Position Description

Title	Counsellor/Advocate
Department	Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL)
Classification	Social Worker Grade 2 or equivalent tertiary health qualification
Agreement	In accordance with qualification or Victorian Public Health Sector (Allied Health Professionals) Single Interest Enterprise Agreement 2021-2025
Responsible to	SACL Coordinator

The Royal Women's Hospital

Since 1856, The Royal Women's Hospital (The Women's) has been providing health services to women and newborn babies in Victoria. Today, The Women's is one of Australia's leading specialist public hospitals dedicated to and advocating for the health and wellbeing of women and newborns. Through our campuses at Parkville and Sandringham and by supporting ten research centres, the Women's is advancing healthcare for women in maternity services and the care of newborn babies, gynaecology, women's health and women's cancer services.

The Women's Vision and Values

The Women's believes that health equity for all women is more than a vision; it is the essence of who we are and what we do encompassing our values, role and purpose.

The Women's Vision is: Creating *healthier futures for women and babies*.

Our values are: *Courage, Passion, Discovery and Respect.*

The Women's Declaration

The Women's Declaration reflects the principles and philosophies so fundamental to the hospital that they are the foundation on which rests everything we do. This is a declaration of the Women's role, function, purpose and promise:

We are committed to the social model of health
We care for women from all walks of life
We recognise that sex and gender affect health and healthcare
We are a voice for women's health
We seek to achieve health equity

Strategic Directions

The Women's Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025 contains four strategic priorities and fourteen initiatives of strategic focus, to achieve our vision of *Creating healthier futures for women and babies.*

The Women's four strategic priorities are:

1. We provide leading care for women and newborns
2. We partner to create exceptional experiences every day
3. We are the best place to work, learn and contribute
4. We lead and partner to influence change

Organisational Context

The Women's Social Model of Health Division is a newly formed function that reinforces our commitment to the social determinants of health. Whilst all services at the Women's ensure health equity for all women, the Social Model of Health Division brings together our services and programs that specialise in providing care to women facing challenges that may adversely affect their health. The Social Model of Health Division at the Women's has responsibility for ensuring the hospital's clinical and social support services are coordinated, aligned and leveraged to provide wrap around care for the women who need it most. In particular, the division has a focus on ensuring a woman's social, economic, cultural, environmental, geographic, and other factors are taken into account in her care plan with the overall aim of reducing health inequalities and addressing systemic inadequacies that affect health access and outcomes.

Department/Unit Specific Overview

The Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL) provides a state wide after-hours telephone crisis service to people of all genders and sexualities impacted by sexual assault (including providing support to trans and gender diverse people and non-binary people and communities).

SACL provides immediate crisis care coordination to victims / survivors of recent sexual assault, telephone crisis counselling support and advocacy, information and referral to victim /survivors of recent and past sexual assault. SACL also provides support and information for non-offending family and friends, and professional consultation and debriefing to on call Counsellor/Advocates from Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA's) Counsellor/Advocates and other professionals across Victoria.

Position Purpose

The SACL Counsellor/Advocate role is responsible for the provision of telephone crisis counselling support, information, referral and advocacy services to survivors of childhood and adult sexual assault, their non-offending families or friends, professionals and other community members. The SACL Counsellor/Advocate is responsible for coordinating an immediate crisis care response with CASA services throughout the state, to survivors of recent sexual assault.

Responsibilities & Major Activities

Clinical skills

- Provide telephone crisis response support to survivors of past and recent sexual assault based on a clearly articulated intersectional feminist, rights advocacy, violence and trauma informed practice framework
- Co-ordinate the personnel involved in the provision of immediate crisis care responses to survivors of recent sexual assault (including CASAs, emergency/medical and police/legal systems)
- Participate in an after-hours roster covering evenings, overnights and weekend shifts
- Participate in a roster that provides back-up on-call to the service as required
- Provide consultation and debriefing to CASA counsellor/advocates delivering crisis care responses across the state after hours
- Provide secondary consultation to health and other professional practitioners

Information and Data management

- Using the relevant databases, maintain timely and accurate statistical data of all work
- Use of the Women's electronic medical record (EMR) where required to fulfil the duties of this position
- Ensure documentation and data meets the requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services, including all statutory requirements and relevant hospital policies and guidelines
- Ensure timely collation, entry and analysis of statistics at all times and on request

Safe practice and environment

- Address the concerns and complaints of service users, their families, team members and other hospital departments to ensure that the quality of the service improves; hold yourself and others accountable for providing an exceptional service user experience; use appropriate techniques to resolve difficult service user situations and regain their confidence. Escalate concerns and complaints appropriately.

