



POSITION DESCRIPTION

September 2017

Position	Children's Counsellor and Group Facilitator
Program	Counselling and Case Management
Stream	Integrated Family Violence Services
Reports to	Team Leader – Counselling
Exemption	VCAT Exemption No. H119/2017 (subject to Equal Opportunity Act 2010)
EA 2017 Classification	Level 5
Located	Women's Health West, 317-319 Barkly Street, Footscray VIC 3011

Organisational Context

Women's Health West (WHW) is the women's health service for the western metropolitan region of Melbourne. We focus on supporting women and their children to lead safe and healthy lives and on changing the conditions that cause and maintain inequity and injustice. We do this through two main complementary programs. Our health promotion program plans and implements activities designed to promote women's health, safety and wellbeing across the areas of sexual and reproductive health, mental health and the prevention of violence and discrimination. Our integrated family violence service provides a range of programs to women and children who experience family violence including court support, crisis housing and case management. We also provide services designed to promote healing and recovery such as women's and children's counselling. We work collaboratively with communities, government and local agencies to influence public policy or change legislation, to improve access to services and resources, and to build individual, community and organisational capacity to improve the status of women. WHW is funded by local, state and federal government grants and receives additional funding from benevolent trusts and philanthropic organisations.

Position Purpose

The counselling program at WHW provides individual counselling and therapeutic group work to children and young people in the western metropolitan region to help them make sense of and recover from family violence. The children's counsellor reports to the counselling team leader and is responsible for providing trauma-informed and developmentally-appropriate counselling interventions to children who have been impacted by family violence. This position conducts assessment of children's counselling needs and provides child-focused counselling to children and their families. In collaboration with other members of the counselling team at WHW and staff at other agencies, the children's counsellor plans, co-facilitates and evaluates therapeutic groups for children in the region. This position also provides support and secondary consultation to both internal and external family violence services, as well as child and family services, regarding the needs of children and the impact of family violence on children's development. The children's counsellor is expected to contribute to the development and achievement of team and organisation goals, and to actively promote the development of a positive organisational and workplace culture in line with the principles of the organisation and the expectations of WHW's strategic plan.

Key Result Areas and Responsibility

Provide a range of child-focused and trauma-informed counselling and group work interventions to children and their families who have experienced family violence, ensuring that all therapeutic activities are adaptive and responsive to identified needs.

- Undertake assessments of children and their families to determine individual needs.
- Undertake ongoing family violence risk assessments of children and their families.
- Provide therapeutic counselling interventions to children, including using creative modalities such as art therapy and play therapy.
- Provide child-centered and trauma-informed family counselling interventions specific to the needs of children and their families.
- Attend regular 'placed-based' outposts in the western metropolitan region to improve access to counselling services for children and their families.
- Provide support and information to parents/caregivers regarding strategies for effective parenting specific to the needs of the child.
- Provide child-centred and trauma-informed single session counselling where required.
- In consultation with the counselling team leader, plan, co-facilitate and evaluate therapeutic groups for children.
- Develop and deliver therapeutic group content in consultation and collaboration with the counselling team and other agencies where appropriate.
- Actively promote the therapeutic groups to services that work with families impacted by family violence to enhance referrals to the groups.
- Ensure all counselling and therapeutic group activities are adaptive and responsive to the identified needs of children and their families.
- Performance of other duties that are required that are within the range of the employee's skills, competency and training.

Contribute to the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the integrated family violence services work plan in relation to children's counselling services.

- Actively monitor, in conjunction with the counselling team leader, performance standards against DHHS requirements to ensure ongoing accreditation for the children's counselling program.
- Maintain accurate case files, assessment documentation and case notes in a manner that will meet all auditing requirements of WHW, DHHS standards and legislative obligations.
- Ensure client critical incidents are managed and documented as per WHW policy and procedures and DHHS critical incident instructions.
- Ensure program data (IRIS) is collected to inform program planning and to meet data recording requirements of the DHHS and the WHW board.
- Contribute to program continuous quality assurance processes and programs.
- Provide written program status reports to the counselling team leader where necessary or required.

Provide support and secondary consultation to other WHW integrated family violence services staff and external service providers regarding the developmental needs of children and the impact of family violence (to ensure maximum collaboration and enhanced referral pathways).

