

Position Description

Counsellor Advocate

Classification:	Allied Health Professional Grade 2 (Social Worker or Psychologist)
Business unit/department:	Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☒ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☒ (outpost Mill Park)
Agreement:	Allied Health Professionals (Victorian Public Sector) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2021-2026 Medical Scientists, Pharmacists and Psychologists Victorian Public Sector (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2021-2025 Choose an item.
Employment type:	Parental Leave Cover
Hours per week:	22.8
Reports to:	Manager, Northern CASA
Direct reports:	N/A
Financial management:	N/A
Date:	September 2026

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Austin Health operates, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We acknowledge the deep and enduring connection that First Nations Peoples have to this land, and we honour their strength, resilience, and leadership. We are committed to creating a culturally safe and supportive workplace where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard, valued, and empowered.

Position purpose

Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) Counsellor Advocates are primarily responsible for providing crisis intervention, longer-term trauma counselling, advocacy, and support to young people and adult victim-survivors of sexual assault, as well as their families and friends.

In addition, Counsellor Advocates participate in the After-Hours roster, providing immediate crisis support to victim-survivors following a recent sexual assault. There are also opportunities to deliver training, assist with our school-based prevention programs, and co-facilitate therapeutic groups.

This position will be based at the Heidelberg Repatriation Campus, with some time spent at the Mill Park outpost.

All NCASA services are delivered within a clearly articulated intersectional feminist, rights-based, and trauma-informed practice framework.

About the Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault

NCASA is the regional sexual assault support service for the Northern Metropolitan region of Melbourne and a department of Austin Health.

NCASA provides therapeutic counselling to adults and young people over the age of 12 years, who have experienced sexual assault in the past or recently, and to their non-offending family members and friends. NCASA provides a range of services including 24-hour crisis care for victims of a recent sexual assault, counselling, group work, advocacy, secondary consultation and training for other professionals and community education.

At NCASA we value inclusivity, diversity and intersectionality, and are passionate about ensuring victim survivors are provided with timely support and that the silence which surrounds sexual assault continues to be broken.

We believe that the journey undertaken by people recovering from sexual assault trauma, by dealing with its impacts, is one of spirit, hope and dignity. People can and do overcome the effects of sexual assault.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific

- Participate in the NCASA intake system as required, including face-to-face, telehealth and telephone intake, assessment and crisis counselling.
- Undertake comprehensive psychosocial, risk and needs assessments to inform service planning and determine the most appropriate intervention and support pathway.
- Provide assessment, advocacy, crisis intervention, safety planning and daytime crisis care to adults who have experienced a recent sexual assault.
- Provide short to medium-term, trauma-informed therapeutic counselling to victim-survivors of sexual assault via in-person or telehealth modalities.
- Demonstrate advanced, client-centred clinical practice, drawing on a range of evidence-based therapeutic interventions and service delivery options to meet client needs.
- Make informed clinical decisions regarding referral pathways, advocacy requirements, risk management and ongoing therapeutic interventions.
- Manage complex presentations, including clients experiencing mental health concerns, suicidality, self-harm, family violence, substance use issues and significant psychosocial vulnerability.
- Provide information, support and psychoeducation to clients, non-offending family members, caregivers and support people.
- Liaise and collaborate with key stakeholders, including health services, mental health services, police, child protection, family violence services and other community agencies to support integrated care and coordinated service responses.
- Provide secondary consultation, information and support to professionals and agencies regarding sexual assault and its impacts.



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- Prepare reports, letters and other clinical documentation as required.
- Record all casework information, clinical documentation and statistical data in accordance with Austin Health and NCASA policies, procedures and standards.
- Actively participate in individual and group supervision, peer consultation and reflective practice activities, and demonstrate a willingness to seek and utilise informal consultation opportunities as required.
- Demonstrate effective organisational skills through efficient time management, appropriate prioritisation of workload and the ability to manage competing demands.
- Abide by all NCASA local policies and procedures.
- Contribute to service development, therapeutic group programs, community education, prevention initiatives and respectful relationships education activities as required.
- Undertake other duties consistent with the position and classification level.

