



Sistering – A Woman’s Place

JOB POSTING

Position:	Mental Health Counsellor
Term:	Full Time (6 Months Contract)
Report to:	Manager – Clinical and Community Support Services
Hours:	37.5 hours per week including some evenings and weekends
Location:	962 Bloor St West
Posting Date:	July 24, 2020
Application Deadline:	July 31, 2020

Sistering is a multi-service agency which offers practical and emotional support to women and trans people facing a variety of challenging life circumstances, including poverty, homelessness, social isolation, mental health and trauma histories.

Our Vision

Sistering envisions a world where all women and trans people, in all our diversity, are valued; a world where we are safe and supported, treated with dignity, and given the respect we deserve. When opportunities are just and equitable, we can live life on our own terms.

Our Mission

Our goal is to create a safe, non-judgmental space for women and trans people who are socially isolated, poor, homeless or precariously housed. Guided by principles of Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism, Sistering works to change the social conditions that endanger women and trans people’s welfare.

What We Do

Sistering’s programs include a low-barrier 24/7 Drop In, Housing and Case Support, Harm Reduction, Peer Outreach, On the Path to Employment and Spun Studio social enterprise, and individual and systemic advocacy.

How We Do It

Sistering operates on a trauma-informed and relationship-based model and our harm reduction philosophy is a core element of all the work we do: we are here to respond to participants’ needs, where they are at, in the moment, to support participants to learn how to reduce harm and/or increase safety. And we recognize that their lives have meaning and value.

Position Summary

Sistering is seeing an increase of psychological concerns in participants during the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes those housed at our Pandemic Respite Shelter, those impacted by homelessness, as well as the precariously housed. The Psychological PPE Program will provide all Sistering participants with a check-in program to assess their mental health and provide support to those in need.

For those within the shelter, it will mean professional onsite access to mental health support. For our homeless (living rough) and housed participants, it will mean access to virtual and physically-distanced check-ins and support.

These regular check-ins, assessments, and potential extended psychological supports are essential to the mental health of our participants. Currently, participants outside of the Pandemic Respite Shelter are only able to access their case workers, if they have one, or programming staff during intermittent calls and during the delivery of food and other essential supplies. Not all staff members are professionally trained to identify and support mental health concerns.

The Psychological PPE Program will provide all Sistering participants with access to a dedicated Mental Health Counselor to address growing mental health concerns. These concerns include the psychological impacts of social isolation and distancing, the increase in psychotic episodes, and the need for consistent support for those facing multiple barriers to support.

Service Responsibilities:

Under the direction of the Program Manager - Clinical and Community Support Services and using the professional resources from within the Sistering team, the Mental Health Worker is responsible for:

- Coordinating the provision of services to clients including consultation, assessment, therapy and follow-up for all clients relevant to the service in accordance with the agency's mandate, policies and procedures.
- Implementing regular, appropriate documentation and written reports for all files in keeping with the standards and procedures of Sistering.
- Ensuring the development of comprehensive and appropriate treatment recommendations regarding mental health counselling are provided in the initial assessment.
- Monitoring and evaluating service delivery and mental health counselling progress of clients.
- Linking clients with health and psychiatric services.
- Advocate for clients in locating and utilizing community resources including legal, medical and financial assistance, housing, employment, transportation, and other referral services.
- From the point of admission providing on-going input and feedback of possible interventions with respect to quality and relevance, for assigned clients.
- Ensuring necessary collaboration with community resources and advocacy occurs with or on behalf of assigned clients.
- Participating constructively and appropriately in short- and long-term planning for the clients of the mental health program.

- Participating constructively in evaluating the mental health program and recommending necessary changes to the Program Manager – Clinical and Community Support Services as may be required.
- Ensuring that DI; Harm Reduction and / or case support staff are present during interventions to support cross learning within the agency and to provide agency staff with the skills necessary to continue the work

Organizational Responsibilities:

- Reflecting and interpreting the Agency Vision, Mission and Core Values in their/her own work with enthusiasm and commitment
- Acting in accordance with relevant legislation and Agency Policies, Standards and Procedures
- Proposing changes within Sistering that would improve the quality of service to participants
- Developing and maintaining respectful, cooperative working relationships to contribute to the integrated, seamless delivery of services to Sistering participants
- Understanding their/her role and responsibility in maintaining a safe workplace
- Ensuring accuracy, confidentiality and safekeeping of agency records
- Participating constructively in the supervision process with the

Qualifications:

- Masters Level Counselling or Social Work Degree including Registration/License with the appropriate body
- Knowledge of working with homeless; women; trans and gender diverse groups of individuals
- Proven ability to coach and train staff alongside providing supports to participants – develop best practices so that staff can continue to provide service beyond the contract
- Anti-Oppressive/Anti-Racist – Trauma informed lens
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, empathic and ability to develop a strong collaborative team and build effective relationships with team members, other Sistering staff, community partners and participants
- Demonstrated ability to build effective partnerships both internally and externally
- Demonstrated commitment to and understanding of principles of harm reduction and the provision of low barrier services
- Thorough understanding of and experience working in programs serving women with complex intersecting needs including homelessness, mental health issues, addictions and histories of trauma
- Strong understanding of and demonstrated commitment to harm reduction, client-centered, trauma-informed, low barrier service provision and anti-oppressive practices
- Thorough knowledge of and experience with community-based resources and services including: housing, legal, income support, health, mental health and criminal justice
- An understanding of systems that cause and support homelessness, poverty and marginalization and willingness to advocate for change.
- An understanding of the practical application of low barrier services and the intersection with harm reduction, trauma informed and anti-oppressive practice

- Thorough knowledge of legislation relevant to operating Sistering programs, including Ontario Works and ODSP, Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Employment Standards Act, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Mental Health Act
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite; effective report and proposal writing skills
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills; additional languages besides English an asset

Working Conditions:

The Mental Health Counsellor works in the office, and Drop-In. There may be the risk of exposure to potentially unpredictable behaviours and situations. The 24/7 Drop-In is a pet friendly facility and employees will be expected to be in the proximity of animals.

Compensation: Competitive salary based on experience and excellent benefits package

Sistering is an Equal Opportunity Employer; we welcome and encourage applications from racialized persons/visible minorities, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and persons of minority sexual orientations and gender identities.

Persons with disabilities who anticipate needing accommodations for any part of the application process may contact, in confidence, to jblair@sistering.org

Apply by email. Subject: "Mental Health Counsellor"

Email to: jblair@sistering.org