



Government of Western Australia
Department of Justice

Job Description Form

Prison Counsellor

Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD)

Psychological Health Service

Position details

Classification Level: Specified Calling Level 2 (SC2)

Award/Agreement: PSA 1992 / Public Service CSA Agreement
(and subsequent agreement/s)

Position Status: Permanent

Organisation Unit: Corrective Services Division, Offender Services Directorate

Physical Location: Prisons state-wide

Reporting relationships

Responsible to: Psychological Health Service Manager (Generic) – Level 4
Specified Calling

This position: Prison Counsellor (Generic) – Level 2 Specified Calling

Direct reports: NIL

Overview of the position

The Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drug (MHAOD) Branch of Offender Services Directorate delivers mental health and alcohol and other drug healthcare to individuals in prison.

As part of the MHAOD Branch the Psychological Health Service is responsible for clinical assessment and intervention to prisoners at acute risk or suicide or self-harm; at chronic risk of suicide or self-harm or otherwise vulnerable within the prison system; with mental health issues; or having difficulties coping, adjusting to prison, or in transition to release. The Psychological Health Service participates in multidisciplinary risk management and clinical case management teams.

The Psychological Health Service is a seven (7) days a week service and is maintained via weekend shift work (prescribed hours) in some prison sites.

The Prison Counsellor is responsible for applying discipline specific professional knowledge, experience, and skills to provide evidence based clinical assessment and intervention services in response to psychological health needs of prisoners. Prison Counsellors provide consultation and participate in multi-disciplinary risk management processes and case management meetings.

Job description

As part of the Psychological Health Service (PHS) team, the successful applicant will be expected to:

- Work to improve communication and model integrity and respect in all interactions.
- Operate within the Department's Corporate Governance Framework, policies and procedures and ensure effective transparency and accountability of all Department activity.
- Operate within the chain of command to coordinate activities required to meet the Department's strategic objectives.
- Work collaboratively to achieve common goals and best practice and facilitate business improvements as appropriate.
- Facilitate cultural and management reforms within the Department through leadership and engagement.
- Represent the Department's interest on committees and working groups as required.

Role specific responsibilities

Assessment and Intervention Services

- Assess prisoners who are identified as being at risk of self-harm and suicide.
- Assess clinical treatment needs and apply appropriate interventions to prisoners.
- Contribute to multidisciplinary case planning.
- Apply culturally appropriate models and practices to assessments and interventions.

Consultation

- Consult with the Clinical Supervisor and more experienced team members for guidance with highly contentious and complex clinical cases.
- Consult with custodial and non-custodial prison staff, and other departmental staff to ensure appropriate prisoner care.
- Consult with external agency representatives as appropriate.

Self-management and Professional Relationships

- Attendance at all mandated PHS training.
- Adhere to the Department's iLearn training requirements.
- Engage in on-going clinical supervision.
- Participate in the Department's Performance Planning and Development processes to ensure the effective management of personal workload to maintain optimum delivery of service provision and opportunities for professional development.

- Support and assist with the professional development of less experienced team members.
- Manage relationships with immediate work team members and other staff to ensure streamlined delivery of multidisciplinary services.

Administration

- Ensure record keeping practices and standards meet Legislative, Directorate and professional requirements.
- Contribute to the evaluation of assessment and intervention services.
- Generate information recorded on the At Risk Management System (ARMS) and Support and Monitoring System (SAMS)
- Attendance at all scheduled PHS team meetings.

Ethical Behaviour

Adheres to relevant Professional and Public Sector Codes of Practice and Ethics.
Demonstrates ethical behaviour in accordance with professional standards, values and policies.

Equity, Diversity and Occupational Safety and Health

Applies the principles of equity, diversity, occupational safety and health in the workplace and behaves in accordance with relevant standards, values and policies.

Other

Other duties as required in accordance with strategic objectives, business plans, local workload priorities and performance management plans.

Role Specific Criteria

Qualifications

An accredited qualification in Psychology and registration with the Psychology Board of Australia; or Tertiary qualification in Social Work and eligible for full membership with the Australian Association of Social Workers or the Society of Professional Social Workers and a minimum of two (2) years supervised practice in counselling.

Experience in a Counselling Role

Experience in a counselling role working with a diverse range of adult clients; including case formulation and treatment planning skills.

Therapeutic Assessment and Intervention Skills

Clinical assessment and intervention skills and knowledge related to cases involving suicide and non-suicidal self-injurious behaviour, and clinical needs more broadly. Knowledge and understanding of evidence based psychological models of assessment and interventions across a range of clinical presentations.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Skills in writing professional case file notes, and other documents for clinical and non-clinical audiences. Communication and interpersonal skills in establishing and maintaining positive and effective relationships with team members and stakeholders and working in a multidisciplinary team.

Knowledge and experience working with diversity in client groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) populations.

Experience working across a diverse client cohort with an understanding of the vulnerabilities of specific populations including ATSI, CALD, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, or questioning (LGBTIQ). An understanding of historical, social, community and family factors when assessing and working with ATSI clients.

Planning and Organisational

Planning and organisational skills that facilitate the effective and efficient prioritisation of work to meet competing demands and timeframes. Ability to liaise with team and senior staff to manage referrals within required timeframes.

Desirable

- Accredited Mental Health Social Worker with the AASW.
- Master of Social Work qualification with relevant counselling experience.
- Progression toward a Masters or Doctorate level qualification in Forensic/Clinical/Counselling Psychology.

Special requirements/equipment

- Evidence of current registration by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority (AHPRA) or Social Work tertiary qualifications consistent with AASW requirements must be provided prior to commencement.
- Completion of 100 Point Identification Check.
- Successful Screening Clearances required (Criminal Record/ other as required)
- Possession of a current valid 'C' class motor vehicle driving licence.
- Business related state-wide travel may be required from time to time.

Certification

The details contained in this document are an accurate statement of the duties, responsibilities and other requirements of the job.

Director Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD)

Signature: _____ Date: 16 August 2024

HR certification date: August 2024