



position description

Position Title:	Housing Mental Health Pathways Program Worker
Salary/Conditions:	Social Work Class 2, Year according to experience plus salary packaging and superannuation
Reports to:	Coordinator, Outreach Support Team
Location:	Collingwood
Hours:	Full time
Period:	Permanent

Organisation overview

HomeGround's vision is to end homelessness in Melbourne. HomeGround's mission is to get people housed and keep people housed.

HomeGround is a growing, independent, not-for-profit and secular organisation, working in the areas of homelessness, housing, community development and social change.

HomeGround has extensive experience at providing housing and support services to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. HomeGround is well known for its quality service delivery and assisted around 10,000 households experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness in the past year alone.

HomeGround is experienced and committed to working in partnerships with government, corporations, philanthropic organisations and the community sector. This includes involvement in research projects and strategic advocacy on critical issues.

HomeGround champions and advocates evidence based approaches to end homelessness. This has included leading the introduction of Common Ground Supportive Housing into Melbourne and developing affordable and supportive housing projects across Melbourne.

We currently work across Melbourne's inner and outer northern suburbs, inner and middle south, and the central business district. We anticipate that our geographic focus will expand over the coming years in line with future supportive housing developments.

More information is available at www.homeground.org.au

Position overview

The Housing Mental Health Pathways Program seeks to prevent people being discharged from Inpatient Acute Mental Health services into homelessness. This program is a partnership between HomeGround Services the acute mental health program at St Vincent's Hospital in Fitzroy. Homeground also has a similar partnership with Bayside Health's acute mental health program at the Alfred Hospital in Prahran.

This position involves engaging with people who are currently inpatients on the wards who have a history of homelessness, or are at risk of homelessness, and assisting in the hospital's discharge planning.

The primary tasks involved with the program are:

- To undertake housing-focused assessment and advocacy work to people during their hospitalisation at the acute mental health program at the St Vincent's Hospital.
- To improve collaboration between the St Vincent's Mental Health Service, Clarendon Clinic Community Mental Health Service, PDRSS services, SAAP-funded services and housing providers.
- To ensure linkages with appropriate housing and support following discharge from hospital
- To provide support to stabilise housing
- To reduce unnecessary psychiatric hospitalisation and improve quality of life for homeless clients

Position responsibilities and functions

1. Direct Service delivery

Outreach

In response to direct contact and/or referrals work with clients on the wards, or where they are located post-discharge, to offer assistance and to make referrals to local agencies.

Practical Assistance and Information/Referral

To work with clients in regards to basic needs such as emergency accommodation, housing, income entitlements, employment, food, clothing, domestic services and medical care. This may include referrals to specific services and /or direct provision of services. Services are provided at the direction of clients.

Advocacy

Advocating on behalf of clients with other agencies to ensure access and delivery of services, which may require the worker to accompany the person to appointments.

Case management

To work within case planning and monitoring procedures within each service to ensure the best results are achieved for each client.

Brokerage

To provide people exiting clinical mental health facilities with direct assistance:

- in accessing private rental housing
- securing tenancies at risk
- to facilitate community connectedness and well-being.

2. Administration

Client files

Maintain client files and records in accord with procedures on a computer case management software system.

General administration

Workers are responsible for producing their own correspondence and reports and contributing to the general administration of the service.

3. Advocacy and service system development

- To advocate to ensure that services are relevant, flexible and accessible to homeless people
- To facilitate improved co-ordination of outreach services in the inner south and specifically with the Housing-Mental Health position located with the Alfred Hospital
- To identify key gaps and work with other agencies to develop service and housing options.
- To identify improvements in the co-ordination of HomeGround's services

4. Professional Development and Practice

- Attend staff meetings and other HomeGround meetings as required.
- To become familiar with health and welfare services within the locality.
- To attend internal and external training as planned with the Co-ordinator.
- To work within HomeGround ethical, privacy and duty of care frameworks.
- To work within HomeGround policies, procedures and practices.

5. General

- Comply with agency reporting requirements, organisational policies and procedures
- Participate in organisation structures and meetings
- Attend team meetings and other HomeGround Services meetings as required
- Participate in supervision with their Coordinator or Manager
- Attend internal and external training as planned with Coordinator or Manager
- Work within HomeGround Services' ethical, privacy and duty of care frameworks
- Contribute to a positive organisational culture
- Perform other duties as required

Performance measurement

A work plan will be developed in line with the strategic plan

Organisational relationships

Reports to:	Coordinator Outreach Support Team
Supervises:	Nil
Internal Contacts:	Outreach Support Team
External Contacts:	St Vincent's Psychiatric Unit and Clarendon Clinic Mental Health Service

Key selection criteria

Essential

1. Capacity to work as sole outreach worker and as part of a team, delivering direct client services to people with complex needs including ability to manage clients who are distressed or agitated and to advocate on their behalf
2. Demonstrated understanding of mental health, homelessness, disability and addiction issues
3. Good written and verbal communication skills
4. Computer literacy
5. A driver's license

Desirable

6. Knowledge of the existing homelessness service system in the ongoing work to gain housing outcomes
7. Knowledge of the clinical and non-clinical mental health service system and support paradigms
8. Understanding of good customer service principles for people with complex needs
9. Ability to manage broad range of relationships to optimise client outcomes
10. Understanding of ethical practice

