



VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL

WORKING TOGETHER

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:	Counsellor
PROGRAM:	VACountry Program and Counselling, AOD and Family Violence Services
STATUS:	0.4 EFT (15.2 hours) per week for 12 months with possibility of extension.
REPORTING TO:	Team Leader Counselling Team
LOCATION:	VACountry Community Hub. From time to time the incumbent may be outposted to other VAC sites or outposted to collaborating centres
CLASSIFICATION:	VAC-GMHC Employment Agreement April 2014 (SW Class 2 (SCHADS) SACS, Level 5)

1. ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) was formed in 1983 as a central part of the Victorian community's response to HIV and AIDS. VAC aims to improve the health and social and emotional well-being of Victorian LGBTI communities and those living with and affected by HIV, with a particular emphasis on bringing the HIV epidemic to an end.

VAC employs over 100 staff members, across various program areas.. Professional development programs are in place, including individual supervision and a professional development program. Staff members have regular clinical supervision. Strategies are in place to maintain a stable, motivated, and supported workforce through regular staff members and team building activities, and peer review meetings.

Our purpose

To reduce HIV transmissions in Victoria by promoting the health of gay men and of people living with HIV.

To work in partnership to improve health outcomes for the sexually and gender diverse community.

Our Vision

A future without HIV.

A world where all sexually and gender diverse people live with dignity, with equal rights, and participate fully in our society.

Our Mission

VAC leads the fight against HIV/AIDS in Victoria by providing care and support for people living with HIV, health promotion, and advocacy.

We advocate, with partner organisations, to improve health outcomes for sexually and gender diverse communities.

For more information on our organisation please visit our website www.vac.org.au

2. PROGRAM CONTEXT, ROLE & FOCUS

The Counselling team, the Alcohol and Other Drugs team, the Family Violence Team and the LGBTI Capacity Building team make up the Counselling, AOD and Family Violence Services Program.

Our Counselling Service provides therapeutic counselling to individuals, couples, and families as well as group programs. These specialist services target the LGBTI community and people at risk of, living with or otherwise affected by HIV or Hepatitis C. These services are currently delivered primarily from our South Yarra site, at VACountry in Bendigo, in conjunction with Living Positive Victoria at Southbank and at Equinox in Fitzroy, with future development opportunities to co-locate services based on identified need.

VACountry is our Bendigo based health promotion program. VACountry provides support, resources and information around LGBTI wellbeing, HIV, Hepatitis C and sexual health across the Loddon Mallee. VACountry operates a Community Hub that provides a safe place for the LGBTI community to connect and access information resources and referral services. The opportunity has arisen to deliver counselling services from our VACountry office for a 12 month trial period.

The counselling team includes therapists (both paid staff and volunteers) with Counselling, Psychology and Social Work qualifications with training in different therapeutic modalities.

Staff report operationally to the Manager of Counselling, AOD and Family Violence Services and receive day to day oversight supervision and clinical support from their Team Leader via phone and Skype. They also receive regular clinical supervision from the Clinical Supervisor over Skype. Travel to Melbourne on occasion will be expected for this role.

3. POSITION ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Counselling service aims to support positive change with clients from the HIV, Hepatitis C and LGBTI communities through the delivery of evidence-based therapeutic individual, couple, group and family counselling interventions to clients and their families. It also supports the work of the Alcohol & Other Drugs Team, Family Violence Team and LGBTI Capacity Building team. Given the regional focus of this role it is expected that the incumbent understands how these issues effect regional population groups.

A key component of the Counsellor's role will also include ongoing liaison and partnering with other services in the organisation and with external service providers to facilitate client access to needed services, to support the realisation of positive health and well-being outcomes.

Key roles and responsibilities of the Counsellor are as follows:

Intake and assessment

- Provide comprehensive and professional intake, assessment and referral services
- Participate actively in client allocation and review processes

Therapeutic counselling

- Deliver high quality, evidence-based, short-term therapeutic counselling relating to the health and well-being of individuals, couples, families and groups who are living with or affected by HIV or Hepatitis C, and to other LGBTI clients on a wide range of issues
- In collaboration with the client(s) and their significant others:
 - Determine details of the type and duration of counselling interventions required to address the therapeutic needs of the client, building on the plan provided at intake and assessment
 - Deliver evidence-based psychosocial interventions including but not limited to brief interventions, cognitive behavioural therapies, community reinforcement therapy,

contingency management, motivational enhancement therapy, social behavioural therapy and group work

– Undertake exit planning

- Maintain the required clinical caseload
- Contribute to the design of group programs and provide co-facilitation of group programs,
- Maintain accurate records of client case notes and contacts and ensure data entry on the client data base is up to date, accurate and complete
- Achieve performance targets as set and work within Program guidelines
- Work within VAC privacy policy and adhere to all VAC policies and procedures, including professional codes of practice

Capacity building

- Provide secondary consultation to providers who work with people at risk of, living with or affected by HIV and Hepatitis C and/or LGBTI clients in the public and private sectors, focusing on issues specific to the Counselling Service client group and strategies for effective engagement with them in treatment
- Contribute to the development and delivery of training programs directed at building sector capacity, within the scope of the counsellor's expertise
- Contribute to the delivery of community education programs and resources aimed at building awareness of key issues in counselling
- Network with external organisations and proactively seek to partner in service delivery and advocacy activities

Professional liaison and consultation

The Counselling Service provides an important opportunity for sector development and the Counsellor role will model and advocate for appropriate sector responses for clients with who are living with or affected by HIV, Hepatitis C and/or may be LGBTI. The success of this aspect of the Counsellor role is dependent on productive and professional relationships with internal and external collaborators.

