

Position Description

Position title:	Senior Legal Counsel
Department:	Executive
Classification:	Admin Officer Grade 8 Level 1 – 5 (AO81 – AO85)
Agreement:	Health and Allied Services, Managers and Administrative Workers Single Enterprise Agreement 2025-2027
Reporting to:	General Counsel

About us

Located in Melbourne on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, the Royal Women's Hospital is Australia's first and leading specialist hospital for women and newborns. We offer expertise in maternity services, neonatal care, gynaecology, assisted reproduction, women's health and cancer services. We advocate for women's health in areas that have long been overlooked or stigmatised, including abortion, endometriosis, family violence, female genital mutilation, menopause, women's mental health, sexual assault and substance use in pregnancy.

Our vision, values and declaration

The Women's vision, values and declaration reflect our promise to our patients and consumers, and articulate our culture and commitment to our community and each other.

Our vision is '**Creating healthier futures for women and babies**'. Our values are:



Courage



Passion



Discovery



Respect

The Women's declaration reflects the principles and philosophies fundamental to our hospital, our people and our culture.

- **We are committed to the social model of health**
- **We care for women from all walks of life**
- **We recognise that sex and gender affect health and healthcare**
- **We are a voice for women's health**
- **We seek to achieve health equity**

Our commitment to inclusion

The Women's is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment which enhances staff and consumer wellbeing, and nurtures a sense of belonging. We strongly encourage anyone identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander to join us. We offer a range of programs and services to support First Nations employees. We invite people with disability to work with us, and we welcome anyone who identifies as linguistically, culturally and/or gender diverse, people from the LGBTQIA+ community and people of any age.

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About the department/unit

The Office of the General Counsel ensures the Women's operates successfully within the complex regulatory and legislative framework in which it delivers services. The role is responsible for providing full service legal advice across a range of strategic and operational issues with a focus on effectively managing legal risk.

Position purpose

We are seeking a dedicated and experienced Senior Legal Counsel to join our team at the Women's. The Senior Legal Counsel plays a key role in supporting the strategic and operational objectives of the Women's by providing expert, timely and pragmatic legal advice. Working within a sensitive, high-risk clinical and research environment, the role addresses a wide range of legal issues, including medico-legal, privacy, guardianship, contract, health, research and governance matters.

Key responsibilities

- Provide legal guidance and support to hospital management, staff and departments on a wide range of legal issues
- Represent the hospital in legal proceedings, including litigation, VCAT proceedings, OVIC reviews, coronial investigations, settlement conferences and mediations
- Manage and oversee relationships with external legal counsel and other service providers, ensuring cost-effective and efficient delivery of legal services
- Work closely with and support the FOI team, advise on patient confidentiality and privacy matters, including FOI compliance, information sharing scheme and release of medical records
- Conduct legal research and stay abreast of developments in health law and regulations to ensure compliance and mitigate legal risk
- Provide legal risk awareness and legal literacy through training and education to the Women's staff on legal issues relevant to their roles and responsibilities
- Review, draft, and negotiate contracts, agreements, and other legal documents to protect the Women's interests and minimize risk
- Collaborate with internal stakeholders to develop and implement policies and procedures that comply with legal requirements and promote ethical practices
- Work with the General Counsel in their strategic planning and decision-making processes to ensure legal considerations are integrated into organizational goals and initiatives
- Work with the research office to review a range of research contracts including clinical trial agreements, material transfer agreements, IP assignments and confidentiality deeds, as well as consideration of key ethical concerns
- Contribute to the coordination of student placements in collaboration with academic partners
- Provide legal advice and assistance on internal complex patient and ethical review committees
- Supervise and mentor paralegals and law students on clinical placements, including assigning tasks, reviewing work, offering constructive feedback, and fostering professional development through structured guidance and exposure to legal practice in a public hospital setting
- Operate as the Acting General Counsel when the General Counsel is on leave.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

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KPI's are how you will be measured as meeting the responsibilities of the position. These will be set with you as part of your Performance Development Plan within the first six months of your appointment to the position.

Key selection criteria

Essential:

- A current practicing certificate as an Australian Legal Practitioner, issued by the Legal Services Board of Victoria and you are admitted to practice as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria.
- Minimum of 5 years of post admission experience practicing law, preferably with a focus on health law.
- Strong expertise in medico-legal and Coroner's Court litigation matters health law, privacy, FOI, and risk management
- Strong understanding of the legal framework of the public health sector and understanding of the social, ethical and financial issues associated with the delivery of public health services.
- Excellent analytical, communication, and negotiation skills, with the ability to convey complex legal concepts to non-legal stakeholders.
- High emotional intelligence and excellent communication, stakeholder management, and interpersonal skills
- Proven ability to work independently, manage multiple priorities, and thrive in a fastpaced environment.
- Demonstrated ability to provide practical legal advice and exercise sound judgment within a complex environment encompassing a broad range of legal issues at both strategic and operational levels.
- Experience practicing in the area of commercial contracts.
- Commitment to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and confidentiality.
- Demonstrated skills in conflict resolution and litigation.
- Experience working in a hospital or other health service.

