



POSITION DESCRIPTION: PEER SUPPORT WORKER

How to apply for this job:

1. Please read the **position description below thoroughly and carefully**. You are encouraged to visit our website to find out more about the organisation or our work and to call with any questions. (www.positivewomen.org.au)
2. Please provide **your current CV** and include a cover letter that briefly tells us why you are interested in the role. It will help if you can also provide specific examples of how your work or life experience matches the key skills and qualities identified in the Position Description, along with any relevant employment experience. You may provide referees (such as a previous employer) if you are able to do so.
3. Applications **MUST** be in writing and sent via email to the PWV Executive Officer, Kirsty Machon, kirsty@positivewomen.org.au, with *Peer Support Worker Role Application* in the subject line.

Applications must be received by **5pm Wednesday June 8, 2022**. For further information, please contact Kirsty Machon on 0478 827 217 Monday to Thursday, or email kirsty@positivewomen.org.au

Employment is subject to you meeting our COVID vaccination (or valid exemption) requirements and successfully undertaking a Working with Children Check and Australian Police Record Check.

Applicants will also need to have the appropriate rights to work in Australia. For information on these requirements, please contact Kirsty.

ABOUT THE ROLE

The Positive Women Victoria (PWV) Peer Support Worker is responsible for providing support and information and acting as a listening peer to women who are living with HIV.

Reporting to the Executive Officer, the Peer Support Worker works as part of a small team to help empower and support women living with HIV to achieve their own unique emotional, social and practical goals.

About peer support

This role is for a woman who is living with HIV who is confident about drawing on her lived experience to support other women living with HIV.

Peer support is a method of delivering social support where people living with HIV provide emotional assistance, guidance, support and information to other people living with HIV (peers), particularly through sharing aspects of their own lived experience and peer knowledge. It aims to build connections, reduce isolation, increase confidence and self-esteem, and support people to access care and services.

It is not a counselling role or a social work role.

Organisational context

PWV is the only community-based organisation in Australia specifically funded to support and empower women living with HIV through the provision of peer support, information, referral services, practical support and advocacy. For over 30 years, PWV has responded to the unique and changing needs of women living with HIV, recognising the impact gender has on the way women experience HIV and addressing the specific needs and emerging issues that affect women living with HIV.

Working as a member of PWV's peer support team, the Peer Support Worker reports directly to the Executive Officer.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND KEY ASPECTS OF THE ROLE

- Provide one-on-one peer support, information, education, referral and advocacy via phone, online (email), and in face-to-face meetings with women living with HIV
- Attend peer-led events such as lunches, group meetings, social occasions or professional meetings as required by the organisation
- Collect and manage an individual record of each peer support service or contact provided, recording this information in the PWV member and client database, adhering at all to PWV's privacy and confidentiality obligations
- Triage new clients or members referred to PWV, and establish a plan of support to meet their needs
- Stay up-to-date with current HIV medical and other information to ensure that PWV members are always provided with relevant, accurate and evidence-based information, or know how to access the information they may need
- Undertake a training and induction program set out by PWV
- Practice good self-care and boundary management with clients
- Working with the Executive Officer, other Peer Support Workers, and the PWV Partnerships and Pathways Leader, ensure that where PWV is not the most appropriate organisation to meet a member or client's specific needs, that referrals are made to and/or information is provided about, other appropriate services
- Other duties may be requested sometimes by the Executive Officer

KEY QUALITIES FOR THIS ROLE

- Lived experience of HIV (a positive HIV diagnosis)
- An ability to communicate clearly and directly with women of diverse experience in culture, language, country of origin, and life experience with a non-judgmental approach
- A willingness to communicate using a variety of potential means to meet client and member needs, including telephone, email, SMS/text, and online communication platforms such as Zoom or FaceTime
- An understanding of your legal obligations regarding client privacy, and commitment protecting the confidentiality and privacy of clients and members at all times
- Ability to use a computer, and willingness to learn to use the PWV IT systems, including the member and client record database

- A willingness to separate personal experiences and views from the role of providing peer support to other women, and to accept other women's experiences and choices even where they may differ from your own
- A willingness to work with individual women (one-on-one support) or in group settings (at events, lunches, or group/social peer activities)
- An ability to work as part of a small team
- Good planning and organisational skills
- A flexible approach and willingness to learn

Note that while there is no requirement for the Peer Support Workers to be public speakers, media spokespeople, or to represent the organisation at public events, the Peer Support Worker should be willing to share their HIV status in limited specific settings, such as at group events among other women living with HIV.

Desirable skills

- Experience working with and on computers
- An understanding of how to communicate by methods including email, telephone calls, online (e.g. by Zoom and other remote applications)
- An understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of women living with HIV, and the beneficial role of HIV treatment
- An understanding of the challenges faced by women living with HIV, in particular, the impacts of stigma and social attitudes toward HIV
- General experience or knowledge of HIV services and the health system
- A strong sense of self-understanding and recognition of the importance of establishing clear boundaries

Qualifications or experience that might suit the role

- You've been a volunteer HIV peer support worker or completed training as a volunteer peer support worker
- You've had engagement with a peer support program or peer navigator program at PWV or another service
- You've worked in a job which requires strong communication skills, the ability to work in a team, and the ability to work well with a wide range of people
- You've had experience in a job such as teaching, social work, community work, health care or aged care, women's health, or similar

HOURS AND WORK ARRANGEMENTS

3 days (22.8 hours) per week

A laptop computer and mobile phone will be provided for the duration of your time employed with the organisation.

Flexible work arrangements, including working from home, are available, and may be required from time to time. PWV has an office in Southbank, and the Peer Support Worker would be expected to work at least some hours from the office.

The Position is remunerated under the Social and Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award (Level 3).

All staff meeting face-to-face with clients are required meet our COVID vaccination requirements or to have a valid exemption from vaccination.

REPORTS TO

The Peer Support Worker reports to the PWV Executive Officer.