

Position Description



Title	Principal Practitioner
Business unit	Practice Leadership Unit
Location	51 Princes Highway, Dandenong
Employment type	Part time (60.8 hours per fortnight) Ongoing
Reports to	Manager Practice Leadership and Development

1. 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

2. Position purpose

The role of the Principal Practitioner is to strengthen the practice skills and knowledge of all services staff and lead a practice culture that is evidence based and integrates theory and research into practice. This pivotal position will provide effective support to community services practitioners by providing expert advice and guidance on complex cases to support effective service delivery and responses across the breadth of programs within Community Services. This role will also work closely and collaboratively with a range of internal and external stakeholders including Alliance Partners, Networks and Child Protection. Whilst the position will be placed at a nominal location, due to operational requirements, the position will work across the Eastern and Southern metropolitan divisions as required.

3. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

4. Relationships

Internal:

- Manager Practice Leadership and Development
- Practice Leadership and Development Team
- Eastern Metropolitan Management Team

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- Southern Metropolitan Management Team
- Uniting CYF staff
- Support foundation staff and volunteers

External:

- Clients and their families
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Other Government funding bodies

5. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Lead the development of practice excellence across Uniting Eastern and Southern metropolitan divisions in conjunction with management and staff.
- Provide expert advice and guidance to programs and practitioners in relation to work with children and families.
- Provide case consultation and technical input on complex cases.
- Build the expertise of the community services practitioners through training and professional development initiatives.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with line managers in Community Services.
- Raise and report any concerns about Child Safety immediately.
- Perform a cross regional role to enhance collaboration and learning.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships, and actively participate in meetings with various staff cohorts and government and non-government services providers.
- Lead, mentor, develop and coach staff in case practice.
- Collaboratively contribute to the development and implementation of the organisation's strategic and operational plans.
- Deliver services that meet all relevant performance and outcome indicators.
- Explore and develop new service opportunities through service integration and collaborative partnerships.
- Develop and maintain consistent, high quality models of care across all relevant services.
- Ensure all accreditation and compliance standards are met.
- Other projects and duties as required.
- Comply with relevant Occupational Health and Safety standards.

Building relationships

- Develop and maintain strategic and service partnerships with internal stakeholders and local, state and federal government, non-government organisations, peak bodies, communities, clients and families to ensure stakeholder engagement in the development of service strategies, development and delivery

Leadership

- Lead the effective delivery and development of Uniting services
- Lead and motivate a committed workforce built on trauma-informed care and client-centricity to achieve positive client outcomes
- Lead the integration of multidisciplinary integrated service delivery with a focus on providing holistic client outcomes
- Foster and facilitate innovation across the relevant services

Continuous improvement

- Develop and promote relevant tools and resources with an aim to ensure that best practice within the Services.
- Provide training to key stakeholders.
- Identify and recommend changes to procedures and standards of care that impact the community services sector

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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.

6. Person specification

Qualifications

- Essential: A degree in Social Work, Psychology or a related tertiary qualification relevant to child and family welfare.
- Desirable: Post graduate qualifications in Social Work, Psychology, or a related field
- Essential: Current valid driver's licence

Experience

- Extensive theoretical underpinning, particularly in trauma theory, attachment theory, and trauma neurobiology
- Extensive experience working with vulnerable children, young people, and families
- Extensive experience in Trauma Informed Practice
- Proven ability to deliver high quality practice development activities including training, secondary consultation, and facilitation of reflective practice
- Demonstrated experience in developing and implementing strategic plans that improve service performance
- Experience in leadership, change management and service development

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values
- Ability to provide high quality case guidance to community services staff working with children, young people, and their families with histories of complex trauma and often statutory involvement
- Ability to facilitate staff learning through the facilitation of training and reflective practice sessions embedded in an understanding of trauma-informed practice
- Demonstrated 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 CALD background, or the LGBTI community.
- Personal Attributes:
 - Verbal ability: Open, honest, articulate and flexible approach to communication – written and verbal. The ability to actively listen.
 - 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 admit 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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7. 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 Working With Children Check (in Victoria) and/or Working With Vulnerable People Check (in Tasmania) 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.

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