

MVISS CULTURAL WELLNESS FACILITATOR & SUBSTANCE USE COUNSELLOR

(2 FTE POSITIONS – Indigenous designated):

The **METRO VANCOUVER INDIGENOUS SERVICES SOCIETY (MVISS)**, a subsidiary of the Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council (MVAEC) is seeking the following **Full-time Permanent Position** for a newly established Mental Wellness and Substance Use agency based in Vancouver, serving Vancouver/ Richmond/ North Shore. MVAEC was incorporated in 2009 and acts as a unified collective voice for the urban Aboriginal population in Metro Vancouver. MVISS was recently incorporated to respond to a request for proposals to establish these services. All positions are permanent full-time with group benefits. ***ALL applicants must*** be able to demonstrate they can provide culturally-based, trauma-informed practice. Substantial program model training will be provided to all staff in first 6 months.

JOB SUMMARY: (Full Time)

The Cultural Wellness Facilitator & Substance Use Counsellor (CWFSUC) works within a multi-disciplinary team to provide prevention, assessment, referral, clinical counselling and follow-up services to individuals and family members affected by mental wellness and substance use issues, specifically individuals who self-identify as Indigenous (Metis, Inuit and First Nations).

Reporting to the Clinical/Mental Wellness Director, and also working directly with the Cultural Lead(s) the Cultural Wellness Facilitator & Substance Use Counsellor (Indigenous) provides counselling and support to individuals and families experiencing mental wellness and substance use challenges. A key element of this position is to function through the use of Indigenous cultural and healing practices, linking directly to Cultural Wellness Lead (CWL) support, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, utilizing ceremonies such as Sweat Lodge, Feasts, Pipe Ceremonies, Longhouse/Bighouse, Brushing, Smudging, Spirit Offerings/Plates, Fasts, Mask Ceremonies, Naming ceremonies, etc. as a vehicle to bring healing and wellness to the persons served.

Specifically, engaging the Indigenous population in Vancouver/Richmond/North Shore in culturally competent services. This may include confidential individual, family or group counselling about the causes and effect of mental wellness and/or substance use challenges, support for families dealing with these same issues and healing needs, and facilitating referrals for additional treatment, such as to the VGH Access and Assessment Center or the BC Mood Disorder Clinic, as well as NNADAP Centers, detox/daytox, etc. The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counsellor (CWFSUC) will also provide education to individuals and groups in the community with a focus on Indigenous cultural and mental wellness and substance use related topics, such as suicide prevention, substance use/misuse, anxiety and depression, historical trauma, grief and loss, child sexual abuse, Residential School Syndrome, etc.

The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counsellor (CWFSUC) will be familiar with other services and resources in the VRNS communities and work closely to provide information and support when required. This will include related networks such as the First Nations and Aboriginal Primary Care Network or partner with other related service providers to collaborate on meeting the overall healing needs of the Indigenous community, including reach to ceremonial areas for Sweat Lodges, etc. The CWFSUC will also use the Native Wellness Assessment tools available through the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation as a means of working with persons served to increase and strengthen their cultural identity and tools to manage their wellness and healing journey. Lastly, the CWFSUC will provide community engagement, outreach and capacity building exercises, where requested.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide Cultural Wellness Facilitation and Substance Use counselling and support to individuals, families and groups in the community. Answer phone calls and inquiries concerning available programs and services; Provide Cultural Wellness Facilitation and counselling regarding the cause, symptoms and prevention strategies of various diagnoses that can affect Cultural Wellness; Provide counselling regarding the use and effects of alcohol and substances; Prepare needs and risk assessments; Maintain a comprehensive understanding of crisis management and the impact of trauma on Cultural Wellness and Substance Use issues; Provide outreach counselling in the community; Accept and make referrals to outside agencies; Maintain strict confidentiality guidelines regarding all person served, conversations and referrals and adhere to Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure as a term of employment; Utilize an acceptable Electronic Management Record system (TBD) to document all person served encounters in a timely manner.
- Coordinate and facilitate educational workshops on Cultural Wellness and Substance Use related topics; Contribute to funding proposals to enhance the services for Cultural Wellness Facilitation and Substance Use programs and initiatives, where possible; Collaborate with the Communication Coordinator or related functions to develop promotional materials and information for the Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counselor promotion initiatives; Attend and sit on community and organizational committees.
- Provide treatment referrals; Assist individuals to identify their need for treatment programs; Liaise with treatment programs; Assist person served to meet all requirements; Support access to funding for treatment programs; Evaluate the effectiveness of treatment programs; Liaise with community agencies and supports; Complete treatment centre referrals; Complete Admission and Discharge Criteria and Assessment Tools (ADAT); Arrange transportation for person served to and from treatment centres; Evaluate the effectiveness of treatment programs.
- Prepare and facilitate Cultural Wellness Facilitation and Substance Use counseling services, including trauma-informed group work; Develop and facilitate Cultural Wellness Facilitation and Substance Use-related group counselling programs, i.e. Structured Relapse Prevention, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Historical Trauma, etc.; Conduct a Needs Assessment/SWOT Analysis for proposed programs; Collaborate with community partners when developing programs; Prepare program evaluations and analyze results.
- All other duties as assigned, related to Indigenous Cultural Wellness Facilitation and Substance Use Counselling as a means to bring about greater healing for individuals, families and the community overall.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

EDUCATION

Undergrad degree with **minimum 3-5 years experience**, e.g. Bachelor Social Worker in good standing with the BC College of Social Workers and/or Social Service Workers; or a Regulated Wellness Facilitator Professional specialization; or another University degree in a relevant discipline with a specialization in Substance Use, e.g. B.A. (Psych). In addition, demonstrated deep understanding of Indigenous healing and cultural practices; grounded in Indigenous cultural frameworks.

