

POSITION:	Program Leader – Specialist Trauma Counselling Team
REPORTING TO:	Manager Client Services
DIRECT REPORTS:	Senior Practitioner, Specialist Trauma Counsellors
KEY RELATIONSHIPS:	Program Leaders, CEO, General Manager Operations and Executive Team members, 1800 Respect Counselling service providers
POSITION STATUS:	Fixed Term ending 31 December 2019

1. PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

Within the parameters of our constitution, service philosophy and the Strategic Plan established by the Board, and under the direction and supervision of approved **safe steps** staff, the Program Leader – Telephone and Online Counselling Service will:

- Ensure staffing scheduling adherence to the national telephone and online counselling service work schedule as is negotiated between **safe steps** and 1800 Respect
- Oversee the day-to-day functions of, on-site monitoring and allocation of tasks, the Specialist Trauma Telephone and online based Counselling Team
- Review compliance and quality process reports and recommendations provided by Medibank Health Solutions and implement effective, real time solutions
- Ensure that all people referred by 1800 Respect for telephone and online counselling support receive appropriate trauma informed care to a high standard
- Ensure that all people who have received trauma informed telephone and online counselling care are referred to appropriate additional therapeutic services as needed
- Ensure that people from ATSI and CALD communities referred by 1800 Respect receive services specific to their needs
- Ensure that staff in the telephone and online counselling team are well supported and receiving adequate supervision as required, including directing the managing of scheduling and backfilling of shifts.
- Adherence to a telephone and online counselling based practice framework.
- Recording of all required data for internal information management systems and ensuring information is concise and secure.
- Undertake projects and other activities as required, which are designed to improve the overall national counselling service.
- Lead and direct professional development, in-service training and team processes, and well as on-shift and individual supervision sessions when required.
- Be a positive and constructive member of **safe steps** who role models professional behavior at all times, informed both by legislative requirements and our service delivery model.

2. ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

safe steps Family Violence Response Centre (formally known as the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service) was set up in 1974 as the Women's Refuge Referral Service to provide a 24 hour 7 days a week telephone helpline for women experiencing domestic violence.

It is now a state-wide incorporated association funded primarily by the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a range of services 24 hours 7 days a week for women and their children who experience family violence. **safe steps** is the primary contact and referral point for access to women's refuges in Victoria. It provides a range of complementary family violence services from prevention, early intervention, response and recovery including:

- a telephone information, support, advocacy and referral service and
- a high security supported safe house accommodation service
- Counselling services

The organisation operates out of two separate work locations, one of which houses the 24/7 immediate response telephone service, strategy and development programs and administration, and the other, which provides safe accommodation

safe steps is governed by a constitution and a Board of Governance with ten members. The Board elects its own chair and meets monthly to set the strategic direction and policy parameters for the organisation and its work. The organisation is managed by a Chief Executive Officer who operates with a high degree of autonomy, and at the same time working closely and effectively with the Board. She attends Board meetings and services the work of the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring effective relationships with our funding bodies and with sector partners, and for developing protocols to ensure that the best possible services are provided to the women and children who need them. **safe steps** is a lead organisation in a wider network of domestic violence services in Victoria.

The organisation has an annual budget turnover of more than \$10 million; it employs more than 65 full-time staff, part-time staff, volunteers and students to support the work of the organisation.

The Program Leader – Specialist Trauma Counselling Team is based at the **safe steps** office in Melbourne and monitors and reports on the telephone and online counselling services provided to women and their children who are referred to **safe steps** from 1800 Respect no matter their location. Additionally the Program Leader – Specialist Trauma Counselling Team directly provides support, information, and

assistance to counselling staff working with women and their children who are experiencing Domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

The Program Leader –Specialist Trauma Counselling Team works in consultation with fellow Program Leaders and senior practitioners and reports directly to Manager Client Services in accordance with Service philosophy, code of conduct, policies and procedures. The Program Leader Counselling Services is expected to work a combination of business hours as required.

The Program Leader – Specialist Trauma Counselling Team is expected to uphold organisation’s policies and procedures, State and Federal legislative requirements as well as the Department of Human Services Standards (DSS), which include the following obligations:

- to respect client confidentiality
- to obtain consent for the disclosure of information about a client
- to inform any client who wishes to make a complaint about the organisation of their right to do so, and to assist them to initiate a complaint

safe step’s locations and unlisted telephone numbers may not be disclosed to any other person except in accordance with service procedures. The locations and unlisted telephone numbers of any high security refuges may not be disclosed to any other person other than in accordance with the instructions of each such service.

3. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

(i) Oversee the day to day operations of the telephone and online counselling services

- Plan and ensure staffing scheduling adherence to the national telephone and online counselling service work schedule as is negotiated between **safe steps** and 1800 Respect
- Provide supervision and mentoring to service staff (including staff located in other states) on a regular basis
- Ensure that all client case notes and data collection for women and their children are timely and of a high standard
- Ensure the counselling services are accessible and responsive to women from CALD or Indigenous/Torres Strait Islander backgrounds in a culturally appropriate manner to optimise their service experience and safety
- Ensure the counselling services are accessible to, and respond appropriately to, the most vulnerable clients including those with a disability, mental health, drug & alcohol and high and complex needs
- Undertake stakeholder engagement which enables the service to secure access for clients to the services and service pathways they require
- Directly provide counselling telephone and online services to people referred from 1800 Respect as may be required including on an on-call/re-call basis

(ii) SERVICE DEVELOPMENT: To contribute to the development of the Telephone and Online Counselling Services, and the overall services of safe steps by:

- Monitoring and evaluating the telephone and online counselling service to determine its effectiveness and make recommendations as necessary to ensure the successful service delivery
- Attend meetings between national counselling and online service providers including travelling Interstate as may be required
- Recommend and implement service improvement strategies as required
- Participate in implementation and review processes
- Strengthen the community's response to women and children experiencing family violence through advocacy, community engagement and education
- Participate in recruitment, on-boarding, induction and ongoing training of staff as required
- Provide supervision and debriefing to colleagues, and contribute to a positive team dynamic and work environment
- Participate in employee performance reviews as required
- Review and circulate statistical data and generating reports as required to ensure a strong evidential base
- Regularly attend and positively contribute to staff meetings, supervision, training and staff development activities as required
- Maintain clearly defined and appropriate personal and professional boundaries with colleagues, reporting staff, clients and stakeholders
- Report patterns of difficulty in applying existing procedures or in liaising and advocating with other agencies.
- Reporting staff development needs and/or inappropriate or unethical staff behavior to appropriate line manager.
- Positively leading organisational change processes as required

(iii) ADMINISTRATION: Through the use of organisational procedures ensure that all administration and documentation requirements are initiated and completed in a professional and timely manner.

- Recording of accurate, timely and detailed case notes
- Collating and preparing reports and other written documents as required Monitoring, reviewing and maintaining the integrity of client files
- Contributing to internal communication systems processes
- Assisting with the upkeep of resource files and databases
- Working within the delegations of authority documents and ensuring financial accountability requirements are adhered to and met.
- Ensuring that accountability reports are produced and collated as necessary
- Participating in service evaluations as required
- Ensuring safety checks and site inspections are carried out in a timely and thorough manner
- Adhering to Occupational Health and Safety Standards and assuming responsibility for the proper use of all equipment and the monitoring of the environment to ensure safe practice.

(iv) OTHER TASKS

- Build and maintain positive relationships with a broad range of stakeholders including 1800 Respect staff and interstate counselling service partners
- Respond to concerns raised by clients or stakeholders and ensure the appropriate escalation of written complaints
- Take appropriate action to ensure continuity of services when IT and/or phone systems fail
- Regularly attend and positively contribute to Leadership Team meetings and Staff meetings, including interstate meetings.
- Abide by all organisational policies and procedures, including all workplace health and safety measures
- Carrying out other duties as requested by line manager, General Manager, or Chief Executive Officer including working up, across and down as may be required.

4. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Demonstrated experience in leading and supporting a Team of community based service workers
- Capacity for self-motivation, ability to cope with changing work functions, workloads and tasks
- Minimum 3 year tertiary qualification in counselling, psychology, social work, social services or a related field is essential
- Eligible for membership with a governing body of profession with either Australian Association of Social Workers, the Australian Psychological Society or Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia
- Trauma specialist counselling experience (preferably telephone counselling) or full time equivalent experience in specialised sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling.
- Experience and understanding of issues relating to service delivery with an agency that is committed to socially and culturally inclusive practices.
Willingness to commit to the living expression of **safe steps** values; non-violent, empowering, feminist, ethical and respectful, collaborative, authoritative and evidence-based
- Understanding of child protection legislation relevant to service delivery
- Demonstrated ability to work in a fast paced and high demand work environment, including working within agreed timeline parameters.
- Well-developed oral and written communication skills including the ability to communicate effectively with a diverse range of cultural and social groups.
- Intermediate use of Microsoft office suite and keyboard skills
- Must be available to work across a variety of shift times.
- A current Victorian Drivers Licence
- A current Working With Children Check
- Willingness to undergo a National Police Check

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EXEMPTION

safe steps is exempt from the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 which would otherwise require the appointment to this position to be on non-gender specific basis. Applications for this position will be considered from women only (Exemption A366/2011).

6. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All offers of employment are subject to satisfactory background checks including a National Police Check (including an international police check if resided continuously in an overseas country for 12 months or more in the last ten years), Working with Children Check, disclosure of previous or current disciplinary action, referee checks, proof of eligibility to work in Australia and qualification checks.
- Where background checks are not to the satisfaction of **safe steps** in its absolute discretion, the offer of employment may be retracted or terminated.
- If you are offered employment with **safe steps** and are not currently an existing employee you will be required to disclose full details of any pre-existing injuries or illness that may be affected by the work and/or undergo a health assessment. The disclosure/health assessment is conducted to ensure you have the health and mental capacity to meet the requirements of the position and to identify any adjustments that may need to be made in the workplace. Failing to notify or hiding a pre-existing injury or illness which might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment, could result in that injury or illness being ineligible for future compensation claims.

7. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received, reviewed and fully understand the position description.

Employee Name	
Employee Signature	
Date	