

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Pastoral Practitioner

ABOUT UNITING

Our purpose	To inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice.
Our values	As an organisation we are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold.
Our foundation	Christ invites us to serve humanity by creating an inclusive, connected and just world.

At Uniting, we take real steps to make the world a better place. Our services are in the areas of aged care, disability, child and family, community services, chaplaincy and pastoral practice. We actively engage with social justice issues and advocate for the people we serve. At Uniting we celebrate diversity and welcome all people regardless of lifestyle choices, ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Uniting is one of the largest community service providers in NSW and the ACT, with a rich history of providing services to the community for more than 100 years. We have more than 550 services, as far north as Tweed Heads, as far west as Broken Hill, and as far south as Eden.

Our focus, as the community services arm of the Uniting Church in Australia, is always on the people we serve, no matter their stage or challenge in life. Our range of supports and services are designed in collaboration with, and around the needs and hopes of people in everyday community life.

The Uniting Church believes in love in action; motivated by the love of God expressed through the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This love is unconditional, all-encompassing and given freely to all people and was expressed in a concrete way by Jesus. We believe that the Bible not only teaches us about God's love in action but also gives us direction as to how we should express God's love through our own words and actions.

We believe that we exist as a church because we are called to be together in mission, God's mission, which is to bring love, compassion, justice, freedom and hope to all of God's creation.

THE ROLE

Position	Pastoral Practitioner
Directorate	Mission
Classification	Non-Enterprise Agreement
Reports to	Hub Chaplain
Requirement	Working with Children Check and NDIS Worker check
Mandatory reporter	Yes

The role sits within the Mission Directorate and contributes to the delivery of high-quality chaplaincy and spiritual care across Uniting services.

The Pastoral Practitioner provides person-centred support to residents, families, carers,

staff and volunteers. Pastoral care is guided by Uniting's values and is culturally responsive, age-appropriate, trauma-aware and respectful of each person's beliefs, values, identity, circumstances and expressed needs. The role supports the emotional, spiritual and religious wellbeing of people, particularly during times of transition, illness, grief, loss, isolation, uncertainty, distress and end-of-life care.

Spiritual care is offered to people of all faiths, spiritualities and worldviews.

ROLE OBJECTIVES

As a member of the Mission team, Pastoral Practitioner will contribute to:

- a stronger and more unified Uniting
- towards the priorities and outcomes of the Mission Directorate within specific area of accountability
- actively participating in communication that supports a shared understanding of Uniting's way of operating
- productively and collaboratively working as a positive role model, both within the team and across Uniting

Pastoral Practitioner will:

- contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice team
- builds and sustains effective, nurturing relationships with the people
- maintain ongoing professional, personal and spiritual development
- maintain accurate and appropriate documentation and reporting
- provide spiritual care to all people as appropriate, and religious care within the Christian faith tradition in a manner that is ecumenical and inclusive

Key Relationships: Internal

The Pastoral Practitioner will work closely with:

- Hub Chaplain
- Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice Leads
- The Head of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice
- The Director of Mission
- Mission Directorate
- Care staff, clinical, lifestyle, and support teams.
- Members of local Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice teams

Key Relationships: External

The Pastoral Practitioner will engage with:

- Residents and their families
- Carers and significant others
- Local congregations
- Ministers, faith leaders and representatives of religious communities
- Approved volunteers and community organisations
- Professional supervision, education and formation providers

External engagement must be undertaken in a manner that protects confidentiality, maintains appropriate boundaries and strengthens Uniting's reputation and relationships.

ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

Pastoral and Spiritual Care

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Provide compassionate, respectful and person-centred spiritual care to residents, clients, families, carers, staff and volunteers.
- Build safe and trusting relationships through attentive presence, active listening, empathy and appropriate spiritual care.
- Support people experiencing grief, illness, loss, loneliness, trauma, transition, spiritual distress and end-of-life concerns.
- Provide inclusive spiritual and religious support, including prayer, reflection, ritual, worship and connection with faith communities.
- Respect each person's culture, beliefs, identity, preferences and right to accept, decline or discontinue pastoral care without imposing personal beliefs.
- Maintain confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries and compliance with legislation, Uniting policies and professional standards.
- Recognise the limits of the pastoral role, collaborate with relevant professionals and make appropriate referrals when needs extend beyond the practitioner's competence or authority.
- Support families, staff and volunteers during illness, deterioration, bereavement and significant life transitions.
- Contribute to memorial services, religious services and other pastoral gatherings where appropriate and authorised.

