



POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Family Violence Support Worker

Reports to: Manager – Victims Assistance and Family Violence Services

Position status Full Time – 12 month Contract

Dated: November 2007

Equal Opportunity Exemption No A5/2006 – Female only staff

OUR HISTORY

Bethany Community Support first opened its doors in May 1868 as the Geelong Female Refuge. It was established to provide refuge and rehabilitation to the poor women of Geelong. As political, social and economic trends changed over the last 140 years, so too have the needs of the community. Over the years, Bethany has responded to those changes and has provided services that have included a babies home, adoption agency, kindergarten, day care service and mothercraft training centre. Bethany is an independent incorporated organisation with no political or religious affiliations. It is governed by a Board of Management drawn from our community. Bethany has a significant presence in the Barwon region and the wider welfare sector. It has a strong history of commitment and provision of high quality and innovative services that build upon individuals and communities strengths to achieve both personal and social change.

OUR WORK

Today, Bethany prides itself on being a key dynamic and diverse human services organisation in the Barwon region. We employ over 80 staff with a budget of over \$5 million and provide services to over 230,000 people living in Geelong and surrounding districts, through our main office in North Geelong and outposted service sites in Norlane, Surf Coast Shire, Colac Otway Shire and Bellarine Peninsula.

Our work is based in the belief that to build a sustainable community it must commence with the people themselves. Bethany learns from the people we work with and together we seek to effect change at individual, collective and political levels.

Bethany aims to build and strengthen communities by the provision of a broad range of prevention, intervention, support and educational services to individuals, children, young people and families based on contemporary research, international best practice models and professional standards.

OUR MISSION

Bethany's Mission is to support and strengthen communities.

OUR VALUES

- **Openness**

We interact with people in a transparent, honest and respectful manner.

- **Social Justice**

We believe in every person being actively involved in decisions which affect them and their lives.

- **Innovation**

We are committed to creatively and proactively responding to community needs.

- **Collaboration**

We engage in collaborative partnerships and relationships that strengthen community.

- **Wellbeing of staff**

We will be responsible for a professional and supportive environment in which staff can achieve their full potential.

- **Accountability**

We will be accountable for all aspects of the organisation.

POSITION DETAILS

Position Context and Organisational Relationship

The Family Violence Support Worker position is located within the Victims Assistance and Family Violence Services. This unit incorporates two key programs in the provision of services for those who have experienced crime. The Victims Assistance Counselling Program provides an integrated service response to victims of crime in the Barwon Sub-region. The objective of the service is to provide high quality service responses including therapeutic support, information, advocacy, case management, practical assistance and counselling services to victims of violent crime to assist their recovery from the effects of crime and reduce the risk of revictimisation. Community Education, liaison and networking are also a vital component of the service.

Family Violence Services are provided to women and children who are experiencing or escaping family violence across the Barwon South West Region through the provision of an after hours crisis service, outreach case management and specialised counselling services.

Staffing in the Unit consists of the Manager, 1.6Eft Victims Assistance Workers and a part time Psychologist/Counsellor, the Family Violence Support Worker and the Regional Family Violence After Hours Service with a pool of casual workers on call.

This position reports directly to the Manager Victims Assistance and Family Violence Services and forms part of the Community Support programs. The Community Support program area operates as an integrated suite of services and brings together the

following: Victims Assistance and Family Violence Services, Men and Family Relationships, Specialised Family Violence Services, Children's Contact Service and Family Resources Unit.

The Family Violence Support worker position plays a vital link to the Men and Family Relationships Program that offers a range of family violence services including the Men's Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) and a Specialised Family Violence Counsellor for Women and Children who are affected by their (ex) partners violence.

The MBCP has a primary focus of maximising the safety of women and children who are affected by family violence. As part of offering this program contact is made with all female partners, and where appropriate ex-partners, or other affected family members to offer support, undertake safety assessments, provide counselling, short-term case management and referrals.

Position Aim and Role

The primary aim of the Family Violence Support Service is to ensure the safety of women and children experiencing or escaping family violence. This position incorporates a number of important functions and has two essential components;

- as a family violence outreach worker and
- as a women's contact officer.

The Family Violence Support worker is the key linkage to the Regional Family Violence After Hours Service offered by Bethany, and provides next day post crisis outreach support, assessment, case management and referral of women and women with children who have received assistance through the After Hours Service.

The target group for the outreach component of the service is women and women with children for whom family violence places them in circumstances that threaten or adversely affect their safety and security. Women may receive outreach support services for an average of 12 weeks. Some women may require support over a longer period. The Outreach service also assesses the needs of accompanying children when assisting women who have experienced violence.

The Family Violence Support worker role will also undertake a function as Women's Contact Officer with primary responsibility for initial contact, assessment and response to all female partners, and where appropriate ex-partners and other affected family members of those attending the Men's Behaviour Change Program.

