



MALLEE SEXUAL ASSAULT UNIT Inc. – MALLEE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES POSITION DESCRIPTION

Specialist Family Violence Worker - Family Violence Child Protection Partnership - MATERNITY BACK FILL POSITION

December 2018

AWARD: Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Award 2010
CONTRACT: Part Time (24hrs pw over 3 days), to August 2019
REPORTS TO: Executive Director
POSITION TYPE: Regular travel across the Mallee region and attendance at state-wide meetings.
CLOSING DATE: Friday 28th December, 2018.

Context

The 2015-16 State Budget committed \$17.57 million in funding over five years to the *Child Protection Flexible Responses Initiative*. The initiative, now known as *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership*, co-locates 17 Specialist Family Violence Workers in Child Protection offices across the State and aims to strengthen Child Protection practice, enable joint assessments, assist Child Protection to navigate the family violence system and strengthen opportunities to divert children away from statutory responses. A large part of this role centres on capacity building across both the family violence and child protection workforces.

This is an exciting career opportunity for an experienced practitioner wanting to develop and share their strong leadership, engagement and collaborative skills across multiple sectors. The position is based at Child Protection Mildura two days per week and half to one day per week at Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services, Mildura.

MISSION STATEMENT:

To reduce the prevalence and impact of sexual assault and domestic violence in the Mallee through partnerships which raise community awareness and undertake preventative and early intervention strategies and provide specialist and coordinated care valued by survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, meeting safety needs, and facilitating their empowerment, dignity and reintegration into communities of choice.

OUR VISION:

To be recognised as the national leader in the prevention of sexual assault and family violence and the provider of services of excellence to victims / survivors.

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT:

The Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Service provides services to victims/survivors and significant others of sexual assault and domestic violence. The components of the service consist of crisis care, counselling services, advocacy, community education, outreach support, information and referral services, therapeutic treatment programs for children under 17 years with problem sexualised behaviours and Risk Assessment Management Panel (RAMP).

Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services acknowledges that family violence and other forms of violence against women are serious, preventable acts that have a significant impact on individuals, families, communities, our society and the economy. Violence against women is driven by four specific expressions of gender inequality:

- Condoning of violence against women and their children
- Men's control of decision making and limits to women's independence
- Stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity
- Disrespect towards women and male peer relations that emphasise aggression.

We recognise that while both men and women can commit violence, family violence is largely committed by men against women and children. Family violence is prevalent and occurs across the social spectrum. However, some groups of women and children experience multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage due to the individual and structural power imbalances they face. This can compound their experience of violence and reduce their access to resources and support. At Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services, we respond to all victim/survivors of family violence in all its forms and deliver services from a rights-based approach that prioritises their safety, agency and empowerment.

Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services has a thirty-year history of providing services to victim/survivors and significant others of sexual assault and domestic violence. The components of the service consist of crisis care and accommodation, counselling services, advocacy, community education, outreach support, information and referral services and therapeutic treatment programs for children under 17 years with problem sexual behaviours.

In addition, we also host a Multidisciplinary Centre (MDC) in Mildura which enables victims of sexual assault to receive a consistent, coordinated and comprehensive response to their needs. The MDC includes a specially trained police unit, the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT), counsellors/advocates with the Mallee Sexual Assault Unit, Child Protection team and a Community Health Nurse.

RAMP, Regional Integration Coordinators, Personal Safety and Security Initiative, Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Specialist Family Violence Advisor Capacity Building Program and Specialist Family Violence Advisor Child Protection are also delivered by Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services. Co-located at the service are also Financial Counsellors (Mallee Family Care) and the Family Violence Legal Unit (Murray Mallee Community Legal Service). We recognise that to achieve best practice responses to victim survivors, their children and perpetrators requires cross sector and cross-discipline collaboration and team work. Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc Mallee Domestic Violence Services strives to achieve service excellence and the Support and Safety Hub is part of a broad suite of changes which will contribute to this change. The service is excited to be partners in the delivery of the Mallee Support and Safety Hub currently underway.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Specialist Family Violence Worker is a senior practitioner with extensive knowledge of family violence. The position is responsible for providing operational and strategic advice to Child Protection practitioners and their managers who undertake investigations of families where a child is or may need protection due to family violence. The position will assist Child Protection in the planning and conduct of investigations and support the development of plans that aim to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

The Specialist Family Violence Worker works collaboratively with the Child Protection senior managers and practitioners to provide effective service delivery and support. Through co-location at a Child Protection office, this position aims to strengthen and improve responses to families subject to a Child Protection investigation. The aim of the *Family Violence Child Protection Partnership* is to:

- support and promote improved understanding of the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent;
- restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and
- use this knowledge to assist Child Protection achieve the following improved outcomes for the service system and for the families reported to Child Protection.

