



POSITION DESCRIPTION

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

POSITION NUMBER: 1164-5

Date reviewed/created: July 2024

POSITION TITLE: Nepean Blue Mountains Bicultural Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Project Officer (South Sudanese)

TEAM: Community Services – Communities in Cultural Transition (CiCT)

LOCATION: Blacktown

AGREEMENT: “NSW (Non-Declared) Affiliated Health Organisations’ Professional and Associated Staff Agreement 2022”.

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.

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.

Background to the Program Area of the Position

The Community Services Team covers a wide range of services for refugee individuals, families, and communities. The team is managed by the Community Services Coordinator, and it consists of 7 smaller teams (School Liaison, Youth, Community Development, Rural and Regional Community Development, My Language Team, CLSR and FICT) and the following positions: CD Evaluation Officers; Grants, Tenders and Fundraising Officer; CiCT Project Officers; Community Cultural Development Officer; LGBTIQ+ Project Officers; and CD Policy Officers. The Community Services Team is integral to the STARTTS systemic approach to the recovery of torture and trauma survivors.

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

1. Responsible to: Senior Communities in Cultural Transition (CiCT) Project Officer.
2. Responsible for: Nil

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Qualifications or significant experience in psychology, social work, health promotion, community development, counselling, or other relevant discipline.
2. Demonstrated experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating groups in a cross-cultural context.
3. Demonstrated understanding of the effects of torture and trauma on individuals, families, and communities and its impact on resettlement in Australian context.
4. Demonstrated understanding of the needs and issues faced by South Sudanese community settling in NSW with focus on Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD).
5. Demonstrated understanding of and capacity to connect with South Sudanese community leaders organisations, networks and structures.
6. Knowledge of appropriate mental health literacy interventions and suicide prevention frameworks and strategies.
7. Effective oral, written & interpersonal communication skills in English and one of the major South Sudanese community languages and proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office.
8. Ability to work independently and as part of a multidisciplinary team within a multicultural environment.

Desirable Requirements:

1. Knowledge of stakeholders in refugee/migrant/Mental Health sector in NBMLHD.
2. Experience in working with South Sudanese community development and/or group work setting.
3. Current NSW Driver's license.

*This position is considered child-related employment and will require a Working with Children Check and a National Police Check.

VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

****This role is a Category A role.** It is mandatory for **Category A** workers to meet and maintain the vaccination criteria (as per the current NSW Health and STARTTS policies).

Vaccination and/or assessment is required for **Category A** workers for the following transmissible diseases – measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, varicella (chickenpox), diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), influenza and tuberculosis.

COVID19 vaccination is strongly recommended, but not a requirement for employment.

If successful you must provide evidence of vaccination and/or assessment.

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

If you have a medical reason for why you cannot be vaccinated, a medical contraindication evidence will be required.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ROLE

This position will be working within STARTTS Community Services Team to work with support structures in the South Sudanese community to increase capacity of community leaders, peer educators and community support structures to identify and support people at risk of suicide or serious mental health illness and make appropriate referrals. The position will deliver psycho-education and lifestyle/wellbeing group interventions to enable South Sudanese community members better identify signs of distress in themselves and develop appropriate coping strategies, develop mutually supportive relationships, break social isolation, reduce stigma associated with seeking mental health assistance, increase knowledge and access to a variety of mental health services. The position is funded by Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network – Wentworth Healthcare.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES:

1. To increase mental health literacy and knowledge of mental health services amongst South Sudanese community members.
 2. To develop a pool of South Sudanese community leaders who are able to recognise signs of self-harm, identify suicide risk amongst South Sudanese community members and address those through accidental counselling and appropriate referrals to relevant mental health services.
 3. To develop accidental counselling skills amongst South Sudanese community leaders thus increasing their capacity to identify risk of self-harm, suicide and serious mental illness and follow up with appropriate referrals.
 4. To reduce social isolation amongst South Sudanese community members and increase protective factors against risk of suicide and self-harm. Research indicates that high levels of social capital and social connectedness act as significant protective factors.
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PRIMARY DUTIES:

1. Group Work

- 1.1. Work with relevant STARTTS staff to identify appropriate groupwork interventions for South Sudanese community members. Participate in planning, delivery and evaluation of 2 groups per quarter. The groups are intended to enhance South Sudanese community members' health, wellbeing and community connections.
- 1.2. Undertake relevant groupwork training.
- 1.3. Provide limited social support and casework to the group members.

2. Community Development, Community Education and Social Support

- 2.1. In collaboration with other STARTTS staff, organise 2 Accidental Counsellor Training sessions for South Sudanese community members and peer leaders per annum. Co-deliver the sessions if required.
- 2.2. In collaboration with other STARTTS staff, organise 2 Suicide Prevention Trainings for South Sudanese community members per annum.
- 2.3. Identify and implement other mental health promotion training sessions.
- 2.4. Support South Sudanese Wellbeing Ambassadors to implement their own projects enhancing mental health and wellbeing of South Sudanese community members.
- 2.5. Organise one South Sudanese Community Leadership Retreat per annum.
- 2.6. Support the work of South Sudanese mental health and suicide prevention working party that includes South Sudanese leaders/elders/volunteers, and relevant mental health services.
- 2.7. Assist STARTTS staff to develop psychoeducation materials for South Sudanese community as required.
- 2.8. Engage South Sudanese community Leaders and Elders to collaborate on initiatives supporting mental health of South Sudanese young people.

3. Training and Supervision

- 3.1. Undertake on-the-job training where relevant.
- 3.2. Participate in community development mentoring.
- 3.3. Participate in regular STARTTS staff development days.
- 3.4. Participate in group co-facilitation where appropriate.
- 3.5. Undertake comprehensive STARTTS induction program.

4. Reporting

- 4.1. Provide bi-monthly progress reports to the Team Leader.
- 4.2. Prepare other reports as required.
- 4.3. Participate in preparation of the funding body reports on a quarterly basis.

5. Personnel

- 5.1. Contribute to the STARTTS strategic planning process and report on relevant Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. Be an active participant in team meetings to maximise contribution to the work of the team.
- 5.4. Participate in STARTTS staff meetings and other relevant meetings.
- 5.5. Work to ensure professional and co-operative working relationships within own team and with other departments across STARTTS.
- 5.6. Participate in identifying quality improvement initiatives/strategies.
- 5.7. Attend and participate in all training opportunities identified for the role.
- 5.8. Liaise with and seek senior advice as required.

6. 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.

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.

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.

Induction and Orientation:

- Participate in an Induction and Orientation program with STARTTS.
- Obtain access to Trello and Organimi, which are tools STARTTS utilises for planning, coordination, and project management.
- Provide a clear, passport-style photograph for your profiles on each platform to maintain a visible and identifiable contact within the organisation.

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*.

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.

I have read the **Bicultural Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Project Officer (South Sudanese) #1164-5** 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: July 2026