

Position:	Homelessness Support Worker
Based:	Stawell Health and Community Centre, with outreach to the Wimmera and Ararat region
Program:	Homelessness Support Worker A Place To Call Home Support for Families at Risk
Funded By:	Department of Human Services
Team:	Housing and Family Violence Team
Responsible To:	Housing and Family Violence (HFV) Program Manager (see attached organisational chart)
Tenure:	6 month contract (ongoing subject to funding) Subject to the signing of an Employment Schedule All positions are subject to a three month probationary period with a review being conducted before employment is confirmed. The period of employment is subject to ongoing funding & satisfactory work performance
Classification:	SACS Award Social Worker Class 1 Level 1 to level 7
Hours:	0.8 EFT (4 days per week)
Date:	February 2012

GRAMPIANS COMMUNITY HEALTH - PREAMBLE:

Grampians Community Health (GCH) formerly Grampians Community Health Centre Inc, has operated since 1986 and provides a multi-disciplinary approach to psychosocial health in line with a Social Model of Health philosophy including the social determinants of health as stated in the Ottawa Charter et al. GCH is embedded in and operates from a number of sites servicing primarily but not limited to the local government areas of Northern Grampians Shire, Rural City of Ararat, Pyrenees Shire and Horsham Rural City.

Balgarnie joined GCH in 1996 as a Psychiatric Support Service – it has since broadened its role to encompass rehabilitation and sub regional outreach.

Palm Lodge joined GCH in 2002. Palm Lodge has been in existence since 1976, first as a residential rehabilitation unit for people with a substance abuse problem and more recently as a counselling & health promotion unit for substance abuse, family violence & housing support and gambling problems.

Nexus joined GCH in November 2005. Nexus developed in Horsham to meet a need young people had expressed in 1999 after the closure of another youth project, Banjo's. It now provides an opportunity for young people in and around the Wimmera to participate in the development of services and recreational activities in a supportive, safe & innovative environment.

Staff at the Centre work in many areas including: Drug & Alcohol Counselling & Withdrawal services, Social Work, Community Nursing, Community Psychiatric, Youth Work, Supported Accommodation, Family Violence, Community Development, Health Promotion and Education, Palliative Care and complex service delivery for Senior Adults, people with disabilities and their carer's.

Vision Statement:

GCH, in collaboration with the communities we serve, will provide excellence & leadership in the development & delivery of primary health care & community services. GCH will facilitate the achievement of healthy living for all throughout the Grampians/Wimmera

Philosophy Base:

GCH's Philosophy is grounded in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO 1986), the Jakarta Convention (WHO 1996) and the Health Development Paradigm now better known as the Social Model of Health, and more recently the Victorian Charter of Human rights and Responsibilities.

The process of information, skill development, empowerment, community collaborative ventures, resilience and self-responsibility embedded in a caring framework of non-judgemental acceptance of diversity underpins the GCH approach to both its staff & clients.

Management philosophy is loosely based around the Deming Management Philosophy, Social Model of Health for staff, Total Quality Improvement and Facilitatory Management

Background to this position

The GCH Supported Accommodation & Assistance Family Violence and Cross Target Programs have eleven cross target and family violence workers based in Horsham & Stawell/Ararat. Two of these positions are aboriginal family violence specific.

The objective of SAAP is to achieve, through the provision of supported accommodation and related support services, the maximum possible degree of self-reliance, empowerment and independence for people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.

Homelessness is the state in which a person does not have access to safe and secure shelter. Safe and secure shelter is shelter of a standard that does not damage a person's health, threaten their personal safety or marginalise them through failing to provide access to adequate personal amenities or the economic and social supports that a home normally provides.

(Please refer to attached document for description of APTCH and Support for Families)

The Housing Support and Family Violence Housing Support Program

The Housing Support and Family Violence Housing Support program aims to provide support, information, resources and referrals to people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, due to a number of factors including family violence.

