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VICTORIA RESOURCES SOCIETY

Part-time Harm Reduction Support Worker

Peers Victoria is a peer based, grass roots organization for people in sex work or trade that has been in operation since 1995. Through direct service delivery and partnerships, Peers provides an array of outreach and drop in support services, advocacy and public education. We maintain an accessible service environment that promotes empowerment of current and former sex workers.

Reporting to the Executive Director and in partnership with a co-worker the **Harm Reduction and Health Support Worker** delivers harm reduction and health education support to populations who experience barriers accessing these services in traditional office-based environments. This program is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and guided by the following objectives: 1: Strengthen the knowledge of risk factors associated with HIV and hepatitis C among people in the sex industry who share drug-use equipment; and 2.) Strengthen the skills, competencies, and abilities of people in/from the sex industry who use substances and share drug-use equipment to prevent HIV and Hepatitis C infections. The program includes one to one work and group education with people in the sex industry of diverse genders and sexualities.

The health support worker will work a combination of daytime shifts (Tues, Wed, Thurs approx. 11-4/4:30 and one (optional) evening (night outreach Mondays approx. 7-11) and, equaling 16 (without Night Outreach) or 20 hours a week (with Night Outreach). The details of the schedule will be determined upon hiring based on incumbent availability and program needs.

Specific duties for this position include:

Day Shifts:

1. Connect with clients (in/from sex industry) in the community affected by communicable disease/at elevated risk of contracting STI's/BBD to assess and support opportunities and barriers to health care;
2. Provide harm reduction supplies, naloxone training and kits, as well as testing and treatment options to clients;
3. Partner with street and HIV/HCV nurses to conduct outreach activities at mutually agreeable times;
4. Collaborate with members of the Peers service team and executive director regarding caseload and triage;
5. Assist members of target service population to access health care supports, with a focus on mental health and substance use. Assistance includes, but is not limited to, helping to arrange appointments, providing bus tickets, and accompaniment as appropriate;
6. Liaise closely with service staff in related health care organizations such as Island Health, Cool Aid Clinic, HepCBC, AIDS Vancouver Island, Vancouver Island PLWAS to ensure up to date knowledge of local service continuum, optimal client referral processes, and co-delivery of supports;
7. Organize monthly group health information and testing education including booking guests speakers, ordering food and managing honorariums and advertising;
8. Participate in relevant health education and research in the community in which Peers Victoria is a partner or leader and share knowledge regarding disease prevention and treatment within Peers service environment;



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9. Maintenance of all documentation necessary to report on the outputs, outcomes and effectiveness of this work (this includes but is not limited to such things as case notes, number of persons served (one to one and at group sessions), number of HIV and HCV testing and treatment completions, harm reduction and naloxone supplies distributed as well as financial transactions).

Night Shifts:

*all duties required of night outreach staff, including:

- Deliver client-centred support services including harm reduction and safer sex supplies, health and social service information and referrals, and food, through the RV;
- Identify potential new participants for daytime health supports;
- Connect with downtown service agencies frequented by sex workers (Sandy Merriman, AIDS Vancouver Island, etc.) when working with Night Outreach;
- Collaborate with the VicPD Special Victims Unit and other service agencies to compile and distribute information regarding violent incidents and offenders as it pertains to the safety of local sex workers;
- Document basic statistics regarding Night Outreach service delivery;
- Participate in food preparation as needed;
- Maintain the general cleanliness and organization of the outreach office, kitchen areas, and outreach RV.

Skills/Qualities:

- Knowledgeable about current evidence regarding HIV and HCV transmission, prevention and treatment. Ability to apply this knowledge as it applies to diverse population of persons in/from the sex industry and intersections of race, gender and sexuality, violence, housing, and other relevant factors;
- Knowledge of a variety of local health services including hospital and community-based services for a range of health needs including, but not limited to, mental health, substance use, and communicable disease;
- Understanding of trauma and disability informed care;
- Approachable, tolerant, non-judgmental, empathic, and calm in conflict or crisis;
- Thorough knowledge of safer sex and substance use harm reduction models;
- Knowledge of local social services including housing, income and food security supports;
- Strong interpersonal skills and collaborative, team oriented, ethical service approach;
- Excellent organizational and time-management skills;
- Commitment to applying social justice principles to health and social care;
- Combination of personal experience in the sex industry and/or experience of having a communicable disease such as HIV/HCV and relevant education/work experience;
- Knowledge of diversity of local sex industry and ability to connect with target population;
- A degree in health or social service provision or equivalent experience in service delivery (4+ years) is required.

Job details:

- 16 or 20 hours per week between the hours of 11 to 4/430pm pm Tues, Wed & Thurs and one optional night outreach shift on Monday nights from 7 to 11 pm.



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- Pay rate \$25/hour for daytime health and harm reduction support work (16 hours) and \$23/hr for optional night outreach shift (*these programs have different responsibilities/duties and funding sources).
- Requires a valid BC driver license and use of personal vehicle;
- Must have Basic First Aid, Food Safe, and CPR;
- Vulnerable Sector Criminal Record Check required;
- Position is funded from through March 2021 with the possibility of renewal.

If you are interested in this employment opportunity, please submit a resume and a covering letter that summarizes your relevant experience and skills by August 30, 2019 to peershiring@gmail.com.

Applications from individuals with direct experience in any aspect of the sex industry are especially welcome. We also encourage applications from, but not limited to, indigenous people, people of colour, people with disability(ies), and people representing diverse genders and sexualities.