Child Protection Client Outcomes

To improve assessment, planning and intervention in Child Protection investigations where family violence is, or is suspected to be, present in order to:

- Increase safety and stability for families;
- Reduce the risk of harm to children;
- Safely reduce the incidence of re-reports to Child Protection and the number of children placed in out of home care;
- Strengthen the engagement of victims and perpetrators with support services; and
- Contribute to improved engagement with perpetrators towards changes in perpetrator behaviour and improved child-centred parenting capacity.

Service System outcomes

To contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system. To achieve this outcome the Specialist Family Violence worker will work with Child Protection to:

- Contribute to an integrated and collaborative child-centred, family-focused service system
- Recognise the protective parent as a victim/survivor
- Recognise and respond appropriately to perpetrator behaviour and perpetrator-driven risk

- Identify and address systemic barriers to joint practice by family violence and Child Protection
- Strengthen referral pathways between Child Protection and specialist family violence services
- Encourage joint family violence risk assessments (CRAF assessments) and safety plans and enhanced information sharing
- Create a better understanding of each organisation's processes
- Identify, consistently document and respond to the risk from perpetrators to each child
- Support cultural safety - keeping Aboriginal people and other groups connected to their culture
- Improve the quality and depth of information sharing and documentation, including material that may be relevant for legal processes.

Accountabilities

The position will operate at both strategic and operational levels and is employed and reports directly to the Executive Director of MSAU-MDVS.

Strategic Focus

The strategic focus involves supporting the development of more integrated service response by Child Protection and family violence services through:

- Identifying emerging trends, needs and gaps in service delivery and practice issues, particularly in the investigation phase, and to use this knowledge to generate changes in systems and approaches.
- Facilitating engagement between and promoting joint work by Child Protection and family violence services in the local area.
- Improving the quality and consistency of family violence related information, assessment and interventions in case notes.
- Identifying the need for, participate in, and/or deliver Child Protection training and professional development activities.
- At the local level, supporting the implementation of the government's responses to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

Operational focus

The operational focus will occur through direct engagement with activities and tasks associated with Child Protection investigations:

- RAMP Associate / completing RAMP referrals for child protection clients.
- To jointly identify and document, with Child Protection, issues in responses to family violence and develop solutions to system gaps and practice issues.
- Provide specialist advice to Child Protection practitioners undertaking investigations where family violence is present.
- Where permitted, facilitate client information sharing, and where appropriate, support joint work between Child Protection and family violence services to achieve better engagement with services for victims and perpetrators of family violence.
- Where permitted, provide information about the client's history from the Specialist Family Violence Agency and other family violence men's and women's services operating in the local area.
- Support Child Protection to understand the dynamics of perpetrator behaviour and use this information to:
 - improve engagement with perpetrators and to create stronger feedback loops between men's services and Child Protection;
 - liaise with Family Violence Police;
 - Complete CRAF with child protection;
 - Support MDVS staff around navigating the child protection system;
 - Act as a secondary consult for Domestic Violence staff;
 - enhance understanding and work with the non-offending parent. Initiate exceptions conferences¹, contribute to the rationale for substantiation, and participate in secondary consultation with Child Protection to enable more informed assessments of safety and risk to victims and perpetrator behaviour.
- Assisting Child Protection practitioners to understand and navigate the family violence system

¹ Also referred to as case reviews or reflective practice reviews. Usually convened by involved professionals to strategically examine and draw themes and learning from 'exceptional' cases and case outcomes.

- Making outward referrals (where possible warm referrals) in collaboration with Child Protection to specialist family violence services and expediting referrals.
- Maintain an in-depth knowledge of the family violence support services in the area and the eligibility requirements for such services.
- Keeping up to date information on waitlists and alternatives for family violence support services in the area.
- Assisting Child Protection to explore secure placement options for clients in refuge or crisis accommodation.
- Coordinating other family violence workers in the area, as appropriate, to attend joint home visits with Child Protection.
- Targeting the use of funding and resources in responding to clients that experience and/or use family violence; and
- Building the capacity of Child Protection.
- Attending joint home visits with Child Protection.

