



## **POSITION SPECIFICATIONS**

<b>LOCAL DESIGNATION:</b>	<b>ACT HAEMOPHILIA SOCIAL WORKER / COUNSELLOR</b>
<b>HOURS:</b>	12-14 Hours per Week
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Haemophilia Treatment Centre at the Canberra Hospital; home office. Also required to work in the community.
<b>AWARD:</b>	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 - Social and Community Services Employee (Level 5 or as appropriate in accordance with qualifications).
<b>SALARY:</b>	In accordance with the above Award, with performance adjustments from time to time.
<b>TERM OF APPOINTMENT</b>	Up to 3 years coinciding with the term of government funding. Extension of employment would be subject to funding and performance. Probationary appointment applies for the first 6 months.
<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	The committee of the Haemophilia Foundation ACT
<b>REVISION DATE:</b>	April 2024

### **A. BACKGROUND**

Haemophilia is a life-long and life-threatening inherited bleeding disorder which produces multiple consequences for the sufferer. The condition results from the body's inability to produce specific clotting factors (Factor VIII and Factor IX) which contribute to the body's clotting mechanisms. The result is that it takes longer for a person with haemophilia to stop bleeding than it would a person without haemophilia.

Treatment normally consists of replacement of the missing clotting factor by one derived from human plasma or a synthetic clotting factor (Recombinant).

If not treated, persons with severe haemophilia will experience bleeding episodes (bleeds), mostly into joint cavities, which can be painful and crippling.

The nature of past plasma derived treatment products have exposed a majority of people with severe haemophilia to blood-borne viruses such as HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C. Unavailability of modern treatment techniques and formation of antibodies to treatment products has also resulted in a proportion of the haemophilia community receiving inadequate treatment for bleeding episodes causing extensive disabling joint damage and severe arthritis.

For more information on haemophilia, see <http://www.haemophilia.org.au>

## **B. PURPOSE OF THE POSITION**

The Haemophilia Counsellor is an important member of a multidisciplinary team of haemophilia carers, co-ordinated through the Haemophilia Treatment Centre located at The Canberra Hospital (TCH).

The position requires the provision of professional social support, counselling, information and education to adults and children with haemophilia and other inherited bleeding disorders and their families throughout the ACT and surrounding districts with the aim of minimising the impact of the disorder and improving the quality of life of clients. Services also involve interactions with other organisations, schools and employers.

Haemophilia issues are generally complex in nature and affect all aspects of a person's life. The complex needs of the haemophilia community requires the haemophilia counsellor to have a high level of expertise in managing a specialised caseload, providing continuity of care to clients in both hospital and community environments.

The haemophilia counsellor's role extends to communication and consultation with various medical, administrative, government and community stakeholders in relation to advocacy, resourcing, staff development, policies and service provision required to improve care and treatment for people with haemophilia and related bleeding disorders.

## **C. THE ENVIRONMENT**

The Haemophilia Foundation ACT (HFACT) is one of a number of State and Territory Haemophilia Foundations working under the umbrella of the Haemophilia Foundation Australia (HFA) representing the interests of persons with haemophilia and related bleeding disorders and their families. The Haemophilia Counselling and Support Service is provided by the HFACT.

The HFACT receives funding under a service agreement from the ACT Health Department to employ a Haemophilia Social Worker / Counsellor to work for an average of 12 -14 hours per week to provide counselling, support and related services to the haemophilia community.

The Haemophilia Treatment Centre provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient services to persons with haemophilia and other related bleeding disorders and their families throughout the ACT and surrounding districts (Snowy Mountains, Yass and South Coast Districts).

The Haemophilia Treatment Centre consists of haematologists, nurses specialising in haemophilia care and treatment, and a physiotherapist. The Haemophilia Treatment Centre has close ties with rheumatologists, gastroenterologists, orthopaedic specialists and infectious disease specialists. An important function of the team is to conduct six monthly review clinics to assess and monitor all aspects of the patient's care. The Haemophilia Counsellor is an integral member of the Haemophilia Treatment team and will be required to spend a proportion of the available hours working closely with haemophilia specialists at the Haemophilia Treatment Centre, assisting in the clinical care of inpatients and clients of the Haemophilia Treatment Centre.

The Haemophilia Treatment Centre and Haemophilia Counsellor work co-operatively, together with the HFACT, the other State and Territory Haemophilia Foundations and the Haemophilia Foundation Australia (HFA) to promote the health, well-being and quality of life for persons with haemophilia and related bleeding disorders and their families.

While the Haemophilia Counsellor is an integral part of the care team at The Canberra Hospital, the position is responsible for attending to the need of all people inherited bleeding disorders and their families within the broader community context.

## **D. COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Haemophilia Counsellor reports to the Committee of the HFACT.

The Haemophilia Counsellor is required to communicate regularly or as required with:

### Primary Stakeholders:

- Committee of the Haemophilia Foundation of the ACT
- Executive Director of the Capital Region Cancer Service (who provides Haematology services) at TCH.