Quality and Risk

- Deliver services in accordance with relevant legislation, professional standards, ethical guidelines and Austin Health clinical governance requirements.
- Undertake quality improvement activities, audits and accreditation processes as required to support compliance with national standards and reporting requirements.
- Ensure personal compliance with mandatory training requirements.
- Maintain accurate clinical records, statistics, case notes and other documentation in accordance with policy and procedural requirements.
- Identify, assess and appropriately escalate clinical and operational risks, contributing to a culture of safety, accountability and continuous improvement.
- Participate in service evaluation and continuous improvement initiatives to enhance service quality and client outcomes.
- Undertake other duties as required.

Professional Development

- Participate in organisational and team activities, including staff meetings, individual and group supervision, education and professional development activities.
- Maintain contemporary knowledge of best practice in sexual assault, trauma-informed care, crisis intervention, mental health and related fields.
- Contribute to a positive team culture through knowledge sharing, peer support, collaboration and reflective practice.
- Ensure clinical practice remains contemporary, evidence-based and aligned with NCASA's intersectional feminist, trauma-informed and rights-based practice framework.

Information Management

- Record information in client medical records in accordance with Austin Health documentation standards, policies and procedures.
- Adhere to Austin Health policies and procedures relating to information management, privacy, confidentiality and use of information technology systems.
- Maintain accurate statistical data and other reporting requirements in accordance with organisational procedures.

Selection criteria



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Essential skills and experience:

- Minimum of five years' post-qualification experience providing therapeutic counselling, preferably within specialist sexual assault, family violence, mental health, crisis or other trauma-focused services.
- Demonstrated expertise in assessment, crisis intervention, therapeutic counselling, advocacy and supporting recovery from trauma.
- Demonstrated understanding of the impacts of sexual assault, complex trauma and interpersonal violence across the lifespan, including the immediate and longer-term impacts on victim-survivors and their families.
- Demonstrated knowledge of contemporary feminist, intersectional and trauma-informed theory and its application to supporting healing and recovery.
- Demonstrated commitment to the values of Austin Health and to feminist, intersectional and trauma-informed practice, with a strong commitment to equitable access for victim-survivors from marginalised and diverse communities.
- Demonstrated knowledge of current family violence legislation, the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework, and other relevant Victorian service systems.
- Demonstrated ability to assess and respond to complex presentations, including mental health concerns, family violence, suicidality, self-harm, substance use and significant psychosocial vulnerability.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to establish effective therapeutic relationships, work collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams and engage effectively with external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively manage competing priorities in a demanding work environment while maintaining accurate clinical records, case notes and administrative requirements.
- Highly developed written, verbal and digital communication skills.
- Current Working with Children Check and satisfactory National Police Check.

Desirable but not essential:

- Experience working within a specialist sexual assault service, family violence service, acute health setting, crisis response service and/or community mental health service.
- Experience providing crisis counselling, brief intervention, psychosocial assessment and advocacy.
- Experience facilitating therapeutic groups, community education programs, prevention initiatives and/or professional training.
- Experience providing secondary consultation and working collaboratively across health, justice, child protection and community service sectors.
- Knowledge of the Victorian sexual assault service system, child protection system, forensic response pathways and relevant legislation.
- We strongly encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ communities and people with disability, whose lived experience and perspectives strengthen our capacity to provide culturally safe, inclusive and accessible services.



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Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- An approved tertiary qualification in Social Work with eligibility for membership of the AASW, or full registration as a Psychologist with AHPRA.

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.
- Comply with requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care, we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*
- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

General information



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Cultural safety

Austin Health is committed to creating a culturally safe, inclusive and anti-racist environment for all staff, patients, consumers, carers and communities. We recognise that racism, discrimination and exclusion negatively impact health and wellbeing, and acknowledge the unique and ongoing effects of colonisation, dispossession and systemic inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We are committed to embedding cultural safety and inclusion across all levels of our health service, actively identifying and eliminating racism in all its forms, and equipping our people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge racism, foster respect, and create a safer and more equitable experience for everyone.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.



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