Key objectives of this position

Within the frame work of the Peak Policies of GCH:

- To effectively assist people who are homeless to achieve self-reliance and independence.
- Support women, with or without children, living in or escaping from situations of family violence.
- Provide information and / or referrals to other service providers as relevant and appropriate.
- Under the direction of GCH take responsibility, as part of a team, for the Housing and Family Violence Program and ensure adherence to SAAP Standards.
- To work with the GCH HFV team to improve the quality and effectiveness of the program.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities

- Assist people to overcome current or impending homelessness through the provision of service, based on Case management principles.
- Support people that are residing in transitional housing and assisting with Office of Housing applications for recurring homelessness
- Assist people to develop knowledge of tenancy issues, their rights and obligations & to promote the development of necessary skills to successfully obtain secure housing and independent living skills.
- Provide client focussed assistance to women and their children experiencing family violence.
- Encourage survivors of family violence to make empowered culturally appropriate decisions about their future.
- Ensure access and advocacy for service users to relevant services such as cultural support, family violence related services, housing, income security, legal assistance, financial management, parenting support, children's support services and health issues, providing some of these services where necessary.
- Ensure clients participation in their own case planning
- Liaise and consult with other SAAP services, government departments and the community sector to continue the development of the SAAP service and other initiatives to meet the needs of homeless people.
- Respond to crisis calls, within service hours and in conjunction with other family violence works where necessary, by using culturally appropriate protocols put in place with the Police, Department of Human Services, Child Protection Unit and other SAAP services.
- Travel throughout the sub region, attending appropriate meetings and developing strong links and protocols with relevant agencies to ensure accessibility to service users.
- Assist with the ongoing development of a relevant service delivery model for survivors of family violence to ensure that the service is responsive.
- Continue to develop skills & knowledge by actively participating in professional development activities and/or ongoing training, both within and away from G.C.H.
- Develop case plans relevant to the specific needs of the individual, maintain accurate case files and collect data according to the GCH & SAAP standards.
- Use computer technology for data collection and reports.
- In a pro rata way actively participate in the Quality Assurance programs of G.C.H. These include weekly casework meetings, professional supervision, G.C.H. staff development days and annual staff weekend and G.C.H. staff meetings.
- Participate in Centre wide and program specific Health Promotion and community development activities.
- As part of the G.C.H. team, participate in the daily activities required for the smooth operation of the centre.
- Be familiar with and work within the GCH policies and philosophies and SAAP standards.
- Ensure the up to date and accurate collection, recording and reporting of statistical and service data as required by National Data Collection Agency, Department of Human Services and GCHC.
- Other duties as agreed with the Direct Care Programs manager, HFV Manager or CEO.

Key Selection Criteria:

1. Understanding of the needs of and a demonstrated **capacity to work with people who are homeless** at risk of homelessness and/or in crisis.
2. **Knowledge/experience in working with families** and family theoretical systems
3. **Awareness of family violence issues** as they relate to survivors.
4. Relevant experience in **housing & tenancy issues**.
5. Demonstrated ability to apply a **flexible, non-judgemental and empowering approach** to service delivery.
6. Well developed **advocacy, consultative and negotiation skills** and the capacity to liaise effectively at a variety of levels
7. **Knowledge** of local accommodation, community and legal services in the region.
8. The **capacity to problem solve**, in a prompt and creative manner, complex human service issues
9. Demonstrated ability to **work independently** and as a team member in a challenging role.
10. Well developed **communication skills**, verbal and written.
11. Ability to prepare clear and concise **reports, submissions** and other relevant documents and **data**.
12. A thorough understanding of the issues related to **confidentiality** and **mandatory reporting** provisions.
13. Understanding of the **Social Model of Health** and its implications for this position

Qualifications & Experience:

Essential

1. Appropriate tertiary qualifications in social and welfare work
2. Current Victorian Drivers Licence.

Preferred

3. Experience in working with clients with complex needs
4. Relevant expertise in working with people who have experienced homelessness and/or family violence.

Other Skills:

Willingness to work 'out of hours' on particular occasions if required

An ability to set appropriate professional boundaries when working with clients & referring when appropriate.

Ability to work in an empathetic non-judgemental manner.