Desirable:

- Embodies the Women's values of courage, passion, discovery and respect
- A commitment to, and understanding of, an organisation dedicated to women's health
- Enthusiastic about Women's health services
- Flexible approach to problem solving
- Excellent time management and prioritizing ability
- Advocates for women and their families

Inherent requirements

Inherent requirements are the essential tasks and activities that must be carried out in order to perform this role, including with adjustments. The Women's is committed to providing workplace adjustments that support all people to work with us. We welcome you to discuss any

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adjustments with the manager of this role during the recruitment process or at any time during your employment, as we acknowledge and understand circumstances can change. You can also request a copy of our workplace adjustments procedure for more information.

Physical demands	Frequency
Shift work – rotation of shifts – day, afternoon and night	Not applicable
Sitting – remaining in a seated position to complete tasks	Prolonged/Constant
Standing – remaining standing without moving about to perform tasks	Occasional
Walking – floor type even, vinyl, carpet,	Occasional
Lean forward/forward flexion from waist to complete tasks	Rare
Trunk twisting – turning from the waist to complete tasks	Not applicable
Kneeling – remaining in a kneeling position to complete tasks	Not applicable
Squatting/crouching – adopting these postures to complete tasks	Not applicable
Leg/foot movement to operate equipment	Not applicable
Climbing stairs/ladders – ascending and descending stairs, ladders, steps	Rare
Lifting/carrying – light lifting and carrying less than 5 kilos	Not applicable
– Moderate lifting and carrying 5 – 10 kilos	Not applicable
– Heavy lifting and carrying – 10 – 20 kilos.	Not applicable
Push/pull of equipment/furniture – light push/pull forces less than 10 kg	Rare
– moderate push / pull forces 10 – 20 kg	Not applicable
– heavy push / pull forces over 20 kg	Not applicable
Reaching – arm fully extended forward or raised above shoulder	Rare
Head/neck postures – holding head in a position other than neutral (facing forward)	Rare
Sequential repetitive actions in short period of time	Occasional
– Repetitive flexion and extension of hands wrists and arms	Occasional
– Gripping, holding, twisting, clasping with fingers/hands	Frequent
Driving – operating any motor-powered vehicle with a valid Victorian driver's license.	Not applicable
Sensory demands	Frequency
Sight – use of sight is integral to most tasks completed each shift	Prolonged/Constant
Hearing – use of hearing is an integral part of work performance	Frequent
Touch – use of touch is integral to most tasks completed each shift	Frequent
Psychosocial demands	Frequency
Observation skills – assessing/reviewing patients in/outpatients	Prolonged/Constant
Problem solving issues associated with clinical and non-clinical care	Prolonged/Constant
Working with distressed people and families	Occasional
Dealing with aggressive and uncooperative people	Occasional
Dealing with unpredictable behaviour	Occasional
Exposure to distressing situations	Prolonged/Constant

Definitions used to quantify frequency of tasks/demands as above

Prolonged/constant	70 – 100 % of time in the position
Frequent	31 – 69 % of time in the position
Occasional	16 – 30% of time in the position
Rare	1 – 15% of time in the position
Not applicable	0% of time in the position

Employee awareness and responsibilities

- Employees are required to be aware of, and work in accordance with, hospital policies and procedures.

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- Employees are required to identify and report incidents, potential for error and near misses, to improve knowledge systems and processes and create a safe environment for staff and patients.
- Employees agree to provide evidence of a valid employment Working with Children Check and provide complete details for the Women's to undertake a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC).
- Our vision is a future free from violence and discrimination in which healthy, respectful relationships are the norm. The Women's expects all staff to contribute to a culture that promotes and supports diversity, equity, respect and inclusion.
- The Women's provides pregnancy termination services as part of its public health responsibility to provide safe health care to women.

Vaccination requirements

As this role has direct physical contact with patients and clinical environments, employees are required to be vaccinated against or demonstrate immunity to influenza, COVID-19, whooping cough (pertussis), hepatitis B, chicken pox, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and may include hepatitis A, and complete screening for tuberculosis.

Employment with the Women's is conditional upon the provision of satisfactory evidence of vaccination and/or screening, and we may withdraw an offer of employment if the required evidence is not provided at least five business days prior to the intended start date.

Declaration

By accepting this position description electronically I confirm I have read, understood and agreed to abide by the responsibilities and accountabilities outlined.

Developed date: September 2025

Developed by: General Counsel

Date of next review: September 2026

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