

Position Description

Title: Therapeutic Specialist

Business unit: Residential Services, Eastern and Southern Melbourne

Location(s): South-Metro (Cheltenham, Hampton, Dandenong)

Employment type: Part time (38 hours per fortnight) | Maximum term to February 2021

Reports to: Manager Therapeutic Services to Residential Care

About Uniting

Uniting works 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.

Uniting is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We've been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We are 7000 skilled, passionate and creative people providing over 770 programs and services.

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 celebrate our diversity and welcome all people regardless of ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity or sexual orientation. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as Australia's First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work. We welcome lesbian, gay, trans, gender diverse and intersex (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

Position purpose

The Therapeutic Specialist is responsible for the provision of high-quality trauma-informed practice advice and guidance to carers, house team-leaders and other members of the care team. This position is a key member of the care team promoting the therapeutic needs of the young person and promoting the creation of healing environments and experiences. A key function of the role is conducting comprehensive assessment and developing Therapeutic Plans to optimise outcomes for young people that guide the implementation of therapeutically intentional service delivered by all team members. The position also leads reflective practice sessions with staff to problem-solve and collaboratively develop and review strategies and approaches that promote children and young people's healing and progress towards desired outcomes.

Scope

Budget: *nil*

People: *nil*

Relationships

- Internal:**
- Manager of Therapeutic Services to Residential Care
 - Executive and Senior Program Management
 - Employees, volunteers and contractors
 - Uniting Corporate, Support Services and Mission divisions
 - Other Operational services

Position Description

Therapeutic Specialist



External:

- Consumers and their families, carers and/or advocates
- Government departments and other funding bodies
- Key partners, community services networks and peak bodies

Key responsibility areas

Service delivery and partnerships

- Develop strategies in collaboration with residential carers to ensure children and young people are successfully transitioned and integrated into the TRC home
- Guide residential carers in direct therapeutic work with children and young people so they gain a full understanding of the process of recovery and the therapeutic responses they will need to provide
- Support staff to respond to crisis situations (incidents) in relation to the young person and to reflect on the triggers and other dynamics associated with the incident
- Work in partnership with the carers, team leaders, and managers to ensure a coordinated, therapeutic and timely response to children and young people related to assessment processes, needs identification, risk assessment, practice guidance, and transition planning.
- Develop and sustain service partnerships and linkages to promote joint therapeutic work, particularly with relevant Aboriginal services
- Conduct thorough assessments and develop a therapeutic treatment plan for each child or young person that is regularly reviewed and updated and applies across all spheres of the child or young person's development including physical, emotional, social, educational/vocational, recreational, cultural and spiritual
- Participate as an active member of the care team in all relevant care team meetings, operational groups and panels and maintain regular planned telephone consultation with care team members as agreed regarding the needs of the child, care family and other key stakeholders.
- Provide regular planned and unplanned specialist therapeutic support and advice to the care team in accordance with the therapeutic care plan.

Leadership and professional practice

- Provide leadership in the professional development of staff, including supporting a culture of reflective practice, quality supervision and coaching
- Facilitate training for professionals and care team members in trauma-informed therapeutic approaches to out-of-home care
- Contribute as directed to research, conferences, training and/or forums

Legal requirements, & risk management

- Report areas of serious risk to next level supervisor and work together to mitigate those risks in line with agency policies and procedures.
- Provide regular reports on required service delivery and related issues, as required

Personal accountability

- Comply 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.

Approved by: General Manager South & East Victoria	Page 2 of 4	Division: Operations
Date Approved: January 2020	Printed copies of this document are not controlled.	Next Review Date: January 2021

- 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.

Person specification

Qualifications

- Bachelor level in relevant professional discipline such as social work, psychology or social science (required)
- Masters level in Psychology and Social Work or equivalent (desirable)

Experience and knowledge

- Experience in providing high quality practice advice and guidance to professionals working with clients presenting with complex needs and statutory involvement
- Demonstrable leadership experience (desirable)
- Demonstrated practice leadership through the delivery of practice related forums, workshops, and conference presentations (desirable)
- Extensive knowledge of out of home care sector including relevant legislation and regulations.
- Extensive knowledge of child development and the impact of abuse and neglect
- Advanced knowledge and understanding of trauma informed practice and trauma recovery principles
- Well-developed analytical and report writing skills.

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values
- **Leadership** – Strong leadership and management skills and knowledge within a complex service delivery environment; ability to build strong, high functioning teams and align teams with the organisational values and goals, particularly those related to consumer-centricity; role modelling expected behaviour
- **Program and Service Development** – Significant experience in the leadership and development of programs and services in a complex environment; experience co-designing, developing and evaluating programs and services with consumers and/or communities
- **Communication** – High level written and oral communication skills; ability to conduct presentations; ability to prepare high quality business cases and reports
- **Stakeholder Relationships** – Strong negotiation and influencing skills; ability to engage, build and maintain strong, mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders; track record of being able to form positive, collaborative and effective relationships with staff; ability to establish credibility with staff
- **Change Management** – Knowledge of contemporary change management models; demonstrated experience in leading successful change programs at scale
- **Problem-solving** – proven ability to take a solution-focused and strengths-based approach within a complex, ambiguous and evolving community services environment

Other

- Current driver's license (Victoria)
- A satisfactory national police records check is a condition of this position and repeated every three years
- Current employee Working with Children Check Card (Victoria) or Working with Vulnerable People Check card (Tasmania)
- Compliance and understanding/familiarity with organisational policies, procedures relevant legislation (Quality management system, Equal Opportunity, Health & Safety etc.)

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.

Approved by: General Manager South & East Victoria	Page 4 of 4	Division: Operations
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