- Haemophilia Treatment Centre staff at TCH
- Other medical and administrative staff involved with the care and management of persons with haemophilia at TCH (e.g. allied health, infectious disease, orthopaedic services, genetics, physiotherapy, paediatrics, psychology services, pathology, etc.)
- Haemophilia inpatients and clients of the Haemophilia Treatment Centre at TCH
- Persons with haemophilia and related bleeding disorder and families residing in the ACT or surrounding districts.

Secondary Stakeholders:

- ACT Health – various areas dealing with chronic conditions, communicable diseases and public health
- Executive Director, Haemophilia Foundation Australia
- Chair and members Australia/New Zealand Haemophilia Social Workers' and Counsellors' Group (ANZHSWCG)
- Medical, allied health and nursing staff in regional hospitals (Yass, Cooma, South Coast)
- Community Health Services and General Practitioners
- Meridian ACT
- Hepatitis ACT
- Other relevant community organisations
- Government assistance organisations (e.g. Centrelink)
- Childcare centres, primary and secondary schools
- Specialist terminal and palliative care services

## **E. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In accordance with the HFACT Code of Conduct:

1. Provide community services including social support, counselling, information and education to persons with haemophilia and related bleeding disorders and their families, facilitating their ability to cope with and manage the condition and its complications, including blood-borne viruses.
2. Provide counselling and continuity of care to haemophilia and inherited bleeding disorder outpatients and inpatients of the Canberra Hospital and regional hospitals, through home visits, regular contact, phone, email and other forms of communication
3. Search for and initiate contact with parents of the newly diagnosed to ensure they have access to the most recent and correct information on treatment and care as well as established support networks.
4. Consult with Director of Oncology/ Haematology and other members of the haemophilia treatment team in relation to the effective operation and resourcing of the Haemophilia Treatment Centre at The Canberra Hospital, staff development and the management of patient welfare.
5. Conduct education programs, including preventative programs for persons with inherited bleeding disorders and their families, government agencies, health care workers, childcare centres, schools and community organisations.
6. Assist persons with inherited bleeding disorders and their families in liaison with health care professionals, government agencies and community organisations in relation to specific welfare or haemophilia related issues.
7. Promote services and contribute to policies aimed at increasing resources and advancing comprehensive care and treatment for persons with inherited bleeding disorders.
8. Act as a resource for the Haemophilia Foundation ACT in developing health services and programs for persons with inherited bleeding disorders as well as assist and participate in haemophilia programs initiated by the Haemophilia Foundation Australia and other State Haemophilia Foundations.
9. Attend monthly HFACT Committee meetings, conferences and events as well as prepare and present monthly reports on activities, programs and status of tasks to HFACT Committee.
10. Comply with and utilise procedures, policies, regulations and standards which impact upon the position.

## **F. QUALIFICATIONS**

The occupant of the counsellor position must possess one or more of the following qualifications:

- Be accredited or able to be accredited by Psychotherapy and/or Counselling Federation of Australia
- Relevant degree (social work, social studies or psychology) with relevant experience or progress towards completion of a degree
- Associate Diploma with substantial experience
- Qualifications in more than one discipline
- Less formal qualifications with specialised skills sufficient to perform at this level attained through previous appointments, service and/or study of an equivalent level of experience and expertise to undertake the range of activities required.

## **G. SELECTION CRITERIA**

1. Demonstrated support and/or counselling experience in a hospital and/or community health environment with advanced clinical skills and the ability to manage complex cases.
2. Knowledge of, or the ability to acquire knowledge of, haemophilia and other inherited bleeding disorders and blood-borne viruses, together with an understanding of the implications of these conditions for the individual and the family.
3. Demonstrated ability to work autonomously, proactively and ethically as part of a multidisciplinary team, communicate with a varying range of stakeholders, show sensitivity, tact and good judgment as well as initiative and self-motivation.
4. Knowledge and skills to address individual, couple and family issues, including reproduction, genetics and sexual health, the implications of a newly diagnosed chronic disorder in infancy, child management skills, sibling issues, adjustment issues in adolescence and adulthood and matters relating to ageing.
5. Knowledge and skills to address individual and family issues associated with a physically disabling chronic illness including employment, chronic pain and mobility.
6. The ability to counsel and support an individual or families through all stages of terminal illness and palliative care including loss, grief and bereavement counselling.
7. Demonstrated ability to provide education and training programs to consumer health groups, health care professionals, government agencies, administrative bodies, the community and others.

## **H. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

1. Ability to travel to regional areas including Snowy Mountains, Yass and South Coast Districts.
2. Ability to work some extended and flexible hours.
3. A current driver's license and your own vehicle are essential.
4. Employment will also be subject to successful working with vulnerable people (WWVP) registration

For more information on the position, please contact: Claude Damiani on 0412 839 135.