The position has been established in accordance with NTV Minimum Standards and Quality Practice (2005) for men's behaviour change programs and provides an essential and accountable link for women and children experiencing violence. The role provides support for women in their own right and is not linked to the Men's Behaviour Change program. It entails carrying out safety assessments with women, offering support, case management and referral and providing information where appropriate about the process of the men's program.

The role provides regular contact with women and where appropriate children, to make ongoing safety and support assessments and to consult with women about their and their children's needs and experiences in relation to the violence they are experiencing

from their (ex) partner. This position will also work closely with the Specialised Family Violence Counsellor in providing referrals and case management to women and children. This work will be mostly phone and centre based contact, but may involve some outreach work where safe and appropriate.

POSITION OBJECTIVES

Objectives of the Family Violence Support Service are:

- To assist women to make informed choices for themselves and their children about their circumstances to enhance and protect their safety.
- To provide confidential, professional and relevant services to women and their children delivered by professionally trained and skilled workers.
- To assist women and their children to remain safe in their local community, maintaining connection with friends, family and other community support. (In some cases safety imperatives may require assistance to relocate to another area);
- To reduce disruption to children's lives by providing a range of developmentally appropriate support services and referrals to specialists as appropriate.
- To work in an accountable structure of delivering Men's Behaviour Change Programs in ensuring the safety of women and children.
- To be part of an integrated response to family violence through the coordinated delivery of services and liaison with key stakeholders, police and courts including the development of referral pathways, protocols and joint initiatives.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- To provide follow up support and case management for women and accompanying children who have accessed the Regional Family Violence After Hours Service.
- To provide initial and follow-up contact work with female partners/expartners and accompanying children where appropriate of men attending a Behaviour Change Program.
- Liaison with the MBCP team, Family Violence After Hours team and Specialised Family Violence Counsellor to ensure continuity of service for women and children, timely follow up, accountability and service development.
- To participate in the team intake roster and case allocation meetings.
- To conduct safety and risk assessments to determine the current and ongoing risks and service requirements for women and children experiencing family violence.
- To provide information, advocacy and case management for women experiencing family violence.
- To consider the needs of children who have experienced or witnessed family violence and make appropriate referrals.
- To deliver group programs, undertake co facilitation of educational or support groups and provide secondary consultation to internal or external services.
- To liaise and build effective working relationships with Police, Courts and Hospitals and a range of family violence specific and mainstream support services.
- To maintain client documentation in accordance with appropriate standards and professional requirements and comply with the accurate collection of statistical information.

- To positively promote and represent the organisation internally and externally in a range of forums and meetings across the sector and with key stakeholders.
- In conjunction with other team members, undertake program promotion, presentations, community education and training activities.
- To work within a professional framework, to undertake annual performance assessments and participate in regular supervision with the Manager.
- To attend regular agency and team meetings and participate in professional development.
- To work within the policies and procedures of Bethany Community Support.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. An appropriate tertiary qualification in Social Work, Welfare or other related discipline.
2. Demonstrated experience in the family violence field, particularly casework and/or counselling with women and children.
3. Sound understanding of the issues underpinning family violence and its effects on women's and children's lives.
4. Knowledge of child development and the impact of violence within the family.
5. Knowledge and understanding of the legal, medical, safety and emotional issues experienced by women and children who have experienced family violence.
6. Demonstrated experience in the provision of crisis intervention and risk assessment frameworks.
7. Sound understanding of theory and practice as it relates to working with men who use violence towards their partner and children, including an understanding of the values and philosophy underpinning men's behaviour change programs.
8. Ability to demonstrate culturally sensitive practice in relation to family violence, inclusive of the needs of Indigenous and CALD communities.
9. Well developed observational, conceptual and analytical skills, together with highly developed interpersonal and communication skills including written mediums.
10. Demonstrated ability to work co-operatively and effectively within and across teams, programs and other services to enhance client care.
11. Demonstrated ability to work as a member of a multidisciplinary team and to work independently.
12. Ability to represent the organisation within this role and to liaise effectively with a range of professionals, police, hospitals, accommodation providers and other relevant providers.
13. Mandatory: A current full Victorian Drivers Licence.

SALARY & CONDITIONS

This is a full time position offering a one year (12 Month) contract. The position is based on the Social and Community Services Award, Social Worker, Class 2 Year 1 - 3 based on experience and qualifications.

Other employment conditions are as per Bethany Community Support's Enterprise Agreement (1998). Generous salary packaging is available as per Government guidelines for public benevolent institutions.

Appointment to this position is subject to a pre-employment police record check. A three-month probationary period will commence upon appointment and a review will be conducted during this period.

Applications will only be accepted addressing all the Key Selection Criteria with an attached Resume, including the names of three professional referees, including most recent employer.

For further information and to forward applications

Contact:

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Applications close 16 November 2007