



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

*STARTTS is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and anti-discrimination policies.*

**POSITION NUMBER: 1063**

**Date reviewed/created: September 2023**

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**POSITION TITLE: Intake Counsellor/Project Officer**

**TEAM:** Direct Services – Intake Team

**LOCATION:** Carramar

**AGREEMENT:** “NSW (Non-Declared) Affiliated Health Organisations’ Professional and Associated Staff Agreement”.

**CLASSIFICATION:** Health Education Officer, or other relevant classification based on qualifications, experience and requirements of the role.

A generous salary packaging scheme is also offered.

**VACCINATION REQUIREMENT:** Category A.

**PERIOD OF APPRAISAL:** Performance will be assessed within 3 months of commencement and a 6 month probationary/qualifying period will also apply.

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### **Background to STARTTS**

STARTTS is a state-wide service funded by the NSW Department of Health and Commonwealth Department of Health to provide high quality assessment, treatment and rehabilitation services to people living in NSW who have experienced organised violence or trauma associated with the refugee experience. STARTTS is an Affiliated Health Organisation (AHO), a Non-Government Organisation whose services are deemed to be part of the NSW public health system.

STARTTS’ service provision philosophy is predicated on a bio-psycho-social framework that incorporates a large range of clinical and psycho-social interventions informed by the latest advances in neuroscience and evidence based practice in relevant fields. As such, STARTTS provides a broad range of services including assessment; counselling for all age groups; psychiatric assessment and interventions; family therapy; group interventions; body-focused interventions such as massage, physiotherapy, acupuncture and pain management groups; support groups; programs for children and youth; and various strategies to increase the capacity of support networks and refugee communities to sustain their members.

The focus of the STARTTS’ approach is on building capacity and empowering people and communities to take control over their own lives, using a strengths-based approach and building on individual, family, community and cultural strengths.

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### **Background to the Program Area of the Position**

This position forms part of STARTTS Direct Services programme and will service clients who have entered Australia as asylum seekers and those who are permanent residents. STARTTS works with both; those who arrived recently and have settled under the Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (HSS) and those who have resided in Australia longer. This position is to provide a comprehensive group and individual assessment, referral and counselling service to STARTTS’ clients living in Sydney metropolitan areas. The Direct Services program offers a holistic range of services including short to medium term culturally appropriate counselling, group work and community development.

STARTTS’ Intake is a primary interface between the organisation and the community, and is responsible for receiving and processing all STARTTS’ incoming referrals. Consequently, all members of the Intake Team are required to provide a high level of customer service to both the internal and external stakeholders, to manage a high volume of confidential client-related information, allocations and client files, and to do so with a strong attention to detail and in a timely manner. It also consists of having extensive knowledge with the use of the client database PAS and CAREHR.

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**ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

1. Responsible to: *Intake Team Leader Counsellor.*
2. Responsible for: *Nil.*

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**SELECTION CRITERIA:****Essential Criteria:**

1. Qualifications in health, welfare, behavioural or social sciences or other relevant classification based on qualifications, experience and requirements of the role.
2. Experience conducting assessments, referrals to other agencies and case management in a multicultural context.
3. Demonstrated case management skills and cross-cultural counselling experience.
4. Demonstrated understanding of the issues affecting refugees in particular resettlement issues, and the effects of torture on individuals, young people, families, and communities.
5. Experience conducting telephone counselling and making appropriate referrals for crisis intervention.
6. Demonstrated organisational and time-management skills.
7. Excellent oral, written and interpersonal communication skills and proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office.
8. Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team within a multicultural environment
9. Knowledge of the NSW Health and Welfare system.

**Desirable Criteria:**

1. Word processing and database management skills.
2. Community development, group work or training skills and experience.
3. Current NSW Driver's Licence.

\*This position is considered child-related employment and will require a Working with Children Background Check and a National Criminal Record Check.

**VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS**

\* Category A workers are required to meet and maintain the vaccination criteria (as per the current NSW Health and STARTTS policies) including annual influenza vaccinations. Two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine will be required to provide a record of your COVID-19 vaccination status. Annual Influenza vaccinations are mandatory. Vaccination and/or assessment for several other transmissible diseases are also required.

Category B workers must have two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine and must also provide COVID-19 vaccination evidence if successful. (The annual influenza vaccination as well as vaccination for other transmissible diseases are strongly encouraged but not mandatory).

Should you not be able to comply with vaccination requirements before your commencement date, the offer of employment may be withdrawn.