GENERIC:

Abide by Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. - Mallee Domestic Violence Service's policies and procedures at all times.

Participate in Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. - Mallee Domestic Violence Service's performance appraisals as requested.

Undertake not to reveal to any person or entity any confidential information relating to clients of the service and employees, policies, processes and dealings and not to make public statements relating to the affairs of Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. - Mallee Domestic Violence Services without prior authority of the Chief Executive Officer.

Cooperate with all health and safety policies and procedures of Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. - Mallee Domestic Violence Service and take all reasonable care that any actions or omissions do not impact on the health and safety of others in the workplace.

Maintain, be aware of, and abide by all legislation applicable to the role, Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. - Mallee Domestic Violence Service and its clients.

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT:

To ensure that Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services practice is in line with relevant standards.

To review files to ensure quality assurance requirements are being met and that outcomes are being achieved.

Completion of work within timelines.

To contribute to the development of policies and procedures in relation to the agency, program, intake, assessment and case work.

To assist in the implementation of systems and structures to promote the good governance of the programs and fulfil our funding requirements.

To ensure standards are met across all areas of service provision by developing and assisting with quality assurance activities. Participate in agency audits – internal and external.

Gather feedback and report this appropriately.

Timely response to matters identified in corrective action records.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Knowledge and skills

1. Expert knowledge of local family violence support services and approaches in the local area.
2. A minimum of three years' experience working in the family violence service system, preferably with supervisory experience.
3. Demonstrated knowledge and high-level understanding of:
 - a. the perpetrator's pattern of coercive control and its impact on children and the ability of the protective parent to safely parent;
 - b. mechanisms to restore and enhance safe, child-centred parenting; and the capacity to use this knowledge to assist Child Protection achieve improved client and system outcomes.
4. An established strong working relationship with Child Protection is desirable.
5. Capacity and desire to support improved engagement by Child Protection with both victims and perpetrators.
6. Demonstrated understanding of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, the *Health Records Act 2001*, Child Safe Standards, the CRAF and Victoria Police Code of Practice.
7. Demonstrated understanding of cultural safety of children from Aboriginal and CALD backgrounds and any child with a disability.
8. Understanding of a client's right to access the service regardless of their country of birth, language, culture, race or religion, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.
9. Willingness and ability to engage directly with perpetrators or with services working with perpetrators of family violence for the purpose of service linkage and referral.
10. Demonstrated experience in developing and maintaining relationships with other stakeholders in a multi-disciplinary environment including capacity to problem solve and negotiate with other professionals.
11. Highly developed written and oral communication skills including:
 - a. a demonstrated high level of skill in accurately recording data, correspondence and reporting; and
 - b. providing written and oral evidence to the Children's Court of Victoria, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria and other relevant courts and tribunals.
12. Use a range of IT/web-based applications to manage workflow in accordance with organisational guidelines and privacy principles.
13. Keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with organisational requirements, information security and privacy policies and requirements.

Personal qualities

1. Good interpersonal, team and networking skills and capacity to work independently.
2. Capacity to adapt to the evolving nature of the role.
3. Enthusiasm for and willingness to lead change.
4. Ability to lead professional development activities with Child Protection and the home family violence agency.
5. Demonstrates initiative.
6. Able to identify and influence systemic change.

Qualifications

- A degree in a relevant or related community services discipline (eg Social Work) is mandatory.
- A valid driver's licence is mandatory.
- Current and clear Victorian and New South Wales Working with Children's Check
- Current and clear National Police Check

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:

Prior to any person being appointed to this position it will be required that they disclose full details of any pre-existing injuries or disease that may be affected by employment in this position.

HOW AND WHERE TO APPLY:

Applications (including a covering letter, resume, and response to the key selection criteria) should be addressed to:

The Interview Panel
Mallee Sexual Assault Unit Inc. Mallee Domestic Violence Services
PO Box 1373
Mildura VIC 3502
Or Email to: info@msau-mdvs.org.au

Applications close: Friday 28th December, 2018