Other Conditions:

1. No overtime allowance is made for this position. Time in lieu of time worked will be available but must be taken at a mutually agreed time with the H&FV Program Manager and/or Direct Care Programs Manager and may not be accrued to more than **15hrs/fortnight pro rata of employed hours**. Time in lieu should be used for exceptional circumstances instead of becoming a regular practice. It is expected that no more than 15hrs of TIL will be carried forward from one pay period to the next.
2. GCH cars can be used for work related activities, depending on availability. Use of own car will be reimbursed at the modified RACV mileage rate. **Note:** The use of a private vehicle to travel in excess of 40km return needs to be approved in advance by the Program Manager, Resources Manager or the CEO

3. This position will have an annual appraisal at which time the job description will be reviewed by the Housing & Family Violence Program Manager and a GCH Core member in consultation with the employee and modified if necessary.
4. Ensure knowledge of current GCH Occupational Health & Safety policies as they relate to this sphere of work. OH&S is a shared responsibility at GCH.
5. Annual Leave and Sick Leave will be payable on a pro rata basis.
6. GCH understands that "normal working hours" are between 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday. Appointments, programs and other work may, at times, fall outside these hours but for OHS reasons are subject to the signing of the "Out of Hours" book.
7. Superannuation contributions will be paid by Grampians Community Health in line with the Superannuation Guarantee Act
8. All permanent GCH staff have access to salary packaging which is offered in line with current legislation. The employee will incur any costs or liabilities associated with these requirements during the period of the contract
9. A National Police Check & Working with Children Check (if required) will be carried out at GCH's expense prior to commencement of employment.
10. Grampians Community Health is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a smoke free workplace.

Families at Risk Program

Aim: to support families with additional needs who require longer term support to successfully access, establish and maintain a public or social housing tenancy or private rental accommodation, preventing them from re-entering the homelessness service system.

Program model

The Support for Families at Risk of Homelessness service will support families to establish and maintain safe and secure housing options upon exit from the Homelessness Service System (including public housing, social housing and private rental accommodation).

Support includes the provision of:

- Longer term, flexible and intensive support within a family oriented case management framework to support families and children. Including assisting to link to key mainstream and specialist support and maintain children in school.
- Access to brokerage funds to assist families to meet case management goals where other opportunities for goods and services are not available, or to access private rental accommodation.

Support to families will include:

Assisting parents to:

- Establish and maintain a public or social housing tenancy or private rental accommodation including assistance to access via brokerage;
- Establish and maintain effective links and support networks within their local community (i.e. support and medical services);
- Strengthen financial management skills including linking with community financial counselling services;
- Establish and maintain effective links to education, employment and training opportunities; and
- Strengthen parenting skills and develop effective strategies to build on the capacity of the family unit (including links to parenting support programs and family services where appropriate).

A Place To Call Home

All households are required to be approved segmented wait list applicants, preferably recurring homelessness, and meet eligibility criteria for public housing. Families should also have or have quickly developed strong linkages to the local community such as children attending local schools and or household members accessing specific health, training or work opportunities.

A critical component of the success of *A Place to Call Home* is the ability for support agencies to continue working with the family for up to fourteen month period.

Households enter THM under normal homelessness prioritisation arrangements which should prioritise those in greater need. At the point when the public housing application has been prepared, the relevant support and THM should identify the household as a suitable candidate for the initiative. Consultation should then occur between the support agency and the THM with local housing office management.



Additional Information to Applicants

- **Key selection criteria must be specifically addressed in your application**
- Applications should include clear details of work experience and qualifications
- Applications should include two written references and the name, address and daytime telephone number of two work- related referees

Applications must reach the address below by

5pm Friday 17th February 2012

Late applications will not be considered.

Applicants should include day and evening telephone contact numbers so that we can readily arrange interview times if necessary

If you are emailing your application, you will be sent an email confirmation of receipt of your application. If you do not receive this, please contact reception to confirm that your application has been received.

Successful applicants would be required to undergo a police check

Address applications to:

“CONFIDENTIAL”
Jill Miller
CEO
Grampians Community Health
8 – 22 Patrick St
STAWELL Vic 3380

Ph: 5358 7400 Fax: 5358 4113

E-mail: gch@grampiancommunityhealth.org.au