboriginal Health Programs.
- Education and training programs.
- Research.

## Values

### SA Health Values

The values of SA Health are used to indicate the type of conduct required by our employees and the conduct that our customers can expect from our health service:

- > We are committed to the values of integrity, respect and accountability.
- > We value care, excellence, innovation, creativity, leadership and equity in health care provision and health outcomes.
- > We demonstrate our values in our interactions with others in SA Health, the community, and those for whom we care.

### Domestic and Family Violence

The WCHN recognises violence against women as a human rights issue that must be addressed in the workplace, and is committed to a zero tolerance policy towards violence against women in the workplace. Accordingly employees must appropriately report and respond to any such acts in the workplace, and make available appropriate support to employees who may be experiencing violence in the community.

### Code of Ethics

The *Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector* provides an ethical framework for the public sector and applies to all public service employees:

- > Democratic Values - Helping the government, under the law to serve the people of South Australia.
- > Service, Respect and Courtesy - Serving the people of South Australia.
- > Honesty and Integrity- Acting at all times in such a way as to uphold the public trust.
- > Accountability- Holding ourselves accountable for everything we do.
- > Professional Conduct Standards- Exhibiting the highest standards of professional conduct.

The Code recognises that some public sector employees are also bound by codes of conduct relevant to their profession.

## Approvals

### Role Description Approval

I acknowledge that the role I currently occupy has the delegated authority to authorise this document.

**Name:**

**Role Title:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

## Role Acceptance

### Incumbent Acceptance

I have read and understand the responsibilities associated with role, the role and organisational context and the values of SA Health as described within this document.

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**



# Accountability – what does it mean for me?

Within WCHN everyone is accountable for their contribution to the safety and quality of care delivered to consumers.

### Consumers

Consumers and their families participate as partners to the extent that they choose. These partnerships can be in their own care, and in organisational design and governance.

### Staff including Contractors, Locums, Agency, Students and Volunteers

All staff (as described above) have a role in the delivery of safe, high quality care to consumers, and are expected to perform their roles with diligence; and with a person-centred approach to the best of their ability. It is the responsibility of all staff to raise concerns when it is recognised that something is not right. Safety and quality is the responsibility of all staff, at all levels and across all locations.

### Clinicians

All clinicians are accountable for the provision of competent, consistent, timely, safe, reliable, contemporary and person centred care within a defined scope of practice.

Clinicians work in teams with professionals from a variety of disciplines based on mutual respect and clear communication, with an understanding of responsibilities, capabilities, constraints and each other's scope of practice.

All clinicians are responsible for providing care that is person centred, evidence based and which focuses on safety through minimising risk while achieving optimal outcomes for consumers. This is helped by participating in clinical governance, in WCHN health and safety forums, fostering a learning environment and supporting other clinicians to provide high quality services which are safe.

Clinicians are expected to speak up when there are concerns about safety so that these can be rectified and learnt from. Clinicians are accountable for their own individual professional practice, including maintaining currency of credentialing, registration and professional practice.

### Managers

Managers are accountable for implementing systems and practices that support high quality clinical practice. Managers oversee, guide and direct staff by providing leadership and advice ensuring appropriate clinical governance, continuous quality improvement, and leading safety programs. Managers develop, implement and monitor performance indicators for the identification, management and reporting of risk. Managers implement the Clinical Governance Framework; Consumer Engagement Framework and the requirements of the National Safety & Quality Standards within their areas of responsibility. Managers are expected to demonstrate diligence and honesty in the management of public resources.

Managers organise, direct and manage the performance of staff to meet operational requirements; implement and promote evidence based standards and policies that are compliant with relevant, professional, industrial and legislative requirements. Managers engage with and listen to staff, and create an environment where staff feel able to speak up in relation to concerns about safety. Managers address concerns raised and provide regular, ongoing feedback in the interests of improving care and safety.