- Provide support and secondary consultation to other members of the integrated family violence services team regarding the developmental needs of children and the impact of family violence.
- Provide trauma-informed support, secondary consultation and advocacy to external health, community and education service providers regarding the developmental needs of children and the impact of family violence.
- Participate in the delivery of trauma-informed community education sessions to external agencies from time-to-time, in collaboration with other staff.
- Actively promote WHW and our programs with our community partners to ensure maximum collaboration that supports positive outcomes for children and their families.

Contribute to the development and achievement of team and organisation goals through regular supervision and participation in professional development activities.

- In collaboration with the counselling team leader, participate in the development, monitoring and review of a clear work plan that sets out objectives, activities, outcomes and evaluation methods for this position.
- Participate in induction processes and probationary reviews as required.
- Participate in regular supervision and annual appraisal to discuss clients, workload and professional development (every two weeks or as agreed by counselling team leader).
- Participate in regular external clinical supervision on a *pro rata* basis.
- Engage in reflexive practice in supervision and with other members of the counselling team.
- Undertake identified training and professional development activities to support practice and skills development.
- Role model respectful and professional behaviour within the work environment at all times, including displaying initiative, openness, honesty, genuineness and transparency.

Contribute to processes that ensure collaboration and integration across and between WHW programs and service to achieve organisational goals and objectives.

- Actively participate in team, program, stream and staff meetings and planning days.
- Actively participate in cross-team and cross-stream mechanisms designed to facilitate links within and between the counselling team, the integrated family violence services stream and the whole organisation, ensuring that collaboration is embedded in all aspects of WHW's operations.
- Engage in organisation-wide strategies, plans and events to enhance WHW's reciprocal engagement with our clients and communities, including the client and community participation plan, the reconciliation plan and the feminist audit tool.
- Participate in organisational continuous quality improvement and risk management frameworks.
- Engage in activities and behaviours that actively promote the development of a positive organisational and workplace culture in line with the principles of the organisation and the expectations of WHW's strategic plan.

Key Selection Criteria

1. Tertiary qualifications in social work or related discipline and eligibility for AASW membership or other professional body. Clinical training in creative modalities (art therapy and/or play therapy) with children desirable.
2. Substantial direct service delivery experience providing assessments and therapeutic interventions, including those based on creative modalities, for children, young people and women from diverse communities who have experienced family violence and/or trauma.
3. A highly developed understanding of child development theory, trauma-informed therapeutic practice, attachment theory and the impact of family violence on the child and parent relationship.
4. A demonstrated understanding of legislation, theory and practice as it relates to the provision of family violence services to women and children and a commitment to children's rights and their application to service delivery.
5. Demonstrated commitment to the provision of high quality services, feminist policy and practice, and a culture of respect, collaboration and continuous learning.
6. Experience in developing and maintaining effective working relationships with external partners and agencies to improve service user and program outcomes.
7. Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to maintain client records and collect statistical data to inform agency reports.
8. Sound computer skills including use of data base applications.
9. Current Victorian driver's license.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

An initial review of performance will be undertaken within **six months** of commencement, as per WHW's probationary policy and procedure. Annual appraisals and support for development will relate to the key result areas above.

REVIEW OF POSITION DESCRIPTION

This position description will be reviewed **biennially** as part of the annual appraisal process, when the position becomes vacant, or as deemed necessary.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT WHW

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and those who speak languages other than English are encouraged to apply.
2. Women's Health West is a Child Safe Organisation and employment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a national Police Record Check and a Working with Children Check. An international police check is also required if you have lived or worked overseas for more than 12 months in the last 10 years.
3. In the context of work health and safety, all employees are required to carry out their duties in a manner that does not adversely affect their own health and safety or that of others. All incidents and injuries must be reported and staff must co-operate with any measures introduced in the workplace to improve WH&S.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have specific queries about this position please contact the Team Leader - Counselling on 9689 9588.

To apply for this position, please send your written application addressing the key selection criteria marked 'Confidential' to the address below. Please include three nominated referees, including your most recent line manager.

Recruitment
Women's Health West
317-319 Barkly Street
FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011
recruitment@whwest.org.au