

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position title	Initial Assessment & Planning (IAP) Worker
Award	L4 Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services (SCHADS)
Location	Inner Melbourne Community Hub
Reporting to	Team Leader – Ozanam House Intake & IAP

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

VincentCare Victoria was established to provide a range of professional accommodation and support services to people that are facing disadvantage and those that are ageing throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria. VincentCare's primary focus is to:

- provide quality services for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, people with all abilities including those struggling with complex needs including substance abuse and mental health issues
- advocate for vulnerable and disadvantaged people, respecting their dignity and rights and providing support and encouragement to enable greater independence.

Our Mandate - VincentCare was established to extend the Christian Mission of the St Vincent de Paul Society to support and advocate on behalf of the most disadvantaged Victorians.

Our Aspiration - To be the leader in providing care, hope and advocacy for those facing disadvantage.

Our Purpose - To create opportunities and lasting change for the most marginalised.

Our Values - *Courage, Leadership, Accountability, Compassion, Excellence, Dignity.*

Diversity and Inclusion - We are committed to the principles of social justice and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity and respect regardless of their cultural background, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion.

Grounded in the principles of social justice, we are committed to treating every individual with dignity and respect, regardless of cultural background, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or religion. We celebrate diversity, value differences, and employ passionate, skilled, and dedicated staff who drive our programs and services.

HUBS

VincentCare services are provided through Hubs, with each Hub providing a range of supports and services including accommodation, case management, outreach.

- **Inner Melbourne Community Hub:** Provides crisis accommodation and support services, including health programs, drug and alcohol case management, emergency relief and services for rough sleepers.
- **Northern Community Hub:** Provides a homelessness access point, metro family violence services, emergency relief and brokerage programs, Functional Zero, outreach and case management.
- **Hume Community Hub:** Provides specialist family violence services including refuge and crisis accommodation, after hours crisis support, case management, Flexible Support Packages as well as a Financial Counselling and Capability program providing emergency relief, financial counselling and community education.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In the past decade, VincentCare has initiated significant transformation, partnerships, leadership and action to guide the way the organisation delivers services to clients. VincentCare has done this to ensure that each individual's work culminates in fulfilling our purpose - to care for the most disadvantaged.

Strategic Directions 2018-23, builds our strengths and opportunities with a focus on five key outcome areas:

- Improving our client-centred focus to everything we do.
- Growing partnerships, infrastructure, community engagement and funding.
- Innovating our services, our workplaces and our organisation to be more agile and more responsive.
- Cementing our place-based services and work toward an asset-based community development approach.
- Increasing our advocacy and influence to create lasting change for generations to come.

ROLE SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The Ozanam House Redevelopment, situated within the Inner Melbourne Community Hub, features an open-access drop in Homelessness Resource Centre (HRC) where people aged over 18 experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness can access a suite of services including (but not limited to) drop-in support (i.e., meals, laundry facilities, showers), case management, a health platform, and initial assessment and planning. The building also encompasses a 60-bed crisis accommodation, 48 extended stay accommodation and 26 Independent Living Units for people experiencing homelessness.

The Initial Assessment & Planning (IAP) Worker sits within the Intake & IAP Team to provide a timely response to people who are homeless and/or at risk of homelessness through the provision of initial information, assessment, and planning pertaining to their needs and choices. This is achieved through an agreed strategy, which may include service system resources, advocacy, interim response, provision of funding, referrals and providing information on topics such as housing, crisis accommodation and tenancy matters.

The main function of the IAP Worker is to engage with clients experiencing and/or risk of homelessness and complete assessments and referrals to support their housing needs. This position works in the HRC and is responsible for completing thorough initial assessments, assisting with alternative housing options, utilising the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF), advocacy, and determining referral pathways across Melbourne to support services, external services and/or other identified goals/supports if necessary.

The IAP Worker will work from a collaborative, integrated and client centred approach with clients in accordance with the VincentCare Recovery Model (VRM).

The IAP Worker will, under minimal direction and guidance regarding work priorities, be required to undertake complex operational work as well as undertake planning and co-ordination of activities within the Intake & IAP programs.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The VincentCare model seeks to reflect a collegial approach which means we:

- Collaborate and share information within the team to support policy development, the continuity and enhancement of service delivery, and the achievement of VincentCare's strategic objectives.



- Engage with all relevant stakeholders to inform our business planning and decision-making processes.
- Are transparent in our decision-making processes.
- Are committed to implementing the decisions made the by the team in support of VincentCare’s strategic objectives.

