

Position Description

Very Special Kids believes that all children and young people have the right to quality of life, no matter how long or short their life may be.

Position Title:	Family Support Practitioner
Location:	Ballarat, Bacchus Marsh and Geelong Region
Department	Service Delivery
Reporting To:	Direct – Family Support Manager Indirect – Family Support Team Leader
Main Purpose of Position:	<p>As partners in the provision of paediatric palliative care, the Family Support Practitioner role involves several key responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing counselling and therapeutic support to children, young people and families from diagnosis and treatment, through illness, end of life, immediately after death, bereavement and transition out of Very Special Kids care. • Planning and delivering programs, and community work to provide social connections and therapeutic benefit to children, young people and families. Undertaking volunteer supervision and engagement • Engaging in professional development of self and others in the importance of psychosocial support in paediatric palliative care and death and grief literacy • Working within the Family Support Team scope of practice competencies, adhering to organisational and professional codes of conduct and best practice standards. • Collaborating for best practice outcomes to provide seamless and well-coordinated supports for families – including close cooperation with hospice staff and all teams within the organisation.
Number of Direct Reports	None
Decision Making Authority	As per Very Special Kids' Delegation of Authority
Key Relationships	<p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Manager of Clinical Services • Family Support Manager • Family Support Team Leaders • Hospice Nurse Manager and Clinical Nurse Educator • Volunteer Manager • Volunteer Coordinator • Service Delivery Team <p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Special Kids families

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Special Kids volunteers • Hospitals and allied health providers • Community agencies and other paediatric palliative care services
Key Selection Criteria	<p>Qualifications/ Education Training and Work Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tertiary qualification in social work or psychology. • Eligibility for membership of, or registration by, relevant professional bodies <p>Knowledge and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct experience working with children and families in grief and bereavement. • Experience working in paediatric palliative care will be well regarded. • Demonstrated ability to provide trauma informed therapeutic intervention. • Knowledge of current loss, grief and bereavement theory and practice, • Demonstrated ability to undertake psychosocial assessment. • Excellent interpersonal, written communication and problem solving skills. • Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to the Victorian Child Safe Standards. • A commitment to inclusive practice. • Demonstrated capacity and experience working collaboratively within a multidisciplinary team. • Current driver's licence, good driving record and willingness to use own vehicle for work related travel. <p>Values and Attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to the provision of child and family centred care • Commitment to the purpose, principles, and philosophy of Very Special Kids • Ability to reflect on own work practice, undertake professional development and self-care. • Commitment to quality improvement and ongoing evaluation • Commitment to contributing to a harmonious work environment

Key Areas of Responsibility

Organisation

- Communicating effectively to build positive and harmonious working relationships within the organisation
- Represent Very Special Kids in a professional and appropriate manner according to the principles of the organisation

Key Performance Indicators

- Open and positive relationships with other staff
- Regular formal and informal communication across all teams
- Demonstrated commitment to teamwork, working within a multi-disciplinary team
- Engage in quality improvement through involvement in organisational relevant working groups and committees.
- Maintain and build the reputation of the organisation.

Community

Key Performance Indicators

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Championing conversations that highlight and celebrate the difference between community and hospital- based paediatric palliative care settings and promote awareness and understanding of choices provided at Very Special Kids. Engaging the skills, resources, knowledge, strengths and capacity of compassionate communities, to address the diverse needs of children, young people and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family support regularly maps and engages local community assets to better scaffold and support families. Very Special Kids develops culturally diverse and responsive care pathways for Paediatric Palliative Care and underrepresented groups. Meaningful and sustained relationships are created with key diversity stakeholders and community leaders.
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Family

Key Performance Indicators

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding, identifying, and addressing relevant psychosocial factors that influence family, healthcare, and other relevant systems. Provision of end-of-life and after death care as part of a multidisciplinary service delivery team. Building parents/guardians/families capacity to support themselves, their children and young people, and their community throughout their paediatric palliative care and bereavement experience. Identifying and mitigating barriers to access, particularly barriers that stem from intersecting experiences of disadvantage. Establishing a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities of individuals and families are respected and valued. Development and delivery of therapeutic group programs and attendance at key events as required, Documenting plans, outcomes, communication, consent and risk according to organisational guidelines and relevant legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is provided in accordance with the Scope of Practice. Family's needs are regularly assessed, and service impact more effectively measured. More people in the community understand the impact of caring for a child with a life limiting condition. More people in the community understand the impact of having a child or young person die. Families have agency over the way they engage with our services and confidence advocating for their needs. Families are more supported and connected to a community of people that care. All records maintained in accordance with the Very Special Kids policies and procedure guidelines.
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Volunteers

Key Performance Indicators

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborating effectively with our volunteer services team in the planning, delivery and evaluation of program work. Engaging with our volunteer community to strengthen and build capacity in paediatric palliative care. Providing supervision of volunteers including adequate briefing, debriefing and feedback opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentor, supervise and support volunteers to contribute to program delivery and quality improvement. Volunteers feel engaged and supported. Volunteers make up an integral part of the very special kids community.
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Quality, Safety, and Improvement

Very Special Kids employees have a responsibility and accountability to contribute to the organisation's commitment to Quality, Safety, and Improvement by:

- Complying with the principles of the Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Acting in accordance and complying with all relevant Safety and Quality policies and procedures
- Identifying risks, reporting, and being actively involved in risk mitigation strategies
- Participating in and actively contributing to quality improvement programs
- Complying with the requirements of the National Safety & Quality Health Service Standards
- Complying with all relevant clinical and/or competency standards
- Complying with the principles of Patient and Family Centred Care that relate to this position

Conditions of Service	
Hours	Part Time working hours – 22.5 to 30.0 per week negotiable. Position requires out of hours work at times.
Other	Current driver's licence
Salary Package	Pursuant to relevant EBA plus superannuation and NFP salary packaging.
Tenure	Ongoing
General	Employment with Very Special Kids will be subject to a satisfactory Police Check, a Working with Children Check and evidence of up-to-date COVID vaccination.

Privacy Statement: Personal Information may be collected and stored for the purpose of recruitment and selection. The information will only be used and disclosed for the primary purpose of its collection. Some exceptions exist. These may be obtained from the Privacy Officer.

Approvals:	
Created by:	Julia McAlpine, General Manager Clinical Services
Approved by:	Donna Durston-McKenna, General Manager People and Culture
Date of Last update:	20 March 2025