KNOWLEDGE/EXPERIENCE

Experience working with people struggling with cultural and mental wellness challenges and/or substance use issues; Practice will include a harm reduction philosophy, as well as be culturally-based and trauma-informed; Comprehensive knowledge of person served centered strengths-based cultural wellness facilitation to address core, underlying root causes and substance use interventions, practice methods and professional skills; Knowledge of community resources, treatment centres, social service networks and organizations; Knowledge of funding agencies available to assist person served in accessing needed support services and community resources. Working knowledge of computer software (email, internet) and Microsoft Office applications (Word, Outlook), and Electronic Management Record systems.

SKILLS

ADVOCACY SKILLS

Strong interpersonal skills to work with diverse person served groups with varying levels of comprehension and language capability; Effective listening, observation and facilitation skills to effectively assess person served and provide appropriate treatment and consultation; Strong mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution skills to respond or assist in emergency situations; Strong collaboration skills to manage service delivery in conjunction with case managers, person served, their family members/caregivers/SDMs and other Wellness Facilitator care professionals; Ability to deal with demanding interpersonal situations and respond with good judgment and understanding; Ability to communicate information effectively through a variety of means including meetings, reports, letters and presentations; Advanced oral and written communication skills in English to establish and maintain a wide range of contacts with Wellness Facilitator care professionals and community organizations (oral proficiency in an Indigenous language would be an asset); Demonstrated ability to analyze and make independent decisions; Ability to think critically, and be innovative to create/modify strategy or intervention techniques to suit the individual needs of person served; Preference to those that self-identify as Indigenous; Valid BC driver's license and use of own vehicle for MVISS business; Must provide a Criminal Records Check with enhanced vulnerable sector screening.

CULTURAL/MENTAL WELLNESS & SUBSTANCES SAFETY COMMITMENT

Comply with any and all applicable Occupational Related Safety Codes and Regulations, as well as maintain good standing in applicable professional associations, e.g. Social Workers or Professional Counseling Associations, etc.; Report to your supervisor any known risk and safety issues, including completing Critical Incident Reporting Forms in the event of a safety issue; Report any known workplace hazard to your supervisor/manager; Report any known violation of applicable Occupational Related Safety Codes and Regulations to your supervisor/manager; Not use or operate any equipment (includes motor vehicle if required for work) or work in a way that may endanger yourself or any other worker; Attend all Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counseling safety training as directed by your supervisor and apply this knowledge to your job.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counselor (CWFSUC) works in a healing supportive office environment, although some cultural activities will naturally be on the land outside of the office environment, e.g. sweat lodge ceremonies, etc.;
- Hours will vary with some evenings, weekends, holidays, although standard hours will be 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday;
- Travel within Vancouver, Richmond and North Shore is required.

In addition, there are these additional working conditions:

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counselor (CWFSUC) will be required to move throughout the community and beyond, so must be comfortable driving and walking in all weather. The CWFSUC must be able to prioritize situations and manage time, and may find that they are needed at irregular hours causing fatigue and stress. They may experience stress and stress related symptoms due to interacting with person served in crisis situations. The CWFSUC may be exposed to illness and unsanitary conditions so must take care to protect their own health and safety. The CWFSUC may also have to manage a physically threatening person and be prepared to be responsible for their own safety, and the safety of others.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS

The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counselor (CWFSUC) may find their office to be busy with both scheduled and unscheduled persons served. They must be ready to respond quickly and effectively to many types of situations, including crisis situations. The CWFSUC may also be invited to other environments that are stressful. They may experience isolation because members of the community may not always agree with the decisions they make, and the commitment to confidentiality may not allow a response. The CWFSUC may also experience isolation because there is no one else in the community doing the same kind of work. The CWFSUC must be prepared to manage their own stress and function well with self-care.

SENSORY DEMANDS

The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counselor (CWFSUC) will be in contact with individuals and families in crisis who may be ill, using substances and/or not attentive to personal wellness and safety for themselves or their homes. The CWFSUC may experience a number of unpleasant sensory demands associated with the lack of personal care.

MENTAL DEMANDS

The Cultural Wellness Facilitator and Substance Use Counselor (CWFSUC) must monitor their own time and stress levels to ensure that they are able to effectively assist persons served. They may find that they are continually interrupted, and may have to quickly assess situations to respond appropriately. The CWFSUC may be placed in a situation where his/her own life may be threatened as well as life-threatening situations for others such as instances of attempted suicide.

HOW TO APPLY:

Applicants **MUST** provide a basic criminal records check once screened in, such as through ***mybackcheck.com*** (roughly 5-7 days for certificate) and later satisfy an enhanced vulnerable population clearance (this cost will be reimbursed). The nature of this agency is based on ***Indigenous Relational Care*** and ***Indigenous Cultures as the Intervention*** philosophies; is culturally-based and a trauma-informed practice. Attractive salaries and a group benefits package are offered. Relocation costs will be considered, as well as Secondments.

Please provide:

1) ***Cover letter and resume*** detailing how you meet the requirements;

- 2) ***Self-identification as Indigenous***, if applicable; or how you can meet requirements if non-Indigenous, e.g. have worked X number of years with Indigenous people, acquired cultural competency/safety training, etc., and
- 3) ***Proof of professional affiliations*** in good standing.

If applying for more than one position, please indicate so in your cover letter. For full job postings, please visit www.mvaec.ca. ***While preferences will be given to Indigenous candidates***, a mix of experiences and backgrounds, including non-Indigenous persons in some positions may be considered. **Apply to ceo@mvaec.ca. Competition Open until filled. (updated May 22 2018)**