- Participate in team planning, steering / reference groups and working parties both internal and external to the organisation, as appropriate to the service
- Act as a representative in forums and related interagency meetings as required
- Maintain regular communication and feedback with the Manager to initiate and support ongoing service improvement

Leadership and participation

The success of the Counselling Service relies on the energy, capacity, and contributions of staff that operate in a supportive and learning environment. Staff will engage, contribute, learn, and shape the services going forward

- Work collaboratively with the Counselling Team Leader and the Manager along with staff from other parts of VAC, to implement operational processes that support service delivery
- Work as part of the Counselling, AOD and Family Violence staff group, contributing ideas and suggestions to support service innovation and program development

- Work with management and staff to enhance the provision of quality and effective counselling services and allied services that will benefit the client groups
- Ensure professional codes of practice and ethics are in place and adhered to within the Counselling Service
- Actively participate in ongoing professional development activities, including individual and group supervision and by attending relevant training
- Undertake other duties as directed in support of the organisation and its objectives

Operational management

- Monitor data collection, records management and reporting to ensure that they meet requirements of the Counselling, AOD and Family Violence Service and requirements of funding bodies
- Work with the Team Leader of the Counselling program and the Manager to undertake case /workload management, retention and performance review processes
- Contribute to the development and maintenance of policies and procedures that reflect and guide the objectives and operations of the Counselling Service

4. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications

1. Relevant tertiary qualification in health or welfare, such as social work, psychology, or counselling
2. Eligibility for membership of a relevant professional association (e.g., AASW, AHPRA, APS, PACFA)
3. Current Drivers license

Skills and experience

1. Knowledge of and experience with evidence-based therapeutic frameworks suitable for short-term counselling practice
2. Experience and competence in the design and delivery of face-to-face individual, family, or group counselling involving a diverse client group, preferably with people living with or affected by HIV, Hepatitis C, and/or from LGBTI communities and their families in a regional context
3. An interest and willingness to work with people from LGBTI communities, including people in a non-judgmental and respectful manner
4. Ability to convey warmth, openness, empathy and concern for the wellbeing of clients and their families
5. Capacity and willingness to contribute to a supportive and productive team environment
6. Experience in advancing external partnerships, with service providers and other stakeholders, to enhance care pathways and build sector capacity

Desirable

1. Demonstrated experience in one or more of the following areas:
 - Peer support frameworks within LGBTI community
 - Counselling and support service delivery using telephone / mobile / on-line / other mechanisms
 - Secondary consultation and systemic advocacy in a professional counselling role
 - Design and delivery of training to professionals

2. Eligibility and willingness to obtain a Medicare provider number registered for the provision of rebated services such as Better Access to Mental Health and Focussed Psychological Strategies (formerly ATAPS)

5. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- Salary is paid under the Victorian AIDS Council Inc. and Gay Men's Health Centre Inc Employment Agreement, Social Worker Class 2 / SACS Level 5, commencing on a pro rata basis based on a full-time annual salary of \$72,006 (hourly rate \$36.31).
- Salary packaging is a legitimate method of restructuring existing salary into a combination of salary and expense payment benefits to provide a higher net remuneration for the employee. This arrangement is available at VAC.
- Employer's contribution to superannuation (9.5%) will also be paid.
- Conditions of employment are as stated in the Victorian AIDS Council Inc. and Gay Men's Health Centre Inc Employment Agreement.
- The position is for 2 days per week. Overtime is not paid; however it can be taken as time-in-lieu with prior approval from the Manager.
- Fridays are essential, other days are negotiable.
- Completion by VAC of a satisfactory police check.
- A Working With Children check is required for the position.
- A willingness and ability to work flexible hours is required, including some early morning, evening and weekend meetings and other work-related commitments.
- A Confidentiality Agreement must be signed.
- VAC is an equal opportunity employer. All staff are required to contribute to creating a non-discriminatory workplace.
- VAC provides a non-smoking workplace.
- Membership of the appropriate union is strongly encouraged.
- Applicants must be either Australian citizens, or have permanent resident status.

6. PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

VAC has a commitment to ensuring that counselling staff receive high quality professional supervision on a regular basis. The Counsellor is required to attend this supervision which may mean travel to Melbourne from time to time or attendance via Skype.

7. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

As an employee of VAC, staff need to strive to ensure a safe and healthy workplace by complying with the provisions of Section 25 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Duties of Employees).

8. APPLICATION PROCESS

Written applications addressing the selection criteria and including a resume and the names and contact details of three professional referees should be sent to recruitment@vac.org.au

For further enquiries please contact: Jackson Fairchild, Manager of Counselling, AOD and Family Violence Services BH: 9865 6700 jackson.fairchild@vac.org.au

Applications close on: COB September 15th 2017

Important: it is essential that applicants specifically address the selection criteria. Where selection criteria have not been addressed, applications will not be considered.