



About FirstMate

FirstMate is a charity dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of people across New Zealand's commercial seafood sector. We understand that working at sea – whether fishing or marine farming – comes with unique pressures and challenges, both on and off the water. Our mission is to offer fishers, marine farmers, and their whānau the guidance, direction, and support they need to navigate these complexities and thrive.

Through our team of experienced Navigators, we provide free counselling services, to health and social services, and practical assistance during difficult times.

FirstMate truly understands what it means to be part of New Zealand's dynamic seafood industry – and we're here to help our community stay on course.

Position Description: Lead Navigator

Position Title: Lead Navigator

Reports To: General Manager

Position Purpose

The Lead Navigator is responsible for leading and coordinating the Navigator network, providing strategic direction and operational support to ensure effective delivery of mental health and wellbeing services to the seafood sector.

This role serves as the primary point of contact for the 0800 ADRIFT phone line and ensures navigators are equipped, supported, and connected to deliver quality outcomes for fishers, marine farmers, and their families.

Contract role: Part time position (0.5)

Key Responsibilities

Navigator Network Management & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide leadership, coordination, and day-to-day support to the Navigator network• Conduct regular check-ins with navigators to ensure wellbeing, address challenges, and maintain service quality• Foster a collaborative and supportive culture in the navigator team• Coordinate navigator workloads and ensure appropriate coverage across regions
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the GM and Project Manager to deliver a consultative Navigator skills analysis and KPI setting
Recruitment & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support recruitment processes for new navigators, including advertising, screening, interviewing, and onboarding • Support the development and delivery of comprehensive training programmes for navigators, covering mental health and wellbeing fundamentals, seafood sector context, and operational procedures • Identify ongoing professional development needs and facilitate upskilling opportunities • Maintain training resources to ensure consistency and quality
0800 ADRIFT Phone Line Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the operation of the 0800 ADRIFT phone line, ensuring appropriate coverage and response protocols • Monitor call volumes, trends, and outcomes • Ensure navigators are equipped to handle calls effectively and escalate complex situations appropriately
Systems & Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development, implementation, and maintenance of systems and processes that support efficient navigator operations • Ensure accurate record-keeping, data management, and confidentiality protocols • Continuously review and improve operational workflows /procedures • Support technology platforms and tools used by the navigators
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular reports to the General Manager on navigator activities, outcomes, and sector trends • Collect, analyse, and present data on service utilisation, impact, and emerging needs • Contribute to strategic planning and reporting requirements
Events & Campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the navigator network in delivering events and campaigns that promote mental health and wellbeing • Coordinate navigator involvement in sector events, expos, and community gatherings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify resources needed to support outreach activities
Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support relationships with industry bodies, Seafood Representative Entities (SREs), and the Board, local government officials (e.g. MPI fisheries officers) If required, represent the navigator network in meetings and forums Act as a liaison between navigators and key stakeholders to ensure alignment and collaboration
Key Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigator network General Manager Fishers and marine farmers Board members Industry stakeholders and partners, including Fisheries NZ Mental health and wellbeing service providers

Essential Skills & Experience

Seafood Sector Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrated understanding of the seafood sector, including fishing and marine farming operations Awareness of the unique challenges, culture, and working conditions within the industry
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate minimum five years' experience in leadership and people management skills
Community & Volunteer Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven experience working with volunteers and community networks Ability to motivate, support, and coordinate people working in diverse locations
Systems & Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong organisational skills with demonstrated capability in developing and managing systems and processes Experience with data management, reporting systems, and quality assurance

Mental Health & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of mental health and wellbeing drivers, particularly in relation to high-stress or isolated work environments • Ability to recognise signs of distress and respond appropriately • Commitment to maintaining confidentiality and professional boundaries
Relationship Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to connect authentically with diverse stakeholders • Comfortable engaging with people at all levels, from fishers and marine farmers to board members • Cultural competence and respect for diverse backgrounds and perspectives

Other Requirements

- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Self-motivated with ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Flexibility to travel and attend events as required
- Current driver's licence

Personal Attributes

- Empathetic and approachable with strong listening skills
- Practical problem-solver with initiative
- Resilient and able to maintain professional boundaries
- Passionate about mental health and wellbeing in the seafood sector
- Integrity and commitment to confidentiality

Note: This position may require occasional after-hours work and attendance at sector events.