

19 March 2025

The Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora Mentally Well Enablement team are very pleased to announce that the University of Canterbury is the first of two tertiary education providers to be awarded a contract that will contribute funding towards the development of the postgraduate diploma training for the Associate Psychologist role.

This tertiary provider will work collaboratively with Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora, the New Zealand Psychologists Board and other key stakeholders, to develop the qualification and the associated regulation of the role.

Associate Psychologists will be registered health professionals regulated by the NZ Psychologists Board. Their training will be reflective of the basic skills, knowledge, attributes, and application relevant to psychological practice in mental health and addiction settings. Foundational competence in te Ao Māori models and concepts, as well as knowledge of Pacific health models, will be a cornerstone of training.

Primary and secondary mental health services typically operate with multi-disciplinary teams that provide integrated care tailored to the diverse needs of individuals and their whānau. This new role is well-suited to addressing the lower-intensity aspects of care and is expected to increase access to psychological services, broaden the range of care available, and free up capacity for other team members to focus more intensively on individuals who require more specialised support.

Health NZ | Te Whatu Ora will focus on the requirements of employment including the support and supervision required for this role.

The first cohort of a minimum of 20 students will begin studying in 2026 with entry into the workforce available from 2027.

Ngā mihi nui