- Contribute and commit to a culture that promotes gender equity, respect and a safe working environment and have an understanding of violence against women and family violence issues.
- Participate in quality improvement activities; involving the RWH Quality and Safety team as necessary

Research and Training Opportunities

- Identify research opportunities and participate as appropriate
- Critically review and keep up to date with professional literature relevant to sexual assault
- Participate in the development and delivery of community education and training

Practice Improvement and Service Development

- Assist in the implementation of mechanisms to ensure that service users are provided with opportunities to have input into and feedback on the services they receive
- Ensure services are delivered in accordance with the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) and the Department of Health and Human Service Standards

Professional Responsibilities

- Participate in team meetings, supervision, peer resourcing and service planning forums
- Participate in an annual performance development review and complete all mandatory competencies
- Represent and promote SACL at external meetings as requested
- Participate in portfolio work or any other project work as required
- Apply conflict resolution skills when dealing with problems
- Attend professional development and training opportunities as required and ensure sufficient professional development is undertaken annually to meet eligibility requirements for membership with the relevant professional body

Stakeholder Relationships

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders

Key Performance Indicators

The following indicators are key performance measures and responsibilities of the position listed above. The particulars of these will be set with you as part of your Performance Development Plan within the first six months of your appointment to the position.

- Provision of high-quality crisis care and follow up services for victim/survivors of sexual assault
- Provision of a service based on an articulated intersectional feminist, rights advocacy, violence and trauma informed practice framework
- Staffing of the Police and Counselling telephone lines during SACL hours of operation [after hours, weekends and public holidays]
- Participation in regular professional development, supervision, debriefing and consultation as required/appropriate
- Participation in an annual Performance Development Review process and completion of mandatory competencies
- Attendance and participation in team meetings and peer group supervision sessions.

Key Selection Criteria

Essential Experience/Qualifications/Competencies

- The minimum qualification required for the SACL Counsellor/Advocate role is a university obtained Bachelor degree, ideally in Social Work or a health profession relevant to the provision of crisis counselling and support.
- Additional qualifications that are higher than a Bachelor Degree must be relevant to the provision of crisis counselling and support, and must be supported by a university obtained Bachelor Degree.
- Eligibility for membership with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) or other Professional Body as relevant to the qualification held.
- Demonstrated crisis counselling experience and specialist knowledge and skills in supporting survivors of sexual assault and violence

- Knowledge of contemporary issues in regards to violence against women in policy and practice
- An understanding of and commitment to, the provision of a service based on an intersectional feminist, rights advocacy, violence and trauma informed practice framework
- Demonstrated excellent level communication (verbal and written), negotiation and advocacy skills
- Demonstrated ability to work as a member of a team and ability to establish and maintain functional networks with a wide variety of health personnel and with other service providers
- Experience and understanding of working with interpreters

Desirable:

- Experience in training delivery and community education
- Experience in group facilitation
- Experience in supervising students

Attributes:

- Embodies the Women's values of courage, passion, discovery and respect
- Exhibits a professional demeanour and flexibility to fulfilling role requirements
- Effective time management, including ability to balance competing and conflicting priorities as they arise
- Ability to work in a crisis orientated service
- Ability to work independently (particularly overnight where work is done solo), with the insight to further consult where necessary

Organisational Relationships

Internal relationships

- Sexual Assault Crisis Line Coordinators and SACL team members
- Manager of Social Work and Social Work team members
- All departments and staff of The Women's, as required in the course of carrying out SACL Counsellor/Advocate duties. Key teams this role interacts with include; the Women's Emergency Centre, After-Hours Managers and General Counsel

External relationships

- Other Victorian CASA's, the CASA Forum and health organisations
- Government departments including Department of Health and Human Services and Family Safety Victoria
- Victoria Police, particularly the Sexual Offices and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)
- Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine
- Other Hospitals and Health providers
- Safe Steps – Victoria's 24/7 Family Violence Support Service

Employee Responsibilities and Accountabilities

- Be aware of and work in accordance with, The Women's policies and procedures, including:
  - Code of Conduct
  - Confidentiality
  - Data Accountability Framework
  - Infection Control
  - Occupational Health and Safety
  - Patient Safety
  - Performance Development Management
  - Respectful Workplace Behaviours
  - Risk Management
- Be respectful of the needs of patients, visitors and other staff and maintain a professional approach in all interactions, creating exceptional experiences
- Undertake other duties as directed that meet relevant standards and recognised practice.
- The Women's provides pregnancy termination services as part of its public health responsibility to provide safe health care to Victorian women.

