

Position Description

Title	Senior Counsellor
Business Unit	Family Services, Southern Melbourne
Location	51 Princes Highway, Dandenong
Employment type	Part time (60.8 hours per fortnight) Maximum term to 30 June 2024
Reports to	Team Leader – Family Services

About Uniting

Uniting Vic.Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We've been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We work alongside people of all ages in local communities in Victoria and Tasmania. Our services reach to Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, the Wimmera region in the west, and across Tasmania.

We empower children, young people and families to learn and thrive. We're there for people experiencing homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction or mental illness. We support people with disability to live the life they choose. We assist older people to maintain their independence and enjoy life. We provide opportunities to access training and meaningful employment. We're proud to welcome and support asylum seekers to our community. We work to empower people with the information, skills and tools they need to live a healthy, happy life.

As an organisation, we work in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

We celebrate diversity and value the lived experience of people of every ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) people at our services. We pledge to provide inclusive and non-discriminatory services.

Our purpose: To inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice

Our values: We are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold

1. Position purpose

The aim of the Senior Counsellor role is to provide a therapeutic counselling service as part of the service response to complex families who are receiving family services in the Southern Metropolitan Area and Bayside Peninsula.

The purpose of the Senior Counsellor position is to:

- Promote and facilitate safe, stable and nurturing environments for vulnerable children and families within our community especially those with complex needs;
- Make a positive contribution to children's adjustment and development by designing and implementing tailored therapeutic interventions for vulnerable children and their families;
- Provide professionals and community stakeholders with professional development opportunities that promote the most effective approaches and contemporary knowledge in working with vulnerable children and families; and
- Work as part of the care team to support children in their family context

2. Scope

Position Description

Senior Counsellor

Budget:

nil

People:

nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Family Services Team Leader
- Clinical Services Leader
- Family Services and Uniting staff

External

- DHHS Professionals and other workers from schools, community and health organisations involved with clients

4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Provide accessible and quality psychological services for children, young people, their carers and families, who have moderate to complex therapeutic needs and are receiving family services;
- Tailored training regarding a range of clinical issues for carers and professionals supporting children who have experienced trauma
- Provide group programs for children, parents and carers in line with the service delivery requirements

Duties & responsibilities

- Provision of counselling/therapy to children, adolescents, families and carers whilst identifying and managing risk issues for children and staff
- Provision of specialist consultation to practitioners, client families and other professionals
- Facilitation and participation in a reflective learning environment within the program and organisation
- Develop and maintain skills and ethical practice to a high level according to best contemporary practice
- Manage the development and delivery of specific portfolio projects
- Manage the development and co-ordination of groups for families, children & young people
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality as per organisational policy
- Maintain data systems including timely collection, uploading and reporting
- Active mentoring to students / interns and other staff
- Maintain professional conduct and ethical practice in accordance with the Code of Ethics of relevant professional society and Uniting policies
- Other projects and duties, as required

Administration

- Contribute to developing program-related literature and documentation
- Collect and analyse data to support strategic direction of the program
- Write high quality, accurate, timely and thorough documentation of client work
- Additional reporting as required for stakeholders such as for Department of Family Fairness and Housing. (former DHHS)

Position Description Senior Counsellor

Southern Region

- The position will be based primarily at Dandenong however the Senior Counsellor will also be required to travel to other Uniting offices and locations across Southern Melbourne and Bayside Peninsula.

Quality and risk

- At the direction of the Family Services Team Leader, participate in the development and implementation of continuous improvement and risk mitigation strategies.

Personal accountability

- Compliance with Uniting's values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant.
- Cooperate with strategies to actively ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children who come into association with us.
- Ensure appropriate use of resources.
- Work collaboratively with Uniting (Victoria Tasmania) employees and external stakeholders in accordance with Uniting's values and professional standards of behaviour.
- Actively participate in initiatives to maintain, build upon and promote a positive and collaborative workplace.
- Identify opportunities to integrate and work collaboratively across teams.
- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and health and safety of others (to the extent required).
- Promote a positive safety culture by contributing to health and safety consultation and communication.
- Promptly respond to and report health and safety hazards, incidents and near misses to line management
- Attend mandatory training sessions (i.e. equal employment opportunity, health, and safety) and mandatory training specific to position.
- Declare anything that you become aware of through the course of your engagement which may impede your suitability to work with children and/or young people.
- Declare any potential or actual conflict of interest that you become aware of through the course of your engagement:
 - Based on a relationship with a current member of Uniting's workforce
 - Based on my ongoing work with another organisation

5. Person specification

Qualifications

- Mandatory: Bachelor's Degree in Psychology or Social Work (other relevant qualifications will be considered)
- Desirable: Full Registration as a Psychologist with AHPRA or Mental Health Accredited Social Worker eligible for AASW membership or Counsellor accredited through ACA or PACFA
- Current Victorian Driver Licence

Experience

- Experience providing assessments, therapy / counselling services to children, adults, couples, and families with complex needs. This would mean that you have completed counselling with complex clients.
- Experience providing family and/or couple relationship counselling – Desirable
- Experience facilitating psycho-therapeutic groups – Desirable

Position Description Senior Counsellor

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values.
 - **Child safety:** Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
 - **Technical Knowledge:**
 - Demonstrated knowledge of relevant theoretical approaches for working with children, adults, couples, and families.
 - A clear understanding of the issues facing families, children and young people who have experienced trauma and/or attachment difficulties
 - Some experience providing parenting assessment, strategies, and education to carers and parents of vulnerable children with challenging behaviours
 - Shows awareness and understanding of child abuse and neglect
 - Demonstrates a knowledge of practices to engage and assure the cultural safety of clients from a diverse range of backgrounds, including those from an Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background, or the LGBTI community.
 - **Technical Skills:**
 - Demonstrated competence in providing psychological therapies and services to children, young people, parents, and carers with diverse and/or complex needs.
 - Demonstrated competence in applying relevant theoretical approaches in planning and implementing therapeutic interventions, formulations, and assessments.
 - Demonstrated competence in assessment of children, adults, and families, including emotional, developmental, cognitive, and systemic considerations.
 - Demonstrated competence in assessing risk and responding appropriately
 - Organizational Skills: Strong ability to multitask and prioritize work commitments, and manage multiple priorities
 - Verbal ability: open, honest, articulate, and flexible approach to communication – written and verbal. The ability to actively listen.
 - Demonstrated competence in report writing and case file notes to a high standard.
 - Strong administrative skills – confident use of Microsoft office and outlook.
 - **Personal Attributes:**
 - Interpersonal focus: strong interest in people and respect for others. The ability to suspend judgement.
 - Cooperative: Demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships.
 - Conscientious: Responsible, dependable, organised and persistent.
 - Open to experience: High level self-awareness, with the ability to recognize mistakes, as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development.
 - **Professionalism:**
 - Professional, confident, focused, and clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries.
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6. We are a child safe organisation

Uniting is a child safe organisation and is committed in everyday practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, at all times. As a child safe organisation, employment with Uniting is subject to a satisfactory national (and international where relevant) police check and relevant Working With Children Check (and NDIS Worker Screening Check where relevant) to your State prior to commencement of any paid or unpaid work and/or participation in any service or undertaking.

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with Uniting's operational, service and consumer requirements.
