

COUNSELLOR

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The position of *Counsellor* with the NSW Rape Crisis Centre represents to someone who has been sexually assaulted, a professional, feminist, non judgemental, supportive and responsive point of contact at a crucial time in that person's life. The Centre also provides information and assistance to the supporters of a person who has been sexually assaulted.

This position of trust demands the highest levels of professionalism, ethical behaviour and an awareness of multiple factors which will influence individual clients' responses to both the trauma and the counselling provided.

All Counsellors are Mandatory Reporters so are compelled by legislation to identify and respond to children and young people at risk of harm

The *Counsellor* will:

- Provide to anyone who has experienced sexual violence . telephone or on-line counselling, support, and referral.
- Provide information and support to non offending family and friends and professionals working with survivors of sexual assault.
- Work face to face with adult survivors of childhood sexual assault to achieve safety and resolve the impacts of trauma.

Note: This is a generic Position description and applies to Professional Counsellors who may be engaged in either face to face or telephone/on-line counselling.

POSITION RELATIONSHIPS

Position Reporting To: Clinical Manager

Positions reporting to this Position: No positions report to this position.

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The NSW Rape Crisis Centre is committed to upholding the rights of all women to live in a socially just and equitable society and the right of all people to live free of violence. The Centre provides a state-wide 24/7 best practice telephone, on-line and face to face counselling service to people who have experienced sexual violence.

The Centre works with Government, Non-Government, private bodies and individuals to ensure anyone who has experienced sexual violence has a clear pathway and access to equitable and professional service provision.

The goals of the NSW Rape Crisis Centre are to:

- improve the mental health outcomes for anyone who has experienced sexual violence;

- enhance access to the NSW Rape Crisis Centre;
- reduce the impact of sexual violence on all people; and
- operate in a best practice and quality assurance framework.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES AND WORK PERFORMED

- Provide, in accordance with the Centre's Code of Ethics and contemporary professional standards, focused, compassionate and ethical counselling and support to NSW Rape Crisis Centre clients.
- Depending upon circumstances and placement, provide such services either by telephone, on-line or face to face.
- Ensure services provided meet best practice standards and are tailored to suit the unique requirements of each client.
- Work in a collegiate manner with fellow staff members, ensuring provision of a seamless and professional counselling service over a 24 hours per day, 7 days per week roster.
- At shift end, provide a comprehensive handover to ensure all necessary information is conveyed to the incoming Counsellor and take steps to minimise the impacts of vicarious trauma on self.
- In consultation with the client, implement and monitor individual case management plans. Face to face counsellors will also conduct development and review of case management plans).
- Meet statutory obligations as Mandatory Reporters in cases of children and young people at risk of harm.
- Ensure that work is carried out to a high standard of professionalism, efficiency, effectiveness and accuracy, timeframes are met and client confidentiality is maintained according to policy.
- Attend and actively participate in clinical supervision, team meetings, professional development, in-service training, performance appraisals and self-care plans.
- Comply with information collection, quality improvement, risk management procedures, record keeping and administrative practices of the Centre.
- Remain informed about the decisions of the Board and abide by their decisions.
- Take all necessary steps to ensure clinical focus is at the cutting edge of clinical counselling practice.
- Ensure all documentation is concise, legible, secure and available to colleagues within the Centre.
- Ensure work practices are ethical, and comply with the NSW Rape Crisis Centre Code of Ethics and the codes of the Australian Psychological Society, the Australian Association of Social Workers or the Counsellors and Psychotherapists Association.

MAJOR CHALLENGES OR CONSTRAINTS

- Responding to a high level of client requests for service in a timely and effective manner.
- Developing and maintaining a keen awareness and effective management strategies for of the occupational health and safety risk of vicarious trauma .

DECISION MAKING

Counsellors of the NSW Rape Crisis Centre are professional and experienced in their vocation and Counsellors are responsible for making appropriate ethical and clinical judgements in their daily work. Regular clinical supervision and 24/7 on call support is available.

INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION

During the course of the counselling process, the *Counsellor* may reach a point where she believes contact between the NSW Rape Crisis Centre and another agency will be of benefit to the client. Signed permission for interagency consultation will be sought from the client and information will only be divulged without such permission if a greater risk of harm to the client exists from refusing to divulge information.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Essential

- Commitment to the provision of excellence in counselling service provision.
- Demonstrated ability to incorporate feminist perspectives within counselling frameworks.
- Tertiary qualifications in Social Work, Psychology or Counselling.
- Minimum two years (full time equivalent) counselling experience.
- Detailed understanding of the causes and consequences of sexual assault.
- Computer literacy.
- High level availability across all shifts.

Desirable

- Demonstrated ability to provide therapeutic services in a culturally appropriate way.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Experience working with traumatised populations.