

Job Title: *Lead Counsellor*

Women's Rural Resource Centre of Strathroy and Area (WRRC)

Reporting to the Shelter Manager, the Lead Counsellor is accountable for providing counselling services through a trauma-informed, strength-based and holistic lens and is responsible for program support, providing effective assessments, counselling and case management to those on their healing journey who have been impacted by gender-based violence (GBV) in rural Middlesex County. The Lead Counselor will create a safe space for healing through individual and group therapeutic support. They will also offer leadership support and clinical consultation to their colleagues.

This position requires a dedicated, kind and empathetic individual to join our vibrant team to support women and individuals affected by gender-based violence (GBV). The Lead Counsellor will help individuals in both the WRRC shelter and in community to access care and programming that supports their unique healing journey towards a healthy and fulfilling life.

The Lead Counsellor will carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the vision, values, and strategic goals of the Women's Rural Resource Centre (WRRC).

Key Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of this role include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Utilize trauma-informed therapeutic techniques to provide one on one and group counselling to those who have experienced gender-based violence (GBV), recognizing the impact of trauma on their emotional, psychological, spiritual, and physical well-being.
- Assist women who are leaving violent/abusive relationships to increase safety for themselves, their dependants, preventing re-victimization and taking necessary steps to rebuild their lives following abuse.
- As part of the intake process, collaborate with clients to develop safety plans, conducting comprehensive and individualized risk assessments.
- Provide therapeutic supports, case management/case planning including crisis prevention/intervention, safety planning, supportive counseling, and ensuring access to housing, legal, and parenting support where needed.
- Conduct comprehensive assessments using the Bio-Psychosocial-Spiritual Assessment (BPSS) model to understand the factors impacting individuals affected by abuse, tailoring treatment plans based on biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of trauma, within a trauma-informed framework.
- Develop comprehensive group programs focused on GBV psychoeducation, healthy coping strategies, peer support, healing, self-discovery, and leadership.

- Work successfully with diverse groups and demonstrate commitment to principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice.
- Understand, educate and implement Indigenous worldview for clients identifying with Indigenous heritage to ensure cultural continuity and positive identify information and retention.
- Empower individuals with knowledge about safety planning and available support services, fostering informed decision-making and self-advocacy.
- Work collaboratively with interdisciplinary team members, including managers, advocates, outreach, and community partners.
- Alongside the shelter advocate, support women who are discharging the shelter to co-create safety plans appropriate to their new living arrangements.
- Engage in ongoing professional development and continuous learning in trauma-informed care, Indigenous health, and anti-oppressive practices. Participation in relevant workshops, conferences, and supervision sessions is expected.
- Collaborate with teams to implement and complete care plans that support the client's involvement in person-centred programs that promote healing and growth.
- Maintain accurate and confidential case records, documenting progress and outcomes.
- Capture and report on statistics that relate to the lead counselling role, programming and case management.
- Participate on the on-call team and attend on-call meetings.
- Participate in staff meetings, training sessions, and professional development opportunities.
- Prioritize self-care, spiritual care, communal and team care practices.

Preferred Skills and Qualifications

- Sound knowledge of shelter services, the non-profit sector, government funded services and relevant community resources.
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of trauma and violence informed care.
- Demonstrate sound knowledge of First Nation cultures and worldview an asset.
- Experience working with Indigenous populations an asset.
- Sound knowledge of gender-based violence.
- Excellent time management skills.
- Excellent conflict resolutions, problem solving and ability to facilitate difficult conversations in a restorative manner.
- Superb communicator, written/oral, listening and presentation skills.
- Highly organized and able to manage competing demands.
- Experience in delivering community programming through an intersectional-feminist lens.

- Deep understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories, and socio-political contexts. Experience working collaboratively with Indigenous communities and integrating cultural practices into therapeutic interventions is an asset.
- A feminist perspective and sound knowledge of the political, social, housing and legal issues affecting women and their children currently.
- Skilled in crisis management, including non-violent crisis intervention and prevention.
- Leadership and facilitation skills.
- Excellent working knowledge of computer office technology and applications including Microsoft Office applications, WISH database, Payworks, etc.

Required Qualifications:

- Post-Secondary degree in Social Work, Counseling, Psychology, or a related field.
- Registered in good standing with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW).
- Minimum two (2) years of experience in case management and counseling in GBV, preferably in a shelter or similar setting.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories and sociopolitical contexts.
- Experience in a trauma-informed care setting.
- Clinical supervision experience.

Personal Characteristics:

- Successful track record of successful therapeutic counselling in the gender-based violence sector.
- Solid understanding of feminism, the women's movement, anti-racism/anti-oppression, and trauma-informed practice.
- Ability to empathize with the experiences of those who have trauma and provide compassionate support.
- Excellent conflict resolution skills; ability to facilitate difficult conversations in a restorative manner.
- Demonstrated understanding and respect for diverse cultural backgrounds, with the ability to adapt counseling approaches accordingly.
- Demonstrated women's advocacy skills, strong case planning skills, and effective child/women-centered practice delivery.
- Adherence to ethical guidelines and professional standards in all aspects of social work practice, ensuring client safety and confidentiality.

Job Requirements:

- Clear current Police Vulnerable Sector Check (PVSC).
- Current Standard First Aid & CPR, Level C certificate (ASIST, CPI an asset).
- Ability to work independently as well as within a team with minimal supervision.
- Valid drivers license.

Working Conditions:

This position may require flexible hours to accommodate the diverse schedules of the clients the WRRRC serves. The Lead Counsellor will work in an office environment; however, the Lead Counsellor may require working in non-stand workplaces and within the WRRRC shelter. Phone and virtual counselling services may also be required. The Lead Counsellor may also be required to travel.

The Lead Counsellor typically works a standard work week (37.5 hrs/wk) but may be required to work some evenings and weekend to support the on-call team or shelter staff.

Physical Requirements:

This position will require routine duties including office work, attending off-site meetings, climbing stairs, lifting up to 25 pounds.

If you are passionate about supporting women on their healing journey and believe in the transformative power of trauma-informed care, we encourage you to apply. Together, we can create a community where all women and families can thrive in healthy relationships.

Please send your resume and cover letter to: executivedirector@wrrcsa.org

Closing: February 17 5pm.

We thank all those apply, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.