

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position	Senior Sexual Assault Healing Therapist
Reports to	Program manager – Family Violence
Direct Reports	None
Status	Full time, 12-month contract until June 2025 with potential to extend
Location	VACCA Western –Possible co-location- Werribee Multidisciplinary Centre (MDC)

ABOUT VACCA

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is the largest organisation of its kind in Australia. VACCA is an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation (ACCO) that supports and advocates for the Aboriginal community. Our strength lies with our people. Our team is committed to the organisation's vision and values; advocates for our children and other vulnerable community members; and shows respect for, observance of and compliance with Aboriginal cultural protocols, practice, and ceremony. Our Aboriginality distinguishes us from mainstream services and enables us to deliver the positive outcomes we achieve for our people.

VACCA employs over 800 staff and delivers more than 70 programs across the state. VACCA's experience and expertise in the delivery of therapeutic interventions is underpinned by culture, connection, and healing. VACCA designs, develops, and delivers programs with self-determination and an understanding that the intergenerational trauma experienced by our community requires intergenerational and community healing.

Central to VACCA's work is the importance of connection to family, community, and culture as essential to Aboriginal children's safety, stability and ensuring that they have an ongoing sense of belonging. As Victoria's largest Aboriginal child welfare agency, VACCA will play a key role in the process of transitioning the care and case management of Aboriginal children from government and nonAboriginal organisations to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in line with Victorian Government decisions and policies.

VACCA is implementing Cultural Therapeutic Ways (CTW) which is a whole of agency approach guiding VACCA's practice of healing for Aboriginal children, young people, families, community members and carers; and creating a safe and supportive workplace for staff. CTW is based upon Human Rights and United Nations Conventions, Victorian Legislation, and the practice wisdom of VACCA staff. The CTW approach ensures the cultural needs of VACCA clients is centre and foremost in all service delivery.

OUR VISION

Aboriginal self-determination - Live, Experience and Be.

OUR PURPOSE

Supporting culturally strong, safe, and thriving Aboriginal communities.

PROGRAM AREA

VACCA is delivering a pilot program of the newly established Aboriginal Sexual Assault Support Service (ASASS) in the Western Melbourne Area. This specialist therapeutic service, funded through Family Safety Victoria (FSV), is nested in VACCA's broader suite of Family Violence (FV) services. The program will also work closely with Gatehouse Centre (Gatehouse), and the Western Centre Against Sexual Assault (WESTCASA).

ASASS is a unique therapeutic and healing service responsive to the diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, women, and men who are victims/survivors of sexual assault. ASASS' distinctive feature is the integration of a specialist sexual assault service within an Aboriginal cultural healing context. The service will be accessible to Aboriginal children, young people, and adults residing in the Western Melbourne Area.

Through the engagement of a Senior Aboriginal Cultural Healing Therapist and a Senior Sexual Assault Healing Therapist who will report to the Team Leader – FV and ASASS in VACCA's Western region, the service will apply culturally safe approaches and holistic healing principles to respond to diverse client needs. The Therapists will work seamlessly with other VACCA services, Gatehouse, West CASA and other relevant services and organisations. The service model also facilitates a method for building specialist therapeutic and sexual assault response capability across VACCA; and building Gatehouse and West CASA's cultural safety knowledge.

Underpinned by VACCA's Cultural Therapeutic Ways framework (CTW), culture, connection, and healing are central to the design and delivery of the ASASS. CTW is the intersection of cultural practice with trauma and self-determination theories. The core premise is informed by an understanding of the trauma held by Aboriginal families as a result of ongoing processes of colonisation. This practice will ensure ASASS makes a critical contribution to research and building the evidence base for leading practice in working with Aboriginal families.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Senior Sexual Assault Healing Therapist (the Therapist) will collaborate with the Senior Cultural Healing Therapist to deliver a holistic and culturally safe therapeutic service. The Therapist will provide appropriate interventions for Aboriginal children, young people, women, and men victims/survivors of sexual assault, and their family members.

The Therapist will possess a strong commitment to, and understanding of the personal, cultural, and political issues surrounding sexual assault, and family violence. Holding a small caseload, they will deliver therapeutic one-to-one counselling using a range of modalities, therapeutic group programs, collaborate with case managers which may include outreach and integrate other appropriate services/cultural supports. The Therapist will also contribute to the clinical and professional development of VACCA and partner practitioners by:

- Supporting VACCA practitioners to apply a sexual assault lens in the delivery of counselling services
- Providing secondary consultation across VACCA and other stakeholders

- Delivering training and reflective practice sessions

Program Manager – FV and ASASS will provide the Therapist with regular supervision and support.

The Therapist will also have access to clinical supervision and other supports through VACCA, West CASA, and Gatehouse. The Therapist will be located with the Program Manager – FV and ASASS at VACCA and the Werribee Multi-Disciplinary Centre (MDC).