Person-Centred Care and Collaboration

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Collaborate with residents, clients, families, carers, staff and volunteers to identify and respond to pastoral and spiritual care needs.
- Provide care that reflects each person's goals, values, culture, language, preferences and life story.
- Contribute to interdisciplinary care planning, case discussions and care reviews, while maintaining privacy and confidentiality.
- Promote holistic care that recognise the physical, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual dimensions of wellbeing.
- Identify and respond appropriately to social isolation, spiritual distress and unmet spiritual care needs.
- Ensure external engagement is authorised, coordinated and consistent with Uniting policies.
- Represent Uniting through professional communication, conduct and collaboration.

Documentation and Reporting

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Maintain accurate, timely, and confidential pastoral care records in iCare, approved Uniting

systems.

- Document assessments, identified needs, interventions, referrals, follow-up actions and outcomes within required timeframes.
- Ensure all records and sensitive information comply with privacy, confidentiality, and recordkeeping requirements.
- Maintain accurate activity data as required.

Operational Responsibilities

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Contribute to the effective operation of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice services and maintain an accessible pastoral presence.
- Plan, prioritise and manage spiritual care activities in consultation with relevant managers or chaplaincy leaders.
- Implement and comply with Uniting policies, procedures, systems, technology platforms and continuous improvement requirements.
- Identify, document and escalate safeguarding, safety, pastoral care and operational risks promptly.
- Refer urgent care or safety concerns immediately to the Service Manager, registered nurse, or care leader.
- Use organisational resources responsibly and undertake higher duties following appropriate consultation.

Professional Supervision and Reflective Practice

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Participate regularly in approved professional supervision, whether individually or in a group setting.
- Reflect on pastoral encounters, professional boundaries, ethical issues, cultural considerations and spiritual care interventions.
- Use supervision to strengthen professional accountability, self-awareness and quality of care.
- Seek timely support when experiencing circumstances that may affect professional judgement, wellbeing or capacity to provide safe care.

Professional Development

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Participate in relevant education, training and professional development activities.
- Undertake Clinical Pastoral Education or equivalent recognised training where required.
- Establish and review professional development goals through Uniting's Continuous Conversations process.
- Engage with relevant professional standards, codes of ethics and evidence-informed practice.
- Share knowledge and contribute constructively to the learning and development of the Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice team.

Teamwork, Culture and Organisational Contribution

The Pastoral Practitioner will:

- Act as a constructive and accountable member of the Mission Directorate.

- Participate actively in team meetings, staff forums, professional development and organisational activities.
- Contribute to a culture of openness, respect, collaboration, feedback and continuous improvement.
- Build and maintain effective working relationships within Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice and across Uniting service streams.
- Contribute to a cohesive, supportive and productive team environment.
- Communicate respectfully, clearly and professionally with colleagues and stakeholders.
- Model Uniting's Code of Conduct and standards of ethical behaviour.
- Represent Uniting positively in all internal and external interactions.
- Demonstrate conduct consistent with the Uniting values of being bold, respectful, imaginative and compassionate.
- Celebrate diversity, prioritise collaboration and contribute to social justice and inclusion.
- Demonstrate an informed understanding of the ethos, values and mission of the Uniting Church in Australia.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance will be assessed against the responsibilities of the role, including the following indicators.

Pastoral and Spiritual Care

- Provides compassionate, person-centred and culturally responsive pastoral and spiritual care aligned with each person's needs, beliefs and preferences.
- Undertakes appropriate assessments (HO3s), interventions, referrals and follow-up within the practitioner's scope of practice.
- Maintains dignity, confidentiality, professional boundaries and ethical standards.
- Feedback from residents, clients, families and staff reflects respectful and supportive care.

Documentation and Operational Processes

- Maintains accurate, objective and timely pastoral care records in approved systems.
- Submits activity data, reports and required information accurately and within expected timeframes.
- Consistently follows Uniting policies, procedures, quality systems and operational requirements.
- Identifies and promptly escalates risks, incidents and safeguarding concerns.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Builds effective relationships with residents, clients, families, staff, volunteers and community stakeholders.
- Communicates clearly, respectfully and promptly.
- Contributes to the integration of pastoral care within the broader service team.
- External relationships support quality service delivery and enhance Uniting's reputation.

Team and Organisational Contribution

- Contributes constructively to the Chaplaincy and Pastoral Practice team and collaborates effectively across Uniting.
- Demonstrates professional behaviour consistent with Uniting's values and Code of Conduct.
- Participates actively in meetings, supervision, professional development and Continuous Conversations.
- Supports a positive, inclusive, safe and productive workplace culture.

Professional Development and Supervision

- Participates in regular professional supervision and reflective practice.
- Establishes, reviews and progresses professional development goals.
- Completes required training and compliance activities within specified timeframes.
- Demonstrates ongoing growth in capability, self-awareness and professional accountability.

QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL FORMATION

Essential Qualifications and Formation

The successful applicant will have:

- Relevant pastoral, theological, ministry, spiritual care or related study.
- One or more units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or demonstrated equivalent pastoral formation and relevant life or work experience.
- A willingness to undertake further Clinical Pastoral Education or equivalent recognised formation as part of ongoing professional development.
- Current Working with Children Check clearance where required.
- Satisfactory completion of all required employment, probity and safeguarding checks.

Desirable Qualifications

It would be advantageous to hold:

- A qualification in theology, ministry, pastoral care, spiritual care, counselling, social science, health, aged care or another relevant discipline.
- Membership or credentialing with a recognised professional spiritual care or chaplaincy association.
- Training in areas such as grief and loss, dementia care, mental health, trauma-informed practice, cultural safety, palliative care or professional supervision.

EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

The successful applicant will demonstrate:

- Experience providing pastoral, spiritual, religious, emotional or relational support to people experiencing vulnerability, illness, grief, loss or significant life transition.
- An understanding of the pastoral and spiritual needs of people receiving services across aged care, disability, community services, child and family services or related care environments.
- Empathy, compassion and an ability to engage respectfully with vulnerable people.
- An understanding of the distinctions and relationships between spirituality, religion, pastoral care, counselling and clinical practice.
- Respect for people who identify with other religious traditions, spiritualities or no religious belief.

- Experience working constructively within multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary teams.
- Awareness of privacy, confidentiality, professional boundaries, safeguarding and duty-of-care obligations.
- Effective written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills.
- Competence in using computers, electronic client management systems, email and standard workplace technology.
- A commitment to social justice, inclusion and improving outcomes for people experiencing disadvantage or vulnerability.

MANDATORY REPORTING AND SAFEGUARDING

This role is designated as a mandatory reporter role. Mandatory reporters are employees who provide services directly to children and young people. All Uniting employees, regardless of role, are required to comply with the Protecting Children and Young People Policy and all related safeguarding procedures.

The Pastoral Practitioner must:

- Understand and comply with mandatory reporting obligations.
- Complete all required safeguarding and child protection training.
- Report concerns relating to abuse, neglect, exploitation, grooming, violence or risk of harm in accordance with legislation and Uniting policy.
- Escalate immediate safety concerns without delay.
- Maintain accurate and confidential records of safeguarding concerns and actions taken.
- Cooperate with authorised investigations and safeguarding processes.

FLEXIBILITY OF DUTIES

Following appropriate consultation, the employee may be required to:

- Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the nature and classification of the position.
- Work at another Uniting service location.
- Transfer to an equivalent position.
- Undertake higher duties for an agreed period.
- Adapt responsibilities in response to changes in legislation, service delivery, organisational priorities or operational requirements.

Any changes will be managed in accordance with applicable legislation, Uniting policy and employment arrangements.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Personal integrity and a values base aligned with Uniting's own
- Excellent communication skills and a strong service orientation
- Ability to engage effectively with clients while maintaining sound professional boundaries
- Commitment to regular reflective practice
- Confidence and capability without a need to prove oneself
- Strong organisational skills, able to manage competing tasks and deliver against objectives

- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- A collaborative, team-oriented approach
- A high level of energy and enthusiasm
- The ability to draw on experience without relying on it to make a point
- A genuine and demonstrated commitment to the organisation

POSITION ACCEPTANCE

I acknowledge that I have read and understood this position description and the responsibilities, capabilities and accountabilities associated with the role.

I understand that the position description may be reviewed and amended following appropriate consultation to reflect changes in organisational requirements, legislation, service delivery or professional practice.

Mandatory Reporters are employees who deliver services directly to children and young people, or who supervise employees delivering such services. All employees, however, share responsibility for applying Uniting's Protecting Children and Young People Policy.

Employee	Manager
Name:	Name and title:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Responsibilities Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011

While at work, all workers must:

- Take reasonable care for own health and safety.
- Takes reasonable care to ensure that their actions or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Complies, so far as reasonably practicable, with all reasonable instructions issued by Uniting to support compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Cooperates with all reasonable Uniting workplace health and safety policies and procedures that have been communicated to employees.

ACTIONS DEMONSTRATING ACCOUNTABILITY

All workers are required to:

- Complies with Uniting's work health, safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, instructions and training requirements.
- Takes responsibility for working safely and seeks appropriate guidance, training or supervision before undertaking unfamiliar tasks.
- Uses required equipment, clothing and personal protective equipment and follows infection prevention and control requirements.
- Promptly reports hazards, incidents, injuries and near misses and participates in workplace safety consultation.
- Cooperates with reasonable measures taken by Uniting to maintain a safe workplace and avoids actions or omissions that may place others at risk.