

Position Description

Senior Counsellor Advocate

Classification:	Allied health worker Grade 3 (Social worker or Psychologist)
Business unit/department:	Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault (NCASA)
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☒ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
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:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	30.4
Reports to:	Manager, NCASA
Direct reports:	N/A
Financial management:	Budget: 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

This is a senior clinical and leadership role within the Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault (NCASA), requiring advanced knowledge, skills and experience in responding to sexual violence, trauma and recovery.

As a member of the NCASA senior leadership team, the Senior Counsellor Advocate provides clinical and practice leadership and supports the delivery and ongoing development of high-quality, trauma-informed and intersectional services. The role provides supervision and consultation to staff and contributes to clinical governance, service planning, quality improvement and the broader strategic direction of NCASA.

Each Senior Counsellor Advocate holds a designated portfolio aligned with NCASA's operational and strategic priorities. Portfolios may include crisis care, intake and access, practice development, prevention and community education, or other areas of service development as determined by the Program Lead and Manager. Senior Counsellor Advocates provide leadership within their portfolio, including coordinating activities, identifying opportunities for improvement and supporting the implementation of service priorities.

Clinically, the Senior Counsellor Advocate provides advanced assessment, counselling, advocacy and psychoeducation to victim survivors and their support networks. The role also provides high-level consultation and guidance on complex clinical and practice matters within NCASA and to relevant services and stakeholders.

The role contributes to the development of professional knowledge and practice through staff development, education and training, research, evaluation and quality improvement activities, with a strong focus on strengthening responses to sexual violence and supporting recovery.

The Senior Counsellor Advocate reports to the Program Lead, with overall accountability to the NCASA Manager.

About the Northern CASA

The Northern Centre Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) is the specialist sexual assault support service for Melbourne's northern metropolitan region and is a department of Austin Health.

NCASA provides specialist support to adults and young people aged 12 years and over who have experienced sexual assault, as well as support to family members and other significant people in their lives. Services include 24-hour crisis care following recent sexual assault, counselling and advocacy, group programs, secondary consultation, professional training and community education.

Our work is trauma-informed, person-centred and grounded in intersectionality and an understanding of the social and structural factors that shape people's experiences of sexual violence, access to support and recovery. We are committed to providing services that are inclusive, accessible and responsive to the diverse communities we serve.

NCASA recognises the strengths, dignity and autonomy of victim survivors and supports each person to make their own choices about what recovery and support look like for them. We also work with professionals, services and communities to strengthen responses to sexual violence and contribute to its prevention.



Our actions
show we care



We bring
our best



Together
we achieve



We shape
the future

Position responsibilities

Clinical Practice

- Provide advanced counselling, advocacy, assessment, psychoeducation and support to people impacted by recent and past sexual assault, and their families and support networks, using evidence-informed, trauma-informed and person-centred approaches.
- Demonstrate advanced clinical reasoning and expertise in responding to complex presentations, including consideration of trauma, risk, safety, developmental and intersectional factors.
- Participate in NCASA intake and crisis care services as required, including participation in NCASA's after-hours on call roster for crisis response.
- Provide specialist information and advocacy regarding clients' rights and options, including relevant legal, medical and service systems.
- Provide expert secondary consultation to health, welfare, education and other professionals and services.
- Prepare high-quality clinical documentation, assessment and intervention plans, support letters and reports for relevant legal, statutory and service processes as required.
- Maintain accurate and timely clinical records, activity data and other documentation in accordance with NCASA, Austin Health and funding requirements.

Leadership and Supervision

- Provide clinical leadership, consultation and supervision to NCASA Counsellor Advocates and other staff as appropriate, supporting high-quality clinical practice.
- Model professional, ethical and respectful practice and contribute to a positive, collaborative and psychologically safe team culture.
- Support the professional development of staff through supervision, reflective practice, consultation, education and identification of learning and development needs.
- Support the Program Lead and Manager with recruitment, workforce development and operational activities as required.
- Support effective team functioning, including participation in leadership, clinical and whole-of-team meetings.
- Provide senior clinical support and consultation during periods of increased complexity, including appropriate escalation to the Program Lead or Manager.

Portfolio and Service Development

- Lead a designated portfolio aligned with NCASA's operational and strategic priorities, including planning, coordination, implementation, evaluation and continuous improvement of relevant activities.
- Identify and progress opportunities for innovation and the development of evidence-informed models of care and practice.
- Support the development and implementation of policies, procedures, practice guidance and other resources relevant to NCASA service delivery.
- Contribute to education, training, research and evaluation activities that strengthen NCASA practice and the broader evidence base relating to sexual violence and recovery.

Quality, Clinical Governance and Risk



**Our actions
show we care**



**We bring
our best**



**Together
we achieve**



**We shape
the future**

- Contribute senior clinical expertise to quality improvement, clinical governance and risk management activities within NCASA.
- Identify opportunities to improve quality, safety, accessibility and client experience and support the implementation and evaluation of improvement initiatives.
- Support accreditation, service evaluation and other quality and compliance requirements.
- Work within relevant legislation, professional standards, ethical frameworks, Austin Health policies and NCASA procedures.
- Contribute to achievement of service activity, performance and funding requirements.
- Support the incorporation of victim-survivor feedback and perspectives into service planning, evaluation and quality improvement.

Collaboration and Professional Practice

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues across NCASA and Austin Health and with external health, community, legal, statutory and specialist services.
- Represent NCASA at relevant Austin Health, regional, sector and interagency forums, working groups and meetings as required.
- Demonstrate advanced communication, consultation, negotiation and conflict-resolution skills and work effectively within multidisciplinary and interagency settings
- Demonstrate culturally safe, inclusive and intersectional practice and responsiveness to the diverse needs and experiences of people accessing NCASA.
- Maintain contemporary knowledge of evidence, legislation, policy and service systems relevant to sexual assault and trauma practice.
- Engage in regular supervision, reflective practice and continuing professional development, recognising the limits of professional knowledge and seeking consultation where appropriate.
- Undertake other duties, projects and responsibilities appropriate to the classification and as directed by the Program Lead or Manager.

Selection criteria

Essential

- Advanced knowledge of sexual violence and its impacts, including the social, structural and systemic factors that contribute to sexual violence and create barriers to disclosure, help-seeking and recovery.
- Advanced knowledge and application of trauma-informed, evidence-informed and person-centred practice, with demonstrated understanding of feminist, intersectional and empowerment-based approaches to sexual assault practice.
- Demonstrated advanced clinical skills and experience working with people impacted by trauma and/or sexual assault, including assessment, counselling, advocacy, risk assessment and management, and work with complex presentations.
- Demonstrated experience providing high-quality clinical supervision, consultation and practice leadership to clinicians and/or students.
- Demonstrated leadership capability, including the ability to support staff, contribute to effective team functioning, manage competing priorities and provide leadership during periods of clinical or operational complexity.



**Our actions
show we care**



**We bring
our best**



**Together
we achieve**



**We shape
the future**

- Demonstrated experience in quality improvement, service or program development and/or evaluation, with the ability to use initiative and progress work independently within the scope of the role.
- Highly developed interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills, including consultation, negotiation and conflict-resolution skills and the capacity to work effectively with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated capacity for reflective practice, sound professional judgement and openness to feedback, including the ability to recognise the limits of one's knowledge and seek consultation where appropriate.
- Sound knowledge of relevant legislation, professional and ethical standards, policy and service systems relevant to sexual assault and trauma practice.
- Demonstrated commitment to culturally safe, inclusive and intersectional practice, including responsiveness to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTIQ+ communities, people with disability and other communities that may experience barriers to accessing services.
- Demonstrated ability to maintain high-quality clinical documentation and meet professional, organisational and service reporting requirements.

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualifications or further professional training relevant to sexual assault, trauma, psychotherapy, family therapy, clinical supervision, or a related field.
- Experience in one or more areas relevant to NCASA service delivery, such as crisis response, intake and access, prevention and community education, group work or community engagement.
- Experience in research, evaluation or knowledge translation, including contribution to publications, presentations or professional education.
- Experience working within a health service or other complex multidisciplinary environment.

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- An Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) accredited Bachelor's degree or entry level Master Degree of Social Work that provides eligibility for membership of the AASW
- A minimum of seven years' post-qualifying professional experience, including demonstrated advanced clinical practice and experience relevant to the requirements of the role.
- Current Working with Children Check and satisfactory National Police Check.
- OR
- A Masters or Doctorate degree in psychology and Current full registration with the Psychology Board of Australia
- A minimum of seven years' post-registration experience, including demonstrated advanced clinical practice and experience relevant to the requirements of the role.
- Current Working with Children Check and satisfactory National Police Check.

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:



**Our actions
show we care**



**We bring
our best**



**Together
we achieve**



**We shape
the future**

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organizational 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

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.



Our actions
show we care



We bring
our best



Together
we achieve



We shape
the future