

Community Counsellor – Nagle Centre

Position Description

Position Title	Community Counsellor
Responsible Council	Wollongong Diocese Central Council
Reports To	Team Leader, Nagle Centre
Base Location	Nagle Centre, Campbelltown
Primary position objective	The Community Counsellor is to be a centre based counselling service for the Nagle Centre which provides care and support for people in the Macarthur area. Clients experiencing crisis and disadvantage which can include; homelessness, mental health concerns and financial hardship. The community counsellor would provide therapeutic interventions to improve outcomes and general wellbeing of the people we assist.

St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a member and volunteer based organisation that has been assisting people experiencing disadvantage in NSW for more than 130 years.

The Society was founded by a 20 year old man named Frederic Ozanam in 1833, who with a group of friends, wanted to make a difference to the poverty and disadvantage that he saw around him in post-Revolution France. Leading by example and with boundless energy, Frederic started what is now a world-wide movement in just 20 short years. The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has around 16,000 members and volunteers and 1,400 staff. Our local member networks, referred to as Conferences, are present in over 420 communities across NSW.

Our members and volunteers provide assistance to people experiencing disadvantage including food parcels and vouchers, financial assistance, assistance with energy bills and other debt, budget counselling and the provision of other material items such as furniture, clothing and bedding and any other household items. Importantly, our members also provide vital emotional support and referral services as needed.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a leading provider of community support services and has close to 100 Special Works across the State in the areas of homelessness, mental health, disability, financial counselling, supported accommodation, food provision, refugees and migrants and addiction counselling.

Our work is funded by all levels of government, the generous support we receive from the community and our 250 Retail Centres across NSW.

Organisational Overview

The Wollongong Diocesan Central Council covers the area from Glenfield in the north to Ulladulla in the south and west to the Southern Highlands. There are a number of low socio-economic areas including broad acre housing estates in Campbelltown and areas of need in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

The Wollongong Diocesan Central Council operates a number of special works including the Nagle Centre which is an emergency crisis support centre that supports people through immediate and ongoing issues. A multifaceted service that support people experiencing homelessness, isolation or disadvantage by offering food security, case work support through advocacy and referrals, therapeutic interventions and education programs.

The Nagle Centre is under the division of *Homelessness and Mental Health* within the Wollongong Diocesan Central Council – Northern Region (Macarthur – Wingecarribee).

Duties and Responsibilities

Major Responsibilities

Individual and group counselling/therapy

- Provide direct individual counselling on an appointment basis
- Provide telephone crisis counselling
- Using modalities that include: Solution Focused, Crisis Counselling, Brief Interventions, Strengths Based Approach etc.
- Run group counselling/therapy where appropriate
- Provide intake and conduct psychosocial assessments and maintain client caseload
- Conduct community education and information sessions as required
- Establish empathetic and professional relationships with clients in order to improve outcomes and general wellbeing
- Refer clients to other sources of support, as required and appropriate
- Liaise, as necessary, with other service providers and individuals to help make changes based on the challenges raised by clients
- Participate in monthly Group Supervision with the Nagle Centre team
- Attend regular meetings with the Team Leader regarding client case load

Program Improvement

- Ensure high standards of client services by working closely with the Case Workers and Team Leader to develop and improve the program(s)
- Under the guidance of the Team Leader, manage and submit reports as required
- Attend relevant training and educational development

Program Promotion and Additional Functions

- Attend such functions, meetings, seminars, training courses as requested by the Team Leader and/or Manager of Homelessness and Mental Health
- Liaise and communicate effectively with key internal and external stakeholders including leadership/management, staff, volunteers, guests, visitors and clients
- Ensure all reports, data collection and record keeping are maintained and updated under the direction of the Team Leader
- Report to the Team Leader of any client issues/concerns, and prepare for and attend supervisory meetings as required
- Work within scheduled timeframes for activities, planning and meetings

- Follow all Service and Society policies and procedures
- Maintain a safe work environment and be proactive in ensuring WH&S in the workplace
- Meet standards/objectives/targets/goals set by the Society
- Additional duties as required

Essential Criteria

- Relevant tertiary qualifications in Counselling, Social Work and/or Psychology
- Experience in working with a range of therapeutic approaches with the capacity to facilitate group work
- Current registration with relevant professional body e.g. Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW), NSW Psychologist Registration Board (APS) or Psychotherapy and Counsellors and Psychotherapists association of NSW (PACFA)
- Experience in working with people from a disadvantaged background
- Sound understanding of Trauma Informed Care and Client Centred Practice
- Proven client service, problem solving and interpersonal skills
- Computer proficiency with the Microsoft Office suite
- Proven written and verbal communication skills
- Willingness to adhere to the ethos of the St Vincent de Paul Society

Desirable Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of the Not for Profit sector
- Flexibility in working hours
- Current Mental Health First Aid certificate
- Current First Aid certificate

Commitments

- Commitment to the philosophy of the St Vincent de Paul Society.
- Commitment to practice standards and code of ethics

The St Vincent de Paul Society, NSW is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer