STUDY THERAPIST - PAPAYA

NOVEMBER 2026

POSITION SUMMARY

Location:	Parkville		
Functional area:	Research		
Classification/ Salary:	Health Professionals and Support Services Award 2020, Health Professional Employee, Level 2 ($69.56 per hour inclusive of casual loading) + 12% super + access to $15,900 NFP salary packaging		
Job level:	Level 3		
Reports to:	Study Lead, Head of Substance Use Research		
Employment type:	Casual (approx. 0.3FTE)		
Employment length:	12 months		
Direct reports	0	Indirect reports	No

POSITION PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Study Therapist provides psychological therapy to participants of a research study entitled PAPAYA (Pharmacologically-Assisted Psychotherapy for social Anxiety in Young people with Autism). This multi-site randomised controlled trial funded by the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) is investigating an experimental combined pharmacological-psychological intervention for social anxiety in autistic young people. This is a triple blind study which aims to recruit 156 young people, 94 of whom will be recruited from Melbourne study sites.

The therapist is responsible for maintaining close fidelity to a manualised intervention, which includes components of existing evidence-based treatments (e.g. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) as well as novel components. The intervention is delivered in therapy dyads (i.e. two therapists working together with each young person). The psychotherapy protocol includes regular length sessions (i.e. 60-90 minutes) as well as extended psychotherapy sessions (up to 8 hours). All psychotherapy sessions will be video recorded to ensure fidelity to the intervention.

The Study Therapist will be expected to have the capacity to function autonomously while also working closely with other study therapists and the research team. They will carry a caseload of clients and will collect and enter research data in an accurate and timely fashion. The Study Therapist will receive support from study lead and study doctors and will be supported by regular staff meetings and close supervision (both operationally and clinically). Delivery of this experimental intervention is expected to

provide challenges beyond those in regular practice, requiring high levels of clinical skill to provide compassionate, structured and safe care to the study sample.

About Research
Orygen research delivers cutting-edge research, policy development, innovative clinical services, and evidence-based training and education for the mental health workforce to ensure that there is continuous improvement in the treatments and care provided to young people experiencing mental ill-health.

POSITION FOCUS

	Key responsibility area	Percentage
1	Clinical Intervention	70%
2	Research	20%
3	Other	10%

POSITION KEY RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

1. **Clinical Intervention**
   - Provide a manualised intervention, which includes components of existing evidence-based treatments (e.g. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) as well as novel components for study participants in accordance with study manuals and protocol with a high degree of fidelity. The intervention will include regular length sessions as well as longer psychotherapy sessions (i.e. 8 hours).
   - Deliver this intervention with a second co-therapist as part of a therapist team (i.e. dyad), working cooperatively with other study therapists.
   - Manage and undertake mental health and risk assessment, psychological treatment, and crisis intervention as necessary for study participants, and maintain accurate records of clients' progress in client files.
   - Attend clinical review meetings as required.

2. **Research**
   - Promote the research program, communicate regularly with, build and maintain collaborative working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
   - Participate in broader research team meetings.
   - Adhere to Good Clinical Practice for Research Guidelines.
   - Collect accurate data and complete outcome and fidelity measures for the purposes of the research trial in a timely manner. Complete data entry as required.

3. **Other**
   - Contribute to a culture of caring, teamwork, continuous improvement, constructive performance review, quality work standards and client service.
   - Work as part of the project team involving multidisciplinary clinical and research staff.
   - Work collaboratively with clinical staff as required in order to provide quality care to study participants.
   - May be required to perform other duties as reasonably directed by the Study Lead.

EDUCATION / QUALIFICATIONS

Essential	• Tertiary qualifications in allied health or health-related discipline and current registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency or equivalent experience and qualifications.

EXPERIENCE / SKILLS

Experience / skills	• Skill and significant experience conducting assessment, case formulation, and evidence-based psychotherapy with young adults with Autism and psychiatric comorbidities. Ability to engage young people with autism in psychotherapy. • Willingness to be trained in and conduct an experimental treatment modality that includes challenging components (i.e. extended therapy sessions of up to 8 hours duration). • A strong interest in youth-onset mental disorders and mental health interventions and an understanding of neurodevelopmental disorders and psychiatric comorbidities. • Proven skills in decision-making, problem-solving and maintaining appropriate boundaries, with ability to manage clinical risk appropriately and seek advice from clinical supervisor when required. • Clinical experience within an autonomous role with demonstrated ability to provide evidence-based therapy and independently maintain a case-load of young people in treatment. • Commitment to high quality clinical research embedded within treatment services. • Understanding of Acts and legislation relevant to working with young people in a mental health setting. • An understanding of Good Clinical Practice for Research. • Previous experience as a clinical trial therapist.
Personal attributes	• Ability to work collaboratively, flexibly and effectively with young people and their families, and a multidisciplinary team. • Highly developed organisational, administrative, and time management skills. • Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills (both verbal and written). • Excellent attention to detail including demonstrated capacity to maintain high quality, timely clinical records and to maintain up-to-date research data entry.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Internal	• Study Lead • PAPAYA study team and investigators • Headspace (Melton, Craigieburn, Sunshine, Werribee, and Glenroy) • Substance Use Research Group
External	• External investigators, Brain and Mind Centre, Sydney • Key Agencies • Community Groups

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Unrestricted right to live and work in Australia.
- A current National Police Check will be required.
- Any offer of employment is conditional upon receipt and maintenance of a satisfactory Working with Children Check.
- You may be required to work across more than one of Orygen's sites, which are currently located within the north and west of Melbourne.
- A current Victorian driver's licence.
- Willingness to deliver interventions either in person (with travel between sites) or via telehealth as required.
- In line with government guidelines, this position may need to be based at home during certain periods. As such a reliable internet connection will be required.
- Occasional out of hours, evening and/or weekend work may be required.

SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are required to comply with all workplace health, safety, quality and wellbeing policies and procedures of Orygen. In addition, employees are expected to:

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- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions and cooperate with Orygen's health, safety and wellbeing requirements.
- Champion a culture of safety and wellbeing by following relevant policies, procedures, training and guidelines, and promptly reporting incidents, hazards, near misses and safety concerns.
- Deliver work in accordance with Orygen's quality standards, clinical and practice guidelines governance, regulatory requirements, and continuous improvement processes.
- Contribute to culturally safe, respectful and inclusive workplaces and services, and support the safety, wellbeing and safeguarding of all children, young people and families engaged with Orygen.
- Recognise that work may involve exposure to sensitive information and potentially distressing content, including information related to mental health, and take steps to monitor and manage its impact on their own wellbeing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Confirming this position description has been read and understood by:

Name	[insert name]
Signature	[insert signature]
Date	[insert date]