

Position Description

Title:	Peer Worker
Business unit:	Early Intervention Psychosocial Response (EIPSR) Program – RESTART program – AOD, Mental Health & Carer Services
Location:	As per employment agreement
Employment type:	As per employment agreement
Reports to:	Team Leader

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 aims of the Early Intervention Psychosocial Support Response (EIPSR) Program are to:

- foster independent living and recovery for clients of the public clinical mental health service system who have a severe mental illness and associated psychiatric disability
- reduce the likelihood that clients with a severe mental illness will develop lifelong disability due to their mental illness by intervening early
- reduce avoidable need for more intensive acute mental health services by providing integrated treatment and psychosocial recovery care in the community.

This role will provide recovery-oriented, evidence-based peer support interventions to mental health clients by utilising their own lived experience of recovery in a mental health context.

Peer Workers will be integral members of the EIPSR teams and draw on their unique perspective and contribution of a lived experience of recovery from mental illness, to instil confidence and hope in others about the recovery journey while increasing clients’ ability to be leading the life they want to lead.

Peer Workers will provide a critical element to a team-based approach to recovery and bring the wisdom of experience to many aspects of service delivery including intake interviews, service promotion, group programs and case reviews.

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Peer Workers work collaboratively with colleagues, clients, carers and other community partner organisations in to deliver the best possible comprehensive service to clients.

2. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Program staff
- Uniting staff – work with other staff and volunteers across the organisation as appropriate to ensure best organisational outcomes

External

- Collaborative partnerships and networks with Monash Health

4. Key responsibility areas

Provision of direct service delivery:

- Engage with clients to develop trusting and professional relationships that support clients to reach their recovery goals. Utilising a Recovery Framework, work collaboratively with clients, carers, family and other supports to identify their needs, set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals. Participate in regular review of progress towards the identified goals.
- Seek to learn about clients' interests, strengths, connections with family and friends, and work with the client in building their capacity to be part of their community. Engage with the client to establish a strong working relationship that elicits cooperation in the provision of care and planning. Provide support and hope of recovery to clients by constructively applying lessons learnt through own lived experience. Draw upon experience, understanding and belief in strength based, recovery orientated models of service.
- Provide opportunities to discuss problem solving strategies, reflecting on helpful and unhelpful behaviours. Provide social validation support by giving clients feedback about their observed social interaction.
- Encourage and support clients to access and remain engaged with his / her clinical mental health, psychosocial rehabilitation, physical health care and social support services. Drawing on personal lived experience of recovery, provide direct practical support to clients so that the client gains / maintains independent living skills.
- In consultation with the Team Leader and team members plan and implement structured groups and activities for self-development, which meet the objectives of the recovery framework.
- Comply with all work health and safety procedures to ensure safe work practices especially in the area of safety in outreach and group activities.

Collaboration and partnerships:

- Work effectively and authentically as part of a team in assisting clients to engage with the practices associated with the Recovery Model. Develop and maintain effective relationships with the team and external stakeholders to ensure clients receive the highest quality, coordinated service.
- In consultation with program management and leadership, develop and maintain effective community partnerships which contribute to group program planning and service delivery.
- Develop and maintain effective partnerships with key stakeholders of the program to support a co-designed model and recovery focused service.
- Use innovation and collaboration to generate referrals and build a case load as required by the program.

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- Ensure regular and effective communication with the Team Leader, mental health clinicians, other Peer Workers and referral partners.

Quality and risk:

- Actively participate in regular supervision processes, participate in staff meetings, program planning, professional development sessions and staff training as required. Participate in Individual Performance and Development Review.
- Contribute to a workplace environment and culture that supports peers, develops teamwork and ensures the provision of quality services for clients. Participate in regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the service in consultation with clients.
- Collect, collate and maintain client notes within the Client Management System and other required systems in an accurate and timely manner.
- Complete all organisational accountability and reporting requirements in an accurate and timely manner. Contribute to Continuous Improvement activities, accreditation processes and quality improvement processes.
- Contribute to further development of best practice by informing policies and project submissions effectively drawing upon personal experience of mental illness and recovery.
- Ensure metrics are captured and monitored in order to provide accurate and timely reports.

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

- Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work and / or relevant welfare qualification

Experience

- Lived experience of mental illness and demonstrated experience of recovery.
- Experience of the public or private mental health system.
- Understanding of harm minimisation approaches to the treatment and management of persons with a Dual Diagnosis (substance misuse and mental health issues).

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- Demonstrated experience in working at a direct care level, including the ability to prioritise different needs within the group.
- Working knowledge of the relevant and current legislation relating to the client group including the Mental Health Act and Privacy Act.

Core selection criteria

- Values alignment: ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values.
- Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
- Ability and willingness to share own experiences of recovery with others for the benefit of advancing their recovery.
- Ability to demonstrate sensitivity and respect for diversity and differences in clients.
- Ability to provide insights from a lived perspective of issues facing clients.
- Ability to maintain a positive approach to change and adapt to new or different ways of working.
- Capacity to overcome obstacles and impediments, to learn from experience and identify areas for self-development.
- Ability to work effectively within a team environment.
- Ability to communicate effectively with other professionals, families and the community.
- Capacity to assist with resolution of client and colleagues' problems.
- Current Victorian driver licence.

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.

7. Acknowledgement

I have read, understood, and accepted the above Position Description

Employee

Name:

Signature:

Date: