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| **POSITION DESCRIPTION** |
| **Position Title:** | Practitioner, Foster & Kinship Care |
| **Service/Facility/Department:**  | Children & Families |
| **Direct Reports:**  | N/A |
| **Key Relationships:**  | **Internal:** Coordinator, Children & Families staff,Anglicare staff, Foster & Kinship carers, and the children and young people placed in their care |
| **External:** Foster & Kinship Carers and the children and young people placed in their care, Department of Communities – Child Safety Services and other Community Organisations. |

**Position Statement / Overall Purpose**

The overall purpose of the Practitioner, Foster & Kinship Careis to recruit, train, assess and support Foster & Kinship carers to meet the individual needs of children and young people in out of home care (OOHC). The Practitioner, Foster & Kinship Care will ensure that a targeted level of support is provided to all care placements, based on identified needs and program type.

In High Plus, Intensive or Enhanced Foster Care program models, Practitioners may also provide direct care, therapeutic interventions and coordination of brokerage or other external supports to enhance the effectiveness and stability of Foster & Kinship Care placements.

The Practitioner, Foster & Kinship Care is responsible for assessing strengths and risks within care placements, and ensuring Foster and Kinship Carers develop and sustain the knowledge, skills and resilience to provide safe and supportive care.

The Practitioner, Foster & Kinship Care will work in accordance with the values of Anglicare Southern Queensland (Anglicare) and support core business by providing service, guidance and advice within this position’s specialty area.

**Position Specific Credentials, Qualifications and Other Requirements**

* Current Blue Card
* Current Licensed Care Service (LCS)
* Current Queensland Driver Licence
* Degree in Social Work, Psychology, Human Services, Behavioural or Social Sciences or similar and/or relevant experience
* Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment (desired)

**Key Selection Criteria**

* Applied knowledge and understanding of child protection, including the Child Protection Act (1999) and relevant legislation
* Ability to implement child centred family focused work (family may include Foster and Kinship Carers, and in some cases natural parents and families)
* Experience in delivering effective in-home support, training and group support to adults, congruent with contemporary understandings of the impact of trauma on child development
* Demonstrated experience in completing complex documentation, including foster and kinship carer assessments and care plans for children and young people
* Highly developed problem-solving, coping and decision-making skills in crisis situations
* Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to consult, negotiate and liaise effectively with a diverse range of people
* Proven ability to work cooperatively in a team environment
* Strong computer skills, including MS Word, Powerpoint and Excel

**Key Accountabilities and Responsibilities**

1. **Accountability: Foster and Kinship Carer Recruitment and Assessment**

***Work within accepted practice frameworks and organisational policies to recruit, train and assess Carers***

**Responsibilities:**

* As a member of the Foster and Kinship Care Team, participate in recruitment, screening, selection, and training of Foster and Kinship Carers
* As part of carer recruitment, assess the suitability of potential foster or kinship carer applicants at each stage of the pre-approval process, utilizing professional practice frameworks and organizational policy and procedures
* Work together with Departmental staff to identify, explore and progress kin placement options for children and young people
* Assist in organising, preparing and delivering Pre-Service Quality Care Training and additional required training for prospective and existing Foster and Kinship Carers
* Through the carer assessment (and renewal) process thoroughly explore and articulate the strengths, vulnerabilities, risks and support needs within the care environment in order to inform the approval decision made by the Department of Communities Child Safety and Disability Services
1. **Accountability: Support Foster and Kinship Care Placement**

***Form and maintain positive relationships with carers, to enable them to effectively support children and young people***

**Responsibilities:**

* Provide support and supervision to carers, taking into consideration their individual needs, including the needs of carer family members (particularly biological children). Support Carers to understand and apply the Statement of Standards of Care in their daily care of children and young people.
* Conduct regular home visits and provide ongoing face-to-face, phone and email support to Foster and Kinship Carers, with a focus on ongoing assessment of the strengths, vulnerabilities and needs within the placement
* Provide targeted support to Foster and Kinship Carers in line with the Departmental Case Plan, Anglicare Care Plan (where appropriate) and the day to day needs of children and young people placed in their care.
* Facilitate opportunities for carer learning and development in line with the carer’s individual needs outlined in the Foster/Kinship Carer Agreement and/or learning and development plan.
* Provide guidance and support to carers in the event of a Standard of Care issue, Harm Report or grievance.
* Promote the importance of family/kinship connections, and support foster and kinship carers, their families, children and young people in developing positive connections, and through reunification of children in care.
* Assist Foster and Kinship Carers to build formal and informal support networks, including linking them with professional supports such as Foster Care Queensland and local carer support groups
* As part of ongoing case work, ensure continuous assessment of the strengths, vulnerabilities, risks and support needs within care placements, exploring and addressing these with the carer and other stakeholders involved with the care of the child or young person
* In programs providing High Plus, Intensive or Enhanced Foster Care, assess placement needs and coordinate implementation of additional supports within the program model. This may include direct care work including therapeutic interventions undertaken by the practitioner, assisting to coordinate youth work supports and/or coordinating brokerage, respite or other external supports.
* Where high plus, enhanced or intensive supports are in place, reassess needs regularly to ensure they continue to meet the threshold for the program model and is necessary for the stability of the placement. Supports should generally be considered time limited and intended to build the capacity of carers, children and young people to thrive without a high level of intervention.
* Participation in placement processes that facilitate matching children and young people requiring placements with Foster and Kinship Carers. This will include facilitating respite arrangements for children and young people when required.
1. **Accountability: Team Work**

***Promote an effective, supportive, caring and accountable team environment.***

**Responsibilities:**

* Ensure open, transparent and collaborative communication with members of the Team. Communication between all stakeholders will be aimed at working in partnership to ensure all work is child centred and designed to meet the identified needs of children and young people in care.
* Liaise and work collaboratively with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services in regard to issues related to carers, children, young people and their families.
* In collaboration with the Coordinator, identify the specific placement support needs of each placement, and work with other team members to transition placement supports seamlessly between programs (where multiple program models exist in the same location).
* Contribute to the building of a positive Children & Families Team culture by demonstrating professional practice in line with Anglicare practice frameworks, values, policies and procedures.
* Actively share ideas and resources across the broader team.
* Actively participate and contribute to Children & Families team meetings.
1. **Accountability: Quality Improvement**

***Engage in a culture of continuous quality improvement and ongoing development to maintain effective care of children and young people***

**Responsibilities:**

* Maintain a high standard of comprehensive record-keeping for children, young people and carers for the purposes of licensing, research and quality assurance purposes (including record keeping of carer and Departmental contact).
* Monitor and update relevant documentation (e.g. Assessments, Blue Cards, Foster Carer Agreements, Carer Learning and Development Plans, Care plans where relevant)
* Comply with all licensing requirements and contribute to ensuring that the Program is in line with licensing requirements and relevant legislation
* Actively participate in and contribute to internal and external auditing of the program
* Participate in relevant alternative care and community networks
* Assist in reviewing the Program, Procedures and Policies. Continue professional development; maintain knowledge of current research and practice related to Foster and Kinship Care, children and young people, participate in appraisal and supervision in accordance with relevant policies.

**Other Duties and Requirements**

* Capability and willingness to work flexible hours, including weekends and evenings (e.g. participation in carer recruitment activities, support groups, special events, carer training events and/or for the purpose of providing carer/child support).
* Participate in a roster providing after-hours support to Foster and Kinship Carers and access to after-hours placements for Child Safety After Hours Service Centre.
* Maintain confidentiality, including but not limited to information relating to residents, clients and employees of Anglicare and do not disclose information during or after employment.
* Act in accordance with Anglicare’s Code of Conduct and the organisation’s policies and procedures.
* Ensure that credentials and qualifications set out in this Position Description are current at all times.
* Undertake those tasks outlined on a duties list, or any other tasks delegated to you by your manger or supervisor, provided these requirements are safe, efficient, relevant, legal and within your abilities.
* Undertake work practices in a safe manner and comply with work health and safety instructions, within relevant policies and procedures.
* Undergo relevant evaluations and assessments, as requested by Anglicare, to ensure that the physical and functional requirements of the role can be met.

**Delegation of Authority:**

* In accordance with the Anglicare Delegations of Authority Policy.