



Peer Support Worker Job Description

About DEWC

The Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DEWC) exists to support and empower women and children, living in extreme poverty in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, who are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation, injustice and injury. Through low barrier Drop-In Centers and Emergency Shelters, DEWC provides basic need services, programs, and specialized supports to over 700 women and children daily to help them survive the conditions that surround them.

Job Summary

The Peer Support is responsible to promote principles of peer support and self help when supporting women to secure practical needs and manage crisis in the Drop-in Centre and/or Shelter with the goal of identifying and addressing barriers to self advocacy.

Reporting directly to the Program Manager, the Peer Support Worker will work in collaboration with other DEWC staff to promote integrated services to women. She will work from a feminist perspective and within an anti-oppression framework.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

- Support women's access to the Drop In and/or Shelter providing practical and basic needs such as showers, toiletries, and meals
- Enhance the Peer Support program to ensure women are supported in developing peer networks and peer support opportunities including by modeling peer support and self help behaviors
- Responds to crises situations and critical incidents ensuring adherence to DEWC policies, procedures, and practices
- Provide de-escalation and facilitate conflict resolution between members
- Provides crises and emotional support to women through active listening and debriefing
- Assesses women's need for other services and refers them to appropriate internal and external services and programs
- Ensure effective communication and team approach in the smooth operation of the DEWC
- Collaborate with the Skills Development Worker to support DEWC volunteers and peers
- Ensure a clean and comfortable environment, communicating maintenance and repair needs
- Assist programming staff with workshops, groups, programs, and annual events
- Performs administrative duties such as report-writing, completing incident and communication logs
- Other related duties not specified that may be assigned from time to time

Required Qualifications:

- Two years related experience, preferably working with marginalized women in a drop in or shelter environment
- Ability to work from a strong feminist analysis and within an anti-oppression framework
- Must have a strong working knowledge and analysis of the issues impacting women in the downtown eastside, including gender based violence, mental