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**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ROLE**

Intake Counsellor/ Project Officer's role is one of the key roles in the referral system, in receiving new referrals to STARTTS, communicating with service providers, referring clients to appropriate services, maintaining accurate information in the medical records and client databases and participating in the allocation of clients to counsellors.

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**PRIMARY OBJECTIVES:**

1. To resource STARTTS intake and complete the preliminary assessment of referrals to ensure that people referred to STARTTS are directed to the most appropriate service within the shortest time possible.

2. To assess, case manage and provide short term counselling to clients on the waiting list.
3. To explore, develop and implement initiatives that contribute to reduce: the length of time clients wait for services, the number of clients waiting for services, and the number of inappropriate referrals to STARTTS.
4. To explore, develop and implement initiatives that contribute to addressing the needs of clients while they are waiting for counselling services.
5. To assist Intake Team Leader, Direct Services Coordinator and Clinical Services and Research Coordinator in the task of organising and prioritising and allocating STARTTS' client waiting list.
6. To identify and continue to develop networks with other relevant service providers who may be either a source of referrals for STARTTS, or point for STARTTS referrals. To contribute to development of STARTTS training and promotional materials through provision of clear information about referral, intake and prioritisation processes and procedures.
7. Work in accordance with the following formula, as follows:
  - 40% Direct Intake duties.
  - 30% Direct services to clients (counselling, co-therapy).
  - 30% Managing waiting list Clients.

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## **PRIMARY DUTIES:**

### **1. Intake and Waiting List**

- 1.1. Receive and manage referrals (→) and enquiries to STARTTS and assist in the management of STARTTS waiting list through the provision of assessment, referral and brief interventions as required.
- 1.2. Receive “drop in” -referrals to STARTTS, and assess appropriately.
- 1.3. Provide information to referral sources regarding alternative appropriate service providers.
- 1.4. Liaise with primary referral sources to provide a coordinated case management of current and potential future clients.
- 1.5. Revise and update the waiting list at regular intervals, so that STARTTS is continuously aware of the current situation of clients awaiting treatment, and of changes in circumstances that may affect their priority status.
- 1.6. Assist Intake Team Leader, Direct Services Coordinator, Clinical Services and Research Coordinator and Team Leaders in prioritisation and allocation of clients to counselling staff.
- 1.7. Assist counselling, community development and sessional staff at STARTTS to provide relevant services to torture and trauma survivors awaiting treatment.
- 1.8. Liaise with the Health Information Manager on referral, intake and medical record procedures where necessary.
- 1.9. Maintain a database of alternative services available (for inappropriate referrals and clients on the waiting list).
- 1.10. Assist counselling staff in selecting appropriate clients from the waiting list for group interventions.

### **2. Assessment and Counselling**

- 2.1. Provide a psychosocial and psychological assessment, counselling, individual and group work and support services to clients.
- 2.2. Provide assessments to clients and individual counselling to a limited number of clients (maximum number equivalent to half-time counsellor caseload with emphasis on psychological assessment; supportive counselling and short term interventions).
- 2.3. Plan and implement group interventions with clients.
- 2.4. Support clients to develop a clear understanding of the issues that may affect them, their children and families, to understand what services are available to them, and to refer to relevant services as determined by client need.

- 2.5. Develop and implement treatment plans in conjunction with clients, which will assist clients to: make social contacts, overcome psycho-social difficulties, and address symptoms associated with traumatic experiences.
- 2.6. Promote assessment and counselling services in conjunction with HSS and non-HSS Case Coordinators and Case Managers, as well as other stake holders to newly arrived refugees through an information strategy including community information sessions (this includes ensuring translation of relevant information regarding STARTTS services where appropriate).
- 2.7. Introduce waiting list clients to the availability of group programs (e.g. Clinical Group assessment and treatment, Family Counselling, the Families in Cultural Transition program (FICT), Community Living Support Refugee (CLSR)) and to other services provided by STARTTS.
- 2.8. Maintain accurate and timely records of client contact and assessment, referral and follow-up, and interventions.

### **3. Liaison and Partnerships**

- 3.1. Ongoing development and maintenance of productive relationships and referral pathways between STARTTS and by Stakeholder partners in the delivery of the HSS services to newly arrived humanitarian entrants.
- 3.2. In conjunction with the Intake Team Leader, Direct Services and Clinical Services and Research Coordinator, Direct Services Team Leaders, Intake/ Team, and relevant STARTTS' staff develop and maintain productive partnerships and projects between STARTTS and other services throughout NSW relevant to the needs refugees.

