

Position Description Counsellor Advocate

Our Organisation

WestCASA is a community based not for profit organisation. WestCASA specialises in therapeutic trauma counselling for sexual violence & family violence operating in the Western metropolitan region of Melbourne for over 30 years.

WestCASA provides counselling, crisis response, advocacy, education, and training. Located in the Multi-Disciplinary Centre (MDC) in Werribee with outpost sites in Footscray, Melton, and the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre.

WestCASA aims to provide a service that facilitates the recovery and healing for women, men, diverse gender folk and young people over the age of 12 years who have experienced sexual violence & family violence using an empowering, respectful, and culturally sensitive therapeutic approach.

Our Values

Empowerment: Recognising structural inequalities we advocate and work therapeutically to empower people to have choice over their own lives

Safety and Inclusion: For everyone. We strive to create a safe environment for all at WestCASA and to identify and address barriers to inclusion.

Compassion: We value and engender compassion with clients and with ourselves.

Excellence and consistency: We promote reflection, best practice, and accountability in all that we do and say.

Advocating: for greater understanding and community responsibility for the conditions under which sexual violence and related family violence occur. For resources and delivering services that support the prevention of and education about sexual violence and related family violence across our community

Our Philosophy

WestCASA is committed to helping people of all gender identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, religions, ages, and physical abilities. This includes trans, gender diverse and non-binary individuals. We respect and celebrate the diversity within our communities and

workplace and recognise that people may use different terms to describe their identity and experience.

At WestCASA you are required to include and celebrate differences such as gender, age, culture, disability, sexual orientation, religion, spirituality, family, and caring responsibilities. These are all valued, respected, and celebrated.

The Role

This role will report to the Area Lead. The duties of this position description are to be understood within a context of collaborative decision making and participatory governance with respect to the work conducted at WestCASA and the processes that support this. Additionally, WestCASA values and practices respectful communication between staff members and with clients.

Position Specifications			
Role title	Counsellor Advocate		
Location	MDC Werribee	Classification	WestCASA EBA
Employment period	Permanent	Remuneration	WestCASA EBA Counsellor Advocate Grade 2
Reporting structure	Reports to Intake Coordinator	Direct Reports	Nil
Hours of employment	0.8 FTE (4 days per week)		

Role Responsibilities

1. Counselling & Advocacy

- 1.1 Provide effective, evidence-based, and culturally sensitive short to medium term trauma counselling to women, men, diverse gender people and young people (aged 12 years and over) who have experienced sexual violence either recently or in the past.

- 1.2 Provide effective, evidence-based, and culturally sensitive short to medium term trauma counselling to people who have experienced family violence or other trauma.
- 1.3 Provide short term support and psychoeducation to non-offending partners, family and friends.
- 1.4 Participate and collaborate in the development and delivery of group work programs.
- 1.5 Participate in the intake service assessing and enabling eligible people to access our service with ease. Provide information regarding services, supports, options and waiting lists.
- 1.6 Support adults who have experienced a recent sexual violence at the Crisis Care Unit located at the Emergency Department of Sunshine Hospital and/or at the MDC during business hours.
- 1.7 Provide occasional after-hours support to adults who have experienced a recent sexual violence at the Crisis Care Unit at Sunshine Hospital. WestCASA has a separate After-Hours Crisis Care Team however, business hour Counsellor/Advocates are occasionally required to do after hours shifts.
- 1.8 Provide regular support to the After-Hours Crisis Care team on the back up roster (one to two shifts per month).
- 1.9 Provide informed referrals, secondary consultation and collaborate on cases with other services, the legal system and police.
- 1.10 Advocate with or on behalf of clients where appropriate, particularly with police, the judicial and medical systems.
- 1.11 Record counselling case notes and client statistics in a timely manner consistent with confidentiality and professional standards.
- 1.12 Contribute to analysis and interpretation of statistical data and client feedback on a regular basis, to inform practice and identify trends that may impact upon service delivery.
- 1.13 Provide professional reports when required.

2. Community Development, Education and Training

- 2.1 Provide education and training to the community, other professionals and groups.
- 2.2 Develop and maintain networks and links with relevant professional groups and community-based organisations.
- 2.3 Participate in community development and education projects with others.
- 2.4 Contribute to sector knowledge development through research, articles for journals, presentations at conferences and workshops.
- 2.5 Develop and update evidence-based information resources for counselling clients and training purposes on issues relating to sexual violence.
- 2.6 Participate in the development and implementation of strategies to raise community awareness of sexual violence.
- 2.7 Respond to relevant social and legal policy.

3. Organisational Responsibilities

- 3.1 Participate in Board of Governance meetings as required.
- 3.2 Attend regular supervision (work review and clinical supervision) to develop own clinical practice, manage potential impacts of the work on personal well-being, and ensure administrative requirements of the role are appropriately managed.
- 3.3 Participate in regular staff meetings, group supervision, training and professional development.
- 3.4 Participate in other activities and meetings relevant to the work of WestCASA.
- 3.5 Observe the policies and procedures of the organisation.
- 3.6 Ensure all work is performed in accordance with requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety policy, procedures and legislation.
- 3.7 Participate in developing and implementing policies, initiatives and practices in relation to continuous quality improvement.
- 3.8 Contribute to WestCASA's organisational activities, such as strategic planning, service planning and evaluation, writing position papers and attending public events. This may include attending events and/or meetings after hours.

2 General responsibilities

- 2.1 Maintain and apply up-to-date knowledge of evidence-based, best practice and legislation that impact on the delivery of WestCASA services.
- 2.2 Collaborate with the Co-Ordinator and Area Lead to identify and participate in skills development appropriate to your role and work plan.
- 2.3 Work at outpost sites as required or directed.

Key Selection Criteria

Qualifications

Post-graduate qualifications in either Master of Social Work or Master of Counselling or equivalent

Knowledge and experience

1. Familiarity with the Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework, MARAM, the Child Safety and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes and the Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse.
2. Commitment to and understanding of the vision, mission and aims of WestCASA (as attached).
3. Capability to practice in ways that support cultural, racial and gender sensitivity in service delivery.
4. An advanced understanding of the gendered and structural nature of sexual violence and family violence.
5. Solid experience in delivering crisis counselling services, telephone/telehealth or face to face intake support/counselling or programs.
6. Experience and skills in delivering trauma focussed counselling for clients.
7. Sound skills in risk assessment of family violence and sexual violence, working knowledge of MARAM framework.

8. Relevant formal qualifications such as social work or psychology.
9. Clinical skills and experience in: -
 - counselling and crisis intervention with individuals and families
 - clinical engagement with adolescents, men & women, nonbinary and trans communities
 - working with complex PTSD and other challenging presentation
 - development and facilitation of intake related groups;
 - provision of community education and training.
10. Demonstrated ability to manage complex and demanding work both for yourself and in others.
11. Demonstrated ability to maintain accurate and confidential records and prepare professional reports.

Employment Requirements

- Post-graduate Qualifications
- Demonstrated working rights with Australia
- Current Victorian Drivers Licence
- Working with Children Check
- Police Check
- COVID vaccination certification