ROLE ACCOUNTABILITIES

Key Result Area	Key Accountabilities
<p>Core Competencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality assessments of housing and support needs to persons who contact via phone or in person, in line with the Opening Doors framework, and established standards and procedures • Assess eligibility and suitability of referrals (internal and external) for Crisis Supported Accommodation • Triage presenting demand and deliver crisis interventions where required • Respond to a range of enquiries regarding resources available to people who are homeless and/or at risk of homelessness from a range of community stakeholders • Advocate with accommodation and support providers • Assess requests for financial assistance and provide financial assistance via HEF in line with agreed budgets and guidelines • Establish and maintain thorough knowledge of local community agencies, and other relevant resources • Conduct referrals to Crisis Supported Accommodation and other housing and support options • Maintain comprehensive knowledge of housing providers such as rooming house operators, real estate agents, community housing and the Office of Housing (OoH) • Respond to critical incidents and challenging behaviour as per VincentCare policy and procedure • Assist line management in the identification and subsequent liaison with other community service organizations for the development of on-going relationships and work practice protocols that will improve outcomes for the clients • Provide secondary consultation and capacity building to other services • In conjunction with the Team Leader and Manager, participate in the ongoing evaluation of service delivery and monitoring of outcomes achieved on behalf of clients • Undertake relevant professional development programs and maintain an understanding of relevant policies and regulations in the area of housing and homelessness • Develop best practice service delivery through training, upskilling and supervision. • Other duties as required
<p>Collaborative Practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fosters a collaborative, inclusive, and safe workplace while promoting diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. • Ensures quality client service delivery, compliance with standards, and supports best practices in fast-paced, crisis-driven environments. • Supports strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders to



	advance shared goals, project initiatives, and effective governance.
Strategic directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An awareness of the organisation’s Strategic Plan objectives. • Continuously seeks to improve service quality by supporting VincentCare to identify, create and implement program reviews, needs analysis, risk assessments and change management practices. • Collaborates across VincentCare to advance shared goals, project initiatives and partnerships.
Profile in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the importance of consulting and collaborating with community and industry sectors. • Supports and maintains relationships with stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes and support service improvement. • Develops and maintains productive working relationship with stakeholders to promote the good works and positive profile of VincentCare.
Service development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides sound and accurate advice and information to stakeholders on program priorities and issues that contribute to and/or inform evidence-based decision making. • Contributes to regular program reviews to ensure they meet client and organisational needs. • Supports the development and implementation of appropriate processes for gaining feedback from clients. • Identifies emerging trends and issues and contributes to the development and review of procedures and guidelines.
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains accurate data records to support performance reporting and funding compliance. • Contributes to governance, risk management, and reporting frameworks to track program milestones. • Commits to professional development and ensures transparent communication on emerging issues. • Use Housing Establish Funds (HEF) and program brokerage in line with VincentCare policies and procedure.
Policy and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures personal and others' safety, complying with work health and safety policies. • Contributes to the development and review of service standards, policies, and procedures. • Stays informed on relevant legislation and responds appropriately to client concerns and risks.
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level commitment to VincentCare’s purpose and values. • Empathetic consideration and understanding of the impacts of disadvantage when clients seek help and support.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respects everyone’s right to privacy and dignity. • Commitment to delivering services in line with VincentCare’s Recovery Model • Safely balances the interests of the consumer, organisation and community • Is confident in aligning own practice to support internal organisational policies and procedures
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies with VincentCare’s values, policies, procedures and code of conduct. • Ensures compliance with legislative frameworks that inform workplace performance and practice, including recognised accreditation standards, e.g. Rainbow Tick, the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (the MARAM), the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) Ministerial Guidelines as established by <i>Part 5A</i> of the <i>Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)</i> and the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) Ministerial Guidelines as established under <i>Part 6A</i> of the <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i>. • Participates in scheduled operational and professional supervision and reflective practice. • Participates in periodic reviews of operational practices including risk and records management, program performance and codes of practice. • Maintains high level adherence to required client management and records keeping systems including timely and accurate case notes, consent, payments, risk profile and referrals.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum tertiary degree with 1 -2 years of experience in Social Work, Psychology, Community Services, or related field. • Note: Consideration may be applied to a lesser formal qualification with substantial years of experience in the required discipline (except where pre-requisites determine mandatory and credentialed standards will apply).
Experience - essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands professional client interaction and case record principles, ensuring accountability and responsibility. • Knowledge of the issues impacting clients, including homelessness, financial hardship, family violence, mental health, and disabilities. • Ability to provide holistic support for complex needs and manage program plans, performance, resources, and budgets. • Demonstrates commitment to social justice, human rights, and cultural sensitivity, and can manage conflict and challenging behaviours. • Direct service delivery experience in homelessness and/or related sectors



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of relevant support and housing services/providers and other specialised services such as mental health • Demonstrated understanding of, and ability to provide high level assessments and support to people experiencing homelessness
Skills and personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to develop organisational and time management skills to meet deadlines in a high-volume, complex environment. • Demonstrated ability to liaise and maintain collaborative working relationships with a broad range of stakeholders • Self-aware, responsive to feedback, and able to reflect and learn. • Demonstrated ability to manage conflict and challenging behaviours • Uses initiative, acts confidently, and exercises sound judgment. • Proficient in Microsoft products, IT platforms. • Effective communication, including report writing and maintaining professional relationships

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- All appointments within VincentCare are subject to the incumbent holding and maintaining (i) a Working with Children Check; and (ii) a satisfactory police check.
- Character/performance reference checks and police checks will be undertaken prior to any job offer being confirmed and will be undertaken on a periodic basis during the period of employment.
- Disclosure of any relevant employment history of formal disciplinary action for improper or unprofessional conduct taken by current or previous employers or any other integrity body within or outside Australia.

This position description is a general outline of duties, responsibilities and requirements of the role and is not an exhaustive list. From time-to-time VincentCare may review and amend the position description to meet organisational needs and may require the employee to perform other duties that are within the scope of their competencies and skills.