### Executive/Divisional Directors

Executive/Divisional Directors are accountable for embedding the Clinical Governance Framework; Consumer Engagement Framework and the requirements of the National Safety & Quality Standards into their areas of responsibility and providing assurance to the Executive and Board that these systems are in place and work effectively, all risks are known and mitigated and that staff understand their safety and quality responsibilities.

It is expected that those holding senior leadership positions will model the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour.

### WCHN Committees

WCHN Committees support Executive Directors to implement and evaluate organisational systems, support divisions to work together to identify and mitigate risk and continuously improve practice. They support the organisation to work as a single entity.

### Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for safety, care delivery, system governance and monitoring.

### Board

The Board is accountable for governance, monitoring, compliance and ensuring the executive are discharging their responsibilities in managing the organisation.

## Four Strategic Priorities



Improved health and wellbeing of families and communities



Meaningful gains in Aboriginal health and wellbeing



Provide leading healthcare for women, babies, children and young people



Create one health network

## Key Enablers

Effective communication

Consumer and community engagement

Culture and leadership

Engaged and capable workforce

Enabling technology

Research

Productive partnerships

Contemporary infrastructure

Financial sustainability

Continuous improvement and innovation

**Mission** To improve the health and wellbeing of families and communities by providing integrated care and support

**Vision** To be a leading and respected health network for women, babies, children, young people and their families

**Values** Compassion, Respect, Equity, Accountability, Together for Excellence

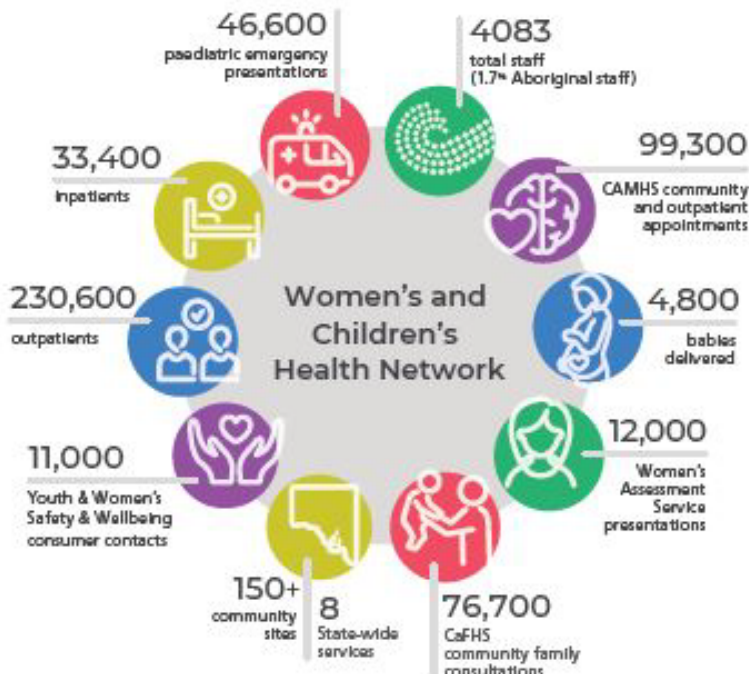
**Our Story** starts with our consumers and communities who are at the centre of everything that we do.

Our focus for the years ahead is to:

- Provide outstanding care and service
- Enhance our culture and leadership
- Design and deliver a new Women's and Children's Hospital
- Strengthen partnerships, expand innovation
- Through research, education and learning, inspire others, share specialist knowledge and deliver excellence in everything that we do
- Deliver an integrated WCHN

**Our Way** is underpinned by our agreed ways of working together that enable us as an organisation to:

- Share a common purpose and direction
- Use innovative and new ways to deliver our service
- Educate and support people to excel in the care that they give
- Grow and develop our current and future leaders
- Ensure that we have consistent behaviours and ways of working
- Implement processes and systems that are efficient and effective



State-wide services: Child and Family Health Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service, Disability Services, Child Protection Service, Metropolitan Youth Health, Women's Health Service, Women's Safety Strategy