

Presbytery of Port Phillip West

Mental Health Ministry Position Description

Position: Mental Health Ministry Coordinator

Term of Appointment: 3 Years initially and renewable

Position Location: Sunshine Hospital and Sunshine Uniting Church

Position: Full Time consisting of .60 Community based, .35 Hospital based and .05 education and awareness raising within the Presbytery

Reporting to: Standing Committee of the Presbytery of Port Phillip West and Manager Pastoral Care Department Sunshine Hospital *(see footnote at end of Position Description)

Position Status: Could be filled by either a lay or ordained person

Background

Gospel Imperative

The stories of Jesus in the Gospels help us understand the nature of God as the One who loves all people without exception, and who works to eradicate suffering and human distress. Jesus himself described his ministry as to fulfil the mission of God, that is

“to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives,
recovery of sight to the blind, and to let the oppressed go free”

(Luke 4: 18)

For this reason, the Christian church at all times and in all places has heard the call to participate in the compassionate ministry of God.

Presbytery Strategy

In 2015, the Uniting Church Presbytery of Port Phillip West, made the decision to commit to a mission-focused strategy ‘Regenerating the Church’ which calls us to renew our focus on participating in God’s mission in the world, and also to create new forms of church, places of welcome where those who may not be drawn to traditional forms of Church for many reasons, may find a place of welcome, care and belonging.

History of the Role

A full-time chaplaincy position funded by the presbytery of Port Phillip West, was commenced in June 2006 and was filled as a full-time ministerial placement in the Mental Health Units at Sunshine Hospital. Following a review in 2016 and further

consultation in 2018 the Presbytery revised the Position Description to incorporate a part community-based component (located at Sunshine Uniting Church), a part time chaplaincy-based position (located at the Sunshine hospital) and a Presbytery based education/awareness raising component.

Ethos of Open Access Communities

Open Access programs are identified as services “characterised by an open-door policy where each person is welcomed to access the available services without assessment of need, without obligation to contribute information about themselves or their situation, and generally, without an appointment. Services offered may include meals, showers, clothing, practical advice and support, medical and mental health support, information and advice, all provided in a safe and supportive environment that facilitates connection and support.” **Yarra Yarra Welcoming Communities Report p. 36**

These sorts of communities, while welcoming all, are unashamedly faith based and have an awareness that they exist in response to the Good News of the gospel. While not requiring any religious affiliation people who participate would have an awareness that the community they belong to is an activity of the church of Jesus Christ and his church.

Sunshine Uniting Church

Sunshine Uniting is co-located on the Withers St site with Uniting who run programs such as material aid, Men’s Shed, Housing Support, Social Worker and an informal drop-in space. The congregation employs a 0.5 Community based Youth Worker. These positions, along with the congregational minister of the Sunshine congregation, currently the Rev Ray Gormann, would be collegiate support, but do not form a “team” and accountability for the mental health position is to Presbytery, through Standing Committee.

Position Purpose:

- To establish and co-ordinate an “Open Door” community based at the Sunshine Uniting Church that welcomes people living with a mental health issue
- To provide Pastoral Care to patients within the Psychiatric Units at Sunshine Hospital
- To increase the Presbytery understanding of mental health issues

Position Responsibilities:

1. Community based component

- Establish and co-ordinate an inclusive community based upon activities located on the premises of Sunshine Uniting Church
- Develop a Policy and Procedures Manual
- Work with the Support and Reference Committee, which comprises members from Presbytery and Sunshine Uniting, to organise activities and recruit volunteers to assist in those activities
- Coordinate, supervise and ensure training for volunteers of the mental health community
- Offer pastoral support and assist participants deal with issues that arise in their daily lives where it is appropriate to provide this
- Set up group activities, including purchasing of any equipment or supplies required
- Ensure all administrative duties are completed in a timely and efficient fashion
- Assess the needs of, and seek guidance from, participants to find out what they want from the group, activity ideas, etc.
- Organise events, such as guest speakers, which can assist with activities such as life skills, health, peer support, etc.
- Organise publicity
- Maintain OH+S requirements and WWWC and police checks for volunteers
- Make regular reports to relevant Presbytery committees and a written annual report to Presbytery-in-Council
- Receive external supervision
- Refer participants to other agencies and supports where appropriate
- Identify and apply for funding for activities and equipment where appropriate
- Organise faith-based occasions such as worship services, bible studies and discussion groups as required

2. Hospital based component

- Assess and address the emotional, spiritual and religious needs of patients within the mental health units at Sunshine Hospital.
- Help patients access their own spiritual resources, as well as those of their own faith community, where appropriate.
- Conduct and participate in the program of weekly Prayer Services facilitated by the pastoral care team in Sunshine Hospital
- Prepare and lead appropriate rituals and ceremonies for patients, their carers and staff, as needed.
- Liaise with staff, external agencies, and faith communities to access support for patients and their carers.
- Maintain a record of daily pastoral encounters and activities.
- Perform general office and administrative duties as required.
- Actively participate in regular professional one-to-one-supervision, demonstrating ongoing development of clinical skills, reflective practice, and self care.

3. Presbytery based education component

- Raise awareness, educate and provide resources within the congregations and agencies of the Presbytery of Port Phillip of general issues surrounding mental health
- Seek opportunities to address congregations and agencies and to run training events around the issues of being welcoming communities of faith and mental health

Position Competencies:

- Skills to communicate effectively with people who are living with a mental illness
- Self-motivated and able to foster community
- Intercultural competency
- Capacity and willingness to work within the ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- Computer literacy, including proven skill in Microsoft Word, Excel spreadsheet and Power Point or capacity to benefit from computer software training.
- Excellent time management – Prioritising and meeting deadlines
- Ability to be an active and involved team member
- Awareness and compliance with OH&S requirements.
- Ability to communicate clearly to groups

Position Requirements:

- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Present an environment of calm and organised work
- Provide a warm and respectful environment for participants and volunteers
- Confidence to deal with a diverse and changing work agenda with enthusiasm and flexibility
- Have a current WWWC and Police Check
- Have a relevant tertiary qualification or appropriate experience
- Have completed, or be willing to undertake, A Clinical Pastoral Education Unit

The position will have an initial 3-month probation period and then be reviewed annually.

* While the psychiatric units at the hospital are operated by North West Mental Health (part of Melbourne Health) this chaplaincy position will report, along with other chaplains working in the hospital, to the Manager, Pastoral Care of Sunshine Hospital which is operated by Western Health.