

Peer Support Worker- Walking Beside Project POSITION DESCRIPTION

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| Position Title: | Peer Support Worker (PSW) - Walking Beside Project |
| Employment type: | 12-month Fixed Term Starting early July 2026 |
| Department: | Strategy, Advocacy and Community Engagement (SACE) |
| Location: | 317-319 Barkly Street, Footscray, VIC, 3011 |
| Salary: | SCHADS level 3.1, 0.4FTE |
| Reporting To: | Peer Support Co-ordinator |
| Exemption: | VCAT Exemption No. H119/2017 (subject to Equal Opportunity Act 2010) This means we can employ only women and gender diverse people, or people from a particular cultural background when required. |
| Child safe standard: | GenWest is a child safe organisation, in order to be successful candidate evidence of a relevant police check and Working with Children’s Check is required (WWCC) |
| To apply: | To apply, please email: recruitment@genwest.org.au If you would like to speak with someone about the position, please contact: Fi James – IFVS Project Lead email fionaj@genwest.org.au . |

Organisational Context

GenWest (formerly Women’s Health West) is an organisation in Melbourne’s western suburbs working towards gender equity. We help people who are experiencing family violence. We support communities to lead safe and healthy lives, by running social and health education programs. We also work with other organisations and councils to advocate for equal rights and the prevention of family violence. Our clients represent the diverse people of Melbourne’s west. This includes women, LGBTIQ+ people, First Nations peoples, people with disability, migrant and refugee communities, children, young people and older people.

GenWest have partnered with The Safer Families Centre at The University of Melbourne as a key partner in the Women’s Emotional Well-Being (WEB) Project to deliver the Walking Beside Project, conducted as part of GenWest’s Strategy, Advocacy and Community Engagement (SACE) stream which implements activities

designed to promote women's health, safety and wellbeing. As part of the broader study on responses to domestic and family violence led by the Safer Families Centre, GenWest will employ two part-time Peer Support Workers (PSWs) to deliver trauma-informed support to victim survivor's participating in the project.

About the Role

The Peer Support Worker (PSW) position is a lived-experience, non-clinical role that provides informal, trauma- and violence-informed support to victim survivor's experiencing family violence. The PSW is not a social worker or specialist family violence practitioner and does not provide risk assessment or therapeutic intervention. Instead, the role centres on sharing lived experience, offering psychosocial education, providing information and advice, and supporting participants to navigate the health, social, and community service systems.

Working under the guidance of the Peer Support Coordinator, the PSW will meet regularly with participants to offer emotional support, help them understand available services, make warm referrals, and promote connection with appropriate supports. Where concerns arise about a participant's safety or level of risk, the PSW is responsible for referring the participant to a specialist family violence service in line with established protocols.

This position forms part of a research project led by the University of Melbourne that aims to strengthen early intervention responses for victim-survivors of family violence within primary care settings. The PSW will contribute to this work by offering peer-based insights and supporting improved pathways to safety and wellbeing.

Role duties/Responsibilities/Tasks

Core Responsibilities

- Provide person led trauma-informed peer support to women and gender diverse people participating in the Walking Beside project.
- Meet with participants through safe, agreed-upon contact methods to build respectful and trusting relationships.
- Support participants to identify goals and navigate health, social and community services.
- Maintain strong professional boundaries, including confidentiality and limits of the role.
- Facilitate warm referrals and work alongside primary health care providers to promote safety and wellbeing.
- Document all interactions accurately, respectfully and in a timely manner.
- Participate in required training, Community of Practice, and research activities.
- Use lived experience ethically and intentionally to support connection, validation and trust.
- Undertake other duties consistent with this role and as directed by the Peer Support Co-Ordinator.

GenWest recognises that the land on which we work and provide our services always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We proudly acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Naarm's west, their rich culture, diversity, histories and knowledge, and the contribution they make to the life of this region.

Interpersonal Responsibilities

- Build a trusting, respectful relationship that center connection, validation, empowerment and self-determination.
- Clearly explain the PSW role, scope boundaries and the number of sessions available.
- Provide transparent information about documentation, privacy, and the limits to confidentiality including obligations to escalate concerns.
- Support participants to identify goals and work collaboratively to navigate services that align with those goals.
- Create a safe space, non-judgmental, pressure free environment for participants to share at their own pace, affirm participant's strengths, protective factors, and capacity for change.
- Draw on your own lived experience thoughtfully, safely, and with clear professional boundaries, ensuring it benefits the participant.

Partnerships & Administration

- Make warm referrals to relevant services, including family violence services, housing supports, financial counselling, mental health services, culturally specific programs, child/family services, and social-connection supports.
- Work collaboratively with primary health care clinicians and family violence services while maintaining a non-clinical peer role.
- Recognise indicators of risk and follow protocols to connect participants to specialist family violence services for formal risk assessment and safety planning.
- Maintain accurate, respectful and timely records.
- Participate in broader WEB project activities as required.

Skills, Qualification & Experience

Please feel free to respond in the way that suits you best. Our goal is to keep this process supportive and accessible.

Essential Criteria

- Lived Experience: You have lived or living experience of domestic/family violence and/or sexual assault and can use this insight where appropriate to support others safely and respectfully.
- Empathy & Integrity: You can build genuine, trusting relationships while keeping clear professional boundaries.
- Inclusive Practice: You can engage with participants from diverse gender, cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds in a non-judgemental and culturally respectful way.
- Using Lived Experience Safely: You can draw on your own story in thoughtful and helpful ways, without centring yourself.

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- Teamwork & Collaboration: You can work respectfully with health workers, service providers, and other professionals.
- Self-Awareness & Care: You can reflect on your strengths and limits, prioritise your own wellbeing, and seek supervision when needed.
- Willingness to Learn: You are committed to participating in training, Community of Practice sessions, and research activities related to the Project.

Desirable Criteria

- Other Languages: Ability to speak languages such as Arabic, French, Dinka, Hindi, Pashto, Urdu, Bengali, or Sinhala.
- Relevant Experience: Any previous peer support work (formal or informal), or experience in health, education, community work, or human services — including volunteer roles.
- Local Knowledge: Understanding of Melbourne’s Western metropolitan region (Melbourne, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Hobson’s Bay, Moonee Valley, Wyndham and Melton.)
- Driver’s Licence: A Victorian Driver’s Licence is helpful but not essential.

Additional Criteria

- Evidence of a relevant police check, and Working with Children's Check is required (WWCC).
- No formal qualifications are required.
- GenWest will look to provide additional accessibility support where possible (please speak to either the recruiting manager or people and culture representative).
- Women and non-binary folk from all cultures are encouraged to apply.

Acknowledgement

This position description may be reviewed.

I declare that I have read and understood the requirements of this position, discussed any queries or concerns with the respective manager at GenWest, and feel that I am able to fulfill the requirements of this position.

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| Employee Name: | Signature: | Date: |
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