### **4. Reporting**

- 4.1. Prepare reports on services relating to areas of work as required.
- 4.2. Provide statistical information regarding referrals and maintain records of interventions.
- 4.3. Provide waiting list numbers and statistics.

### **5. Administration and Training**

- 5.1. Assist in the evaluation and effectiveness of the services provided.
- 5.2. Ensure the efficient recording of client and program records.
- 5.3. Assist Intake Team Leader, Direct Services Coordinator, Clinical Services and Research Coordinator in the efficient management and administration of the waiting list.
- 5.4. Undertake training about the effects of torture and trauma and the approaches to service provision required by torture survivors.
- 5.5. Provide casework, referral and/or group work services to improve the health status of torture and trauma survivors awaiting treatment.
- 5.6. Assist other health and welfare organisations to provide relevant service directions for torture and trauma survivors from refugee communities.
- 5.7. Gain thorough knowledge of refugee communities and services therein.
- 5.8. Undertake regular case review and follow-up of clients with relevant staff from STARTTS and/or other agencies involved.
- 5.9. Identify gaps in services and develop relevant materials and new services in consultation with other staff.
- 5.10. Participate in educational and professional development programs.
- 5.11. Participate in relevant community development, research and/or documentation projects as required.
- 5.12. Participate in case allocation meetings with the Intake Team Leader, Direct Services Coordinator, Clinical Services Coordinator and Team Leaders, and in clinical case conferences.
- 5.13. Provide input to the development of training materials relevant to the needs of services working with newly arrived refugees.

## 6. Personnel

- 6.1. Contribute to the STARTTS strategic planning process and report on relevant Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 6.2. Participate actively in the STARTTS Performance Management program and contribute to the development of an annual work plan that aligns with the organisation's Strategic Plan.
- 6.3. Be an active participant in team meetings to maximise contribution to the work of the team.
- 6.4. Participate in STARTTS staff meetings and other relevant meetings.
- 6.5. Work to ensure professional and co-operative working relationships within own team and with other departments across STARTTS.
- 6.6. Participate in identifying quality improvement initiatives/strategies.
- 6.7. Attend and participate in all training opportunities identified for the role.
- 6.8. Liaise with and seek senior advice as required.

## 7. As a STARTTS employee you are expected to:

- Have commitment to Human Rights, EEO, WHS and Safe Work Practices.
- Carry out the role and responsibilities in a manner that is consistent with delegations, policies, procedures and operations systems of STARTTS and in line with STARTTS Code of Conduct.
- Maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion in relation to all STARTTS matters.
- Actively seek to improve skills and knowledge that will benefit the organisation.
- Project a professional image at all times and in all situations.
- Undertake any other duties that may be required within the area of work.

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### Equal Employment Opportunity and Staff Relationships:

- STARTTS is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer and encompasses its philosophy and practice.
- STARTTS rejects racism and sexism in all its forms and is committed to the elimination of racial and gender discrimination including direct and indirect racism and sexism, racial vilification, and harassment.

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### STARTTS Workplace Policies

You must observe and comply with the provisions set out in any and all written policy, practice or procedure of STARTTS. A breach of STARTTS' policies, practices and procedures may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of your employment.

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### Work Health & Safety Responsibilities:

- Comply with STARTTS WHS policies and procedures.
- Work with due care and consideration to safeguard your own health and safety and the health and safety of others, and to report to your Supervisor any potential hazards, mishaps, incidents or injuries that may occur or become aware of during the course of work.

**Risk Management Responsibilities:** All staff have a responsibility to identify any risks (i.e., the chance of something happening that will have an impact on the objectives of the organisation) in the course of their work and to inform their supervisor, as per the *STARTTS Risk Management Policy and Program*.

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### Smoke-free Workplace

STARTTS is completely smoke-free. This means that smoking is not allowed in any STARTTS' buildings, vehicles or grounds, there are no designated smoking areas. As an employee you are required to comply with the 'Non-smoking' Policy.

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I have read the **Intake Counsellor/Project Officer #1063** Position Description, understand its contents and agree to work in accordance with the requirements of the position. I understand and accept that I must also comply with STARTTS' policies and procedures and can be required to work in any location under the jurisdiction of STARTTS.

I also agree to strictly observe STARTTS' policy on confidentiality of client information or such other sensitive or confidential information that I may come across in the course of my employment.

**Employee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please print*

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Jorge Aroche**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The review for this Position Description is due: September 2025**