



POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:	Early Career Mental Health Counsellor
PROGRAM:	Therapeutic Services, South Australia
STATUS:	Part Time (15.2 hrs per week – 0.4FTE), Fixed Term (until 30 June 2027)
REPORTING TO:	Manager, Therapeutic Services (SA)
LOCATION:	Adelaide 5000 and possible outreach at other collaborating centres
CLASSIFICATION:	Thorne Harbour Health Limited Enterprise Agreement 2026/ SCHCADS/SACS Level 4. Thorne Harbour Health pays above award rates.

1. ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Thorne Harbour Health (THH) is a community-controlled health organisation governed by our members and accountable to the *communities we serve*. THH began in July 1983 and for 40 years, the organisation has been a leader in the community's response to HIV and AIDS. THH has been delivering services in South Australia for ten years. THH aims to improve the health, social and emotional well-being of LGBTIQ+ communities and those living with or affected by HIV, with a particular emphasis on bringing the HIV and AIDS epidemic to an end. Thorne Harbour Health aims to improve the health, social and emotional well-being of LGBTIQ+ communities and those living with or affected by HIV, with a particular emphasis on bringing the HIV and AIDS epidemic to an end.

Our Vision

A world where our communities are healthy and live safely, with dignity and wellbeing.

Our Mission

To deliver community-led and culturally appropriate health and wellbeing programs informed by and responsive to our communities, always advocating to reduce stigma and discrimination.

The Communities We Serve

When we talk about 'the communities we serve', language matters. We use words in ways that acknowledge and demonstrate respect for the way we describe our bodies, genders, and relationships. The terminology our communities use is complex and evolving, and identities can shift and change over the course of a person's life. We now use the LGBTIQ+ acronym as a collective term, but not all see it as inclusive enough. At Thorne Harbour Health, the communities we serve are made up of unique people with diverse backgrounds and experiences who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, people with innate variations of sex characteristics, trans and gender diverse, non-binary, intersex, queer, other sexualities, gender bodily diverse people, and all people living with HIV. HIV continues to be important to us because it's where we began and will always be part of our communities' experience. While we remain committed to using and advocating for inclusive language and will

endeavour to always describe people in the way they describe themselves, for the purpose of communication and accessibility of this strategic plan, we will use the term 'our communities' when referring to the diverse communities we serve.

This strategy is informed by our communities. We acknowledge the people we have lost to HIV, transphobia, homophobia, stigma, and discrimination. We acknowledge the learnings and guidance from our communities' elders and honour their legacy.

For more information on our organisation, please visit our website www.thorneharbour.org

2. PROGRAM CONTEXT, ROLE & FOCUS

Thorne Harbour Health (THH) is an LGBTIQ+ community-controlled organisation, governed by our members, and working for the communities we serve. Combining passion, commitment and activism, THH aims to improve the health, social and emotional well-being of LGBTIQ+ communities and those living with or affected by HIV.

THH established its Therapeutic Services in South Australia in 2021 and now offers specialist Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD), Family Domestic Violence (FDV), and Mental Health Services for LGBTIQ+ communities and people living with HIV (PLHIV). These services are co-located and are overseen by the Manager, Therapeutic Services SA.

Our Specialist Mental Health, AOD, HIV and FDV services provide cost free support in the Adelaide metropolitan region to LGBTIQ+ individuals aged 16 years and over (for mental health and AOD) and 18 years and over (for FDV). Mental Health and AOD services include peer support, brief intervention (including single sessions), clinical care and/or recovery coordination, counselling and psychological therapies, and family and group support. The services are aimed at meeting the needs of people who experience barriers to accessing mainstream mental health and AOD \ services or have needs not met by mainstream service such as managing the impact of minority stress and homo/bi/trans phobia and/or gender affirmation. Clients may self-refer or be referred via their GP or other services. LGBTIQ+ cultural safety, affirmative practices and a trauma-informed lens informs how all staff members conduct intake, risk assessment, service planning and the delivery of support and psychological interventions.

Our Specialist LGBTIQ+ Family and Domestic Violence service aims to enhance the safety, health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ victims/survivors through the establishment of working partnerships with mainstream service providers, and the provision of therapeutic support.

We are currently recruiting for a skilled and appropriately qualified Early Career Mental Health Counsellor to join our Therapeutic Services team in South Australia. All clinical staff in Therapeutic Services have appropriate qualifications for their roles. All staff are expected to participate in regular operational and clinical supervision (provided separately), provide operational and/or clinical supervision as appropriate to other staff and volunteers, and support the learning needs of students on placement.

3. POSITION ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Early Career Mental Health Counsellor supports the mental health and wellbeing of clients through the provision of sexuality and gender affirming therapeutic counselling interventions, primarily working with clients with mental health presentations of mild to moderate intensity. The Early Career Mental Health Counsellor holds appropriate qualifications in a relevant discipline (for example, social work, psychology, etc.) and is keen to develop their skills and experience in mental health assessment, treatment planning and individual or group counselling interventions. They are receptive to direction and guidance from senior staff, which will contribute to their professional learning and development, and are able work collaboratively with multidisciplinary team members,

internal peer and case workers, counsellors and clinicians from the mental health, AOD and FDV teams, and external medical professionals, including general practitioners and psychiatrists.

The Therapeutic Services staff all use evidence-based practice and are supported in accessing appropriate and role relevant professional development.

Key roles and responsibilities of the Early Career Mental Health Counsellor are as follows:

- Undertake comprehensive psychosocial assessments, utilising a range of mandated tools (such as the IAR-DST, K10+, K5+ and others).
- Under the guidance of more senior staff, deliver person-centred, affirming and culturally sensitive clinical interventions using a range of evidence-based therapies, strategies and approaches appropriate for a trauma-informed framework that is focused on underserved and at-risk LGBTIQ+ people.
- Work with clients to explore gender expression and identify and support engagement with gender affirmation services.
- In collaboration with client(s):
 - Determine details of the type and duration of counselling and/or case work interventions required to address the therapeutic needs of the client(s), building on the plan agreed on at assessment.
 - Deliver evidence-based psychological interventions aimed at improving the mental health and wellbeing of people experiencing mild to moderate mental health disorders and psychological distress. Evidence-based interventions may include (but are not limited to) CBT, ACT, solutions-focused therapy, motivational interviewing, and narrative therapy.
 - Undertake exit planning and reporting back to referring GP and PHN programs or other referring partners.
- In collaboration with other team members, design and facilitate appropriate psychoeducational and therapeutic group programs with a mental health and wellbeing focus.
- Maintain the required caseload and service contacts as per program requirements.
- Participate in clinical and operational supervision as required by Thorne Harbour Health.
- Assess and manage client related risk in line with Thorne Harbour Health policies and procedures and partner and funder policies and procedures where applicable.
- Maintain accurate records of client case notes and contacts and ensure data entry is timely, up to date, accurate and complete on Thorne Harbour Health and PHN or referring partner systems.
- Achieve performance targets (key performance indicators – KPIs) as set and work within program guidelines and according to expectations.
- Work within THH privacy policy and adhere to all THH policies and procedures, including professional codes of practice.
- Actively participate in and contribute to regular clinical review, and intake and screening meetings focused on risk assessment and management, risk escalation, treatment planning and caseload review.
- Identify, respond to and escalate potential, impending or actual exposures to clinical risk.
- Support where required with a range of health promotion and community development activities to support the mental health and welfare of people living with HIV and LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Other duties as directed, commensurate with existing skills, knowledge, and experience in support of the organisation and its objectives.

4. KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications

- Tertiary qualification relevant to counselling practice, for example Social Work, Occupational Therapy or Psychology, and eligibility for membership of a relevant governing body (e.g., AASW, AHPRA, APS).

Skills and experience

- Experience in conducting assessments, case formulations and case planning.
- Knowledge of and experience in delivering evidence-based counselling interventions to support mental health and wellbeing.
- Familiarity with a range of evidence-based therapies and strategies appropriate for culturally safe and trauma-informed work with LGBTIQ+ community members.
- An interest and willingness to advance the health and wellbeing of people from LGBTIQ+ communities, including people living with HIV, in a non-judgmental and respectful manner.
- Experience or willingness and commitment to be inclusive and affirming of trans and gender diverse community members and assist people in seeking support in exploring and affirming their gender.
- Highly developed oral and written communication, organisational and administrative / reporting skills
- Capacity and willingness to contribute to a supportive and productive team environment.
- A current South Australian Driver Licence.

Desirable

- Previous experience in working with LGBTIQ+ community members.
- Previous experience working in a mental health setting.

5. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- Salary is paid in accordance with the Thorne Harbour Health Limited Enterprise Agreement 2026. The classification for the position is SCHCADS Award/SACS Level 4.
- Salary packaging is available at Thorne Harbour Health. It is a legitimate method of restructuring existing salary into a combination of salary and expense payment benefits to provide a higher net remuneration for the employee.
- Employer's contribution to superannuation will also be paid.
- Conditions of employment are as stated in the Thorne Harbour Health Limited Enterprise Agreement 2026.
- The position is for 15.2 hours per week.
- Completion by Thorne Harbour Health of a satisfactory police check.
- Evidence of a valid Working with Children Check.
- A willingness and ability to work flexible hours is required, including some early morning, evening and weekend meetings and other work-related commitments.
- A Confidentiality Agreement must be signed.
- Thorne Harbour Health is an equal opportunity employer. All staff members are required to contribute to creating a non-discriminatory workplace.
- Thorne Harbour Health provides a non-smoking workplace.
- Membership of the appropriate union is strongly encouraged.
- Candidates must have full working rights in Australia and may be required to provide proof of this eligibility.

6. PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

Thorne Harbour Health has a commitment to ensuring that staff members receive high-quality supervision on a regular basis. This role is required to attend this supervision.

7. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

As an employee of Thorne Harbour Health, staff need to strive to ensure a safe and healthy workplace by complying with the provisions of Section 25 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Victoria) (Duties of Employees) or Section 28 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (South Australia) (Duties of Workers).

8. APPLICATION PROCESS

Written applications addressing the selection criteria and including a resume and the names and contact details of three professional referees should be sent to recruitment@thorneharbour.org

For further enquiries please contact Jess Shipman – Manager, Therapeutic Services on 0477 710 105 or jessica.shipman@thorneharbour.org

Applications close on Tuesday 22 September 2026.

Important: it is essential that applicants specifically address the selection criteria. Where selection criteria have not been addressed, applications will not be considered.