

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Position</b>	Family Services Specialist Disability Practitioner
<b>Reports to</b>	Team Leader Family Services
<b>Direct Reports</b>	Nil
<b>Status</b>	Full-Time (38 hours) – 12 months (Fixed contract)
<b>Location</b>	Wangaratta / Wodonga

## BACKGROUND

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is the largest organization of its kind in Australia. VACCA is an Aboriginal community-controlled organization 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 and compliance with Aboriginal cultural protocols, practice and ceremony. Our Aboriginality is what distinguishes us from mainstream services and what enables us to deliver the positive outcomes we achieve for our people.

VACCA employs over 600 staff and delivers more than 70 programs across the state. VACCA's experience and expertise in the delivery of therapeutic interventions are 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 non-Aboriginal organisations to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations following the recent decision of the Victorian Government.

VACCA is implementing cultural therapeutic ways which is an agency wide framework that underpins our work with the community, our clients and staff

## OUR VISION

Aboriginal self-determination - Live, Experience and Be.

## OUR PURPOSE

Supporting culturally strong, safe and thriving Aboriginal communities.

## PROGRAM AREA

The transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has represented a significant shift in the way disability supports are provided to people with disability. While the NDIS represents a powerful opportunity to support parents and children with disability, the complexity of accessing and navigating the scheme can leave vulnerable families at risk of scheme exclusion or from optimising the funded disability supports they are entitled to receive.

Many vulnerable Aboriginal families require considerable support from the service systems to access and participate effectively in the NDIS. For child and family services workforces this has meant allocating significant resources into developing competencies in navigating the NDIS and working with families to support their scheme participation.

To ameliorate some of the disability-related demand on broader family services and child protection workforces created by the transition to the NDIS, additional targets will be allocated in family services agencies across the state to support vulnerable families with disability. The targets will support new specialist disability practitioner roles dedicated to working with vulnerable families with disability and improving child and family services sector responses to these families.

## POSITION SUMMARY

The family services specialist disability practitioner roles have been established to build both disability and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) expertise across the community-based family services system. The roles will assist vulnerable children and parents with disability to access disability supports and participate effectively in the NDIS.

The family services disability practice roles have been established to address the challenges many vulnerable families experience with accessing disability support needs, particularly those available through the NDIS. The family services specialist disability practitioner roles will have the responsibilities of supporting families with NDIS access and participation and assisting families to navigate systems of disability support, including the NDIS, disability advocates, disability service providers and mainstream services.

The roles will also be responsible for providing disability-related case consultations to the broader family services system within the eastern metro area. The secondary consultation role aims to support practitioners working in family services to maximise the disability supports and outcomes for children with disability now available through the NDIS.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

*Internal:* All VACCA services and programs

*External:* ACCOs, DFFH, Orange Door Hub, Child First, NDIS Local Area Coordinators (LACs), Schools, Health Services etc

## 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 in working and engaging with Aboriginal families and children/ Demonstrated experience in child and family sector
- Knowledge of the NDIS operational model and NDIS planning processes
- Demonstrated experience liaising with the NDIS funded sector, including Local Area Coordinators, Support Coordinators and NDIS planners
- An understanding of the support needs of vulnerable families with disability
- Demonstrated case management experience in a community services setting
- Demonstrated experience or knowledge of the family services sector
- Strong communication, negotiation and influencing skills
- Excellent ability to connect and build rapport with multiple stakeholders

## REQUIREMENTS

- You must have and continue to hold a full Victorian Driver's Licence and a current employment working with children check card.

## POSITION ACCOUNTABILITIES

The family services specialist disability practitioners are expected to:

- Deliver a service that is sensitive to the needs of children and parents with disability and provide a flexible response that recognises and supports the strengths, dignity and desires of the person with a disability in their family context.
- Work with Aboriginal vulnerable families to identify disability support needs, assist with NDIS access and undertaking NDIS disability-related goal setting and helping families prepare for their plan reviews.
- Integrate both family services and disability services to support whole of family functioning.
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the NDIS funded supports that can contribute to building family capacity and the sustainability of care.
- Establish cooperative relationships with local NDIA/NDIS staff and providers to work collaboratively to support families.
- Work actively and collaboratively with the family and NDIS, NDIS Local Area Coordinators (LACs) and/or Support Coordinators to identify the disability support needs of the family.
- Provide case coordination of relevant mainstream services, such as schools and health care providers, (where needed) and work with NDIS LACs, planners and Support Coordinators to ensure a joined-up approach tailored to the needs of the family. Coordination could occur via telephone or email, through case conferencing or during care team meetings.

- Provide consultations to other child and family services agency practitioners on disability and NDIS-related issues.
- Build the ongoing capacity of other family services practitioners to support families with disability support needs through understanding and utilising avenues for secondary consultation and referral.
- Build the ongoing capacity of all family services practitioners to support families to navigate the NDIS to receive timely access to disability supports.
- Where working with child protection to support a family, provide advice for the child protection practitioner regarding what they should expect the NDIS to fund for the disability support of children and young people.
- Build relationships with specialist schools to encourage the early identification and early support of families where the complexity of the disability support needs is likely to cause increased family pressure.
- Work collaboratively with DFFH Divisional Disability and Principal Disability Practice Specialist practitioners (DPA/PDPAs) to:
  - Identify families with complex disability support needs at risk of breakdown due to unmet disability support needs and who may require a DPA/PDA response. Refer Section on the relationships with PDPAs and DPAs (pg. 5).
  - Discuss and refer in scope families to the family services agencies and practitioners delivering the 'Children with Complex Disability Support Needs' program. Refer to the Section on the relationship between specialist practitioners and the Children with Complex Disability Support Needs program (pg. 5).

## 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 and maintenance of policies, systems and processes.
- Continue the development of a culturally strong and positive working environment using a continuous improvement approach.

## OTHER

- Participate proactively in team project initiatives
- Support other team members in periods of high demand and during periods of absence.



- Participate in project groups and attend events
- 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. 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.