- Data integrity is an essential element of clinical and corporate governance and a key performance indicator for the Women's. The management of data influences and directly affects patient care, patient decisions, and ultimately the quality and reputation of our service delivery. As a consequence all staff are responsible and accountable to ensure that (within their area of work):
  - Data recording and reporting, (including RWH external reporting) is timely, accurate (i.e. error free) and fit for purpose
  - Data management system policies and control processes are complied with on all occasions
  - Where data issues and/or problems become apparent these matters are to be immediately referred and reported to supervisors/managers.
- Agree to provide evidence of a valid employment Working with Children Check and provide the necessary details for the Women's to undertake a national (and international, if applicable) Police check
- The Women's expects staff to identify and report incidents, potential for error and near misses and supports staff to learn how to improve the knowledge systems and processes to create a safe and supportive environment for staff and patients.
- Contributes to a positive and supportive learning culture and environment for health professional students and learners at all levels.

Staff Vaccination Requirements

COVID 19 Vaccination

Provide evidence that they have received a full COVID-19 Vaccination, or provide evidence from a medical practitioner certifying that an exception applies related to a contraindication to the administration of the COVID-19 vaccination. This includes employees in all roles at the Women's Hospital. This requirement is in line with the directions pursuant to section 200 (1)(d) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic).

Influenza Vaccination

In line with the Health Services Amendment (Mandatory Vaccination of Healthcare Workers) Act 2020, some health care workers are now required to have their flu vaccination to work in health care. Evidence of vaccination is required. As this role fits into category C of the departments risk ratings, applicants are strongly encouraged (although not required) to be vaccinated against influenza.

Statutory Responsibilities

- OHS Act 2004
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- The Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct
- Children Youth and Families Act 2005 and Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Family Violence Protection Act 2008

Inherent Requirements

There are a number of critical work demands (inherent requirements) that are generic across all positions at The Women's. The generic inherent requirements for this position are detailed below. These may be added to with more specific inherent requirements, if required, by your manager and Occupational Health and Safety.

Physical Demands	Frequency
Shift work – rotation of shifts – day, afternoon and night	Prolonged/ Constant
Sitting – remaining in a seated position to complete tasks	Prolonged/ Constant
Standing- remaining standing without moving about to perform tasks	Occasional
Walking – floor type even, vinyl, carpet,	Occasional
Lean forward / forward flexion from waist to complete tasks	Rare
Trunk twisting – turning from the waist to complete tasks	Not applicable
Kneeling – remaining in a kneeling position to complete tasks	Not applicable
Squatting / crouching – adopting these postures to complete tasks	Not applicable
Leg / foot movement to operate equipment	Not applicable
Climbing stairs / ladders – ascending and descending stairs, ladders, steps	Rare

Lifting / carrying – light lifting and carrying less than 5 kilos	Rare
– Moderate lifting and carrying 5–10 kilos	Not applicable
– Heavy lifting and carrying – 10–20 kilos.	Not applicable
Push/Pull of equipment/furniture – light push/pull forces less than 10 kg	Rare
– moderate push / pull forces 10–20 kg	Not applicable
– heavy push / pull forces over 20 kg	Not applicable
Reaching – arm fully extended forward or raised above shoulder	Rare
Head / Neck Postures – holding head in a position other than neutral (facing forward)	Rare
Sequential repetitive actions in short period of time	
– Repetitive flexion and extension of hands wrists and arms	Occasional
– Gripping, holding, twisting, clasping with fingers / hands	Occasional
Driving – operating any motor vehicle with a valid Victorian driver's license.	Not applicable
Sensory demands	**Frequency**
Sight – use of sight is integral to most tasks completed each shift	Prolonged/Constant
Hearing – use of hearing is an integral part of work performance	Prolonged/Constant
Touch – use of touch is integral to most tasks completed each shift.	Prolonged/Constant
Psychosocial demands	**Frequency**
Observation skills – assessing / reviewing patients in /outpatients	Frequent
Problem Solving issues associated with clinical and non-clinical care	Prolonged/Constant
Attention to Detail	Prolonged/Constant
Working with distressed people and families	Prolonged/ Constant
Dealing with aggressive and uncooperative people	Occasional
Dealing with unpredictable behaviour	Occasional
Exposure to distressing situations	Prolonged/ Constant

Definitions used to quantify frequency of tasks / demands as above	
Prolonged / Constant	70–100 % of time in the position
Frequent	31–69 % of time in the position
Occasional	16–30% of time in the position
Rare	0–15% of time in the position
Not Applicable	

Declaration

I have read, understood and agree to abide by the responsibilities and accountabilities outlined in this position description.

Developed Date: February 2024

Developed by: Manager Social Work

Date of next Review: February 2024