



ARAFEMI

**ARAFEMI Victoria Inc
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

POSITION TITLE	Carer Peer Support Group Convenor
CLASSIFICATION	Permanent Part Time (8 Hours) per week Modern SACS Award 2010 / SACS (\$24.61 p/hour plus entitlements)
REPORTS TO	Manager of Family Services
DATE	Feb 2010
LOCATION(s)	Varied - Northern

Organisational Context

ARAFEMI

ARAFEMI Victoria's mission is to promote and improve the well being of people affected by mental illness. ARAFEMI is an incorporated association and a registered community support service under the Mental Health Act 1986.

At a strategic planning workshop in April 2006, ARAFEMI Victoria adopted a recovery-orientated approach as the basis for all services it provides to people with a mental health issue and their carers.

Core values held by ARAFEMI include a strong belief in recovery for people with a mental health issue and their careers and the right to live with respect and dignity in a society that provides equality of opportunity.

ARAFEMI provides services to persons with a mental illness and family members and other carers. Family support services include the carer helpline, support groups, counselling program, workshops and seminars and flexible respite options.

Northern Area Mental Health Service (NAMHS)

The Northern Area Mental Health Service (NAMHS) is one component of NorthWestern Mental Health. NAMHS consists of an integrated network of mental health services for adults in the Cities of Darebin and Whittlesea. Eligibility for services includes young people with early psychosis, and persons with co-occurring mental illness and substance use (dual diagnosis). The NAMHS strives to provide services in a culturally and gender sensitive manner, and places high priority on meeting the needs of the families and carers of persons with mental illness.

Clinical services are provided through 8 programs:

- Darebin Community Mental Health Centre
- Whittlesea Community Mental Health Centre

- Northern Crisis Assessment and Treatment Service (including ECATT & CL),
- Northern Mobile Support and Treatment Service
- Northern Psychiatric Unit (25 beds)
- Northern Community Care Unit
- Northern Primary Mental Health Team
- Youth Early Psychosis Program

Group Context

The Carer Peer Support Group Convenor will be based at ARAFEMI Rosanna office and will work with Darebin Community Mental Health Service and various sites and programmes within NAMHS to re-develop and deliver support groups to carers living in the Northern region.

This exciting new position is a collaborative project between NAMHS and ARAFEMI which seeks to expand and develop existing NAMHS carer support groups to deliver broader support to any carer living in the Northern region of Melbourne. The project seeks to enhance carer participation in support groups by having groups externally facilitated. Hence a focus of this role is to assist in the transition of groups from NAMHS and developing ARAFEMI's role as the provider of group peer support for carers in the North. ARAFEMI will provide ongoing support and supervision to the role.

In the initial phase of the project the Carer Peer Support Group Convenor will work collaboratively with the NAMHS Carer Consultant to co-facilitate day and evening Carer Peer Support groups with NAMHS clinicians. They will also facilitate the transition of groups away from NAMHS services to community based delivery and responsibility for the ongoing organisation and co-ordination of the groups.

The Carer Peer Support Groups aim to:

- Provide informal, practical support to carer's including, listening to carer's concerns, providing information about services and assisting carers to access carer and family supports;
- Assist families and carers to overcome isolation in their experience of dealing with a relative or friend who has a mental illness;
- Facilitate families and carers to become more informed about mental illness;
- Foster a greater understanding for families and carers of the sort of support that can be derived from a carer support group;
- Equip families and carers with some basic coping strategies and how these can be applied to individual situations;
- Provide families with additional choices and support in dealing with the challenges in caring for someone with a mental illness.

Groups utilize an open peer support group model, which recognizes and values the shared expertise and lived experience of all group participants in their own recovery journey.

Key Tasks

Liaison

- Work collaboratively with carer consultant, clinicians and other staff of NAMHS or ARAFEMI to facilitate group transition
- Liaise with other community services and organisations in the North to promote the development and delivery of new support group structure

Group Planning and delivery

- Plan, develop and evaluate groups in consultation with group members.

- Facilitate the groups including providing support to the group as a whole and to individual members during breaks, liaising with guest speakers and supporting group dynamics.
- Take responsibility for securing the venues where the Peer Support Groups are to be held and provide ongoing venue support including: arranging the room for the support group, unlocking and locking the venue and greeting attendees.
- Maintain administrative systems.
- Achieving a balance between meeting the needs of the group and meeting the needs of individuals.
- Keep the meeting running to time and maintain boundaries necessary for the smooth running of the group and the comfort of group members.
- Participate in training and reflective supervision and debriefing structures via ARAFEMI

Responsibility

- Take responsibility for the co-ordination of 4 Peer Support Groups across the Northern region.
- Maintain Carer Group database of carer's attendance and complete required Service contacts/statistics.
- Liaise closely with Carer Consultant NAHMS and Family Services Manager ARAFEMI to ensure major issues are identified and feedback to relevant Carer and Family structures.
- Participate in regular Group Evaluation Processes
- Participate in the Carer Peer Support Working Group and development of the Alliance Carer Involvement Project.
- Demonstrated ability to engage and support families/carers in an empowering and ethical manner.
- Develop marketing materials and brochures in liaison with ARAFEMI and NAMHS to facilitate enhanced access to carers.

Key Selection Criteria

Essential

- Demonstrated experience in working with carers of people with a mental illness.
- An understanding of the mental health system.
- Demonstrated experience in group design, facilitation and support.
- Excellent communication and listening skills.
- An understanding of mental illness and its effects on families and other carers and consumers.
- A non-judgemental attitude towards people.
- Ability to accept constructive feedback and incorporate feedback into work practices.
- An understanding of confidentiality and privacy issues.
- A demonstrated ability to work collaboratively
- Demonstrated ability to set up and deliver services utilising a community development model
- Awareness of the diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the community and the impact this can have on a consumer and carer's experience of mental illness.

Desirable

Direct personal experience as a carer or family member of a person with a mental illness, and of the public mental health system.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Hours:

The position is for a total of 8 hours per week on a Wednesday. These hours are divided between group work and group administration.

Group facilitation will be a total of four hours per week (rotating groups). The role involves daytime group delivery and evening hours. The role is complimented by an additional 4 hours per week for group administration.

Salary and Conditions:

Permanent Part Time (8 Hours) per week

Modern SACS Award 2010 / SACS (\$24.61 p/hour plus entitlements)

This position is contracted for 1 year. The position includes out of hours work and the incumbent must be available on Wednesdays for day or evening work.

Additional Requirements:

A probationary period of three months will apply.

Criminal record checks are mandatory for all new appointments.

APPLICATIONS

For enquiries about the position contact Frances Sanders on 9810 9300.

Written applications marked confidential, including curriculum vitae, response to selection criteria and with at least two referees should be sent to:

Sarah Rosenberg
Human Resources and Communications Officer
ARAFEMI
270 Auburn Rd
Hawthorn 3122

Email: sarah.rosenberg@arafemi.org.au

Closing date for applications is 21 March 2010