RELATIONSHIPS

Internal:

Team Leaders – FV, Senior Aboriginal Cultural Healing Therapist, Program Manager Family Violence (Western), Senior Project Manager Family Violence, Executive Manager (Western), Aboriginal Children’s Healing Team (ACHT), Family Violence Therapeutic Practitioners and Aboriginal Therapeutic Group Workers, Family Violence Case Workers, Research and Evaluation Team, Clinical Governance Lead

External:

MDC staff, West CASA practitioners and staff, Gatehouse practitioners and staff, other local Community Service Organisations, local program partners, and others as relevant to the service, Victoria Police, DFFS Child Protection, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Orange Doors (Western Metro).

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, the values that underpin VACCA’ vision and purpose and the capacity to take a leadership role in championing these internally and externally
- Demonstrated awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal societies and cultures, and commitment to continually build knowledge of such, along with a high level of awareness of the key issues which impact upon Aboriginal communities
- Demonstrated experience and expertise delivering culturally safe therapeutic interventions and responding to complex trauma of Aboriginal children, young people, and adult victim/survivors of sexual assault.
- An understanding of the issues that impact Aboriginal adults who have experienced sexual assault.
- An understanding of child development and the impact of trauma and sexual assault on children and young people.
- Detailed knowledge of family-focused approaches which work to heal complex trauma from sexual assault. This includes impacts on the individual and their family.
- An understanding of culturally appropriate service responses for Aboriginal communities.
- An understanding of strength-based Aboriginal trauma-informed practice specific to sexual assault.
- Detailed knowledge and understanding of intergenerational trauma and the issues that impact Aboriginal people.
- Ability to work in a team and work collaboratively with other team members.
- Excellent communication skills and an ability to develop trusted relationships with Aboriginal community members.

- Demonstrated willingness to participate in professional development and engage in the professional development of other staff.
- Demonstrated ability to engage and work with a diverse range of stakeholders.

QUALIFICATION & EXPERIENCE

- A tertiary qualification or relevant experience working in a sexual assault context.
- Knowledge and experience in the application of relevant legislation and professional guidelines (including children and young people at risk, MARAM, Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, Child Information Sharing Scheme, relevant professional Code of Ethics and Practice Standards, and privacy requirements).

REQUIREMENTS

- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence and a current employment working with children check card
- Current COVID-19 vaccination (including booster dose, as applicable)

POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Hold a caseload and deliver one-to-one therapeutic counselling
- Co-facilitate therapeutic group programs
- Collaborate with case managers and maintain linkages to other supports
- Provide culturally appropriate therapeutic interventions to Aboriginal children, young people, women, men, and families using cultural and therapeutic frameworks
- Promote service access and support warm referrals via co-location at the MDC
- Provide secondary consultation across VACCA and other stakeholders
- Support therapeutic services provided by other VACCA practitioners to ensure application of sexual assault lens and enhancement of sexual assault practice skills across VACCA
- Maintain strong internal linkages and collaborative working relationships with other VACCA programs such as Family Violence Programs, Aboriginal Children's Healing Team (AHT), Family Services, youth programs and cultural camps
- Engage in ongoing professional development and participate in regular supervision
- Provide and participate in training and team reflective practice
- Work collaboratively and contribute to the development of an evidence base for an Aboriginal therapeutic response to sexual assault
- Participate in program evaluation through collection of data
- Identify and discuss areas of continuous program improvement
- Maintain collaborative working relationships with all stakeholders
- Support and assist the development and implementation of program resources such as program manuals, practice, and data collection tools to support service delivery
- Maintain accurate client records and case notes, and contribute to report writing
- Maintain quality and up to date database information that meets privacy and legislative requirements
- Provide other support and engage in other tasks as required

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

- Ensure compliance with the OH&S Act and VACCA policies.
- Contribute positively and proactively to team and organisation wide OH&S activities.

QUALITY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure compliance with legislation, contract, and policy requirements in your day to day work in order to meet the organisation's audit, contract, and registration obligations.
- Proactively apply your specialist knowledge in the review/maintenance of family violence policies.
- Continue the development of a culturally strong and positive working environment using a continuous improvement approach.

OTHER

- Adhere to professional guidelines, organisational policies and procedures and legislative requirements
- Ensure confidentiality of all information relating to clients, employees, policies, processes, and dealings within the service.
- Participate in internal and external working groups and action learning forums as required.
- Undertake other duties as directed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and supporting strong, safe, thriving Aboriginal communities and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity, honouring all cultural backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and spiritual beliefs.

VACCA is a child-safe organisation and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with zero tolerance for child abuse. Our recruitment process aligns with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. All successful applicants will be required to undertake a National Police Record Check and Working with Children Check prior to commencement of employment and periodically following commencement.

VACCA is an equal opportunity employer and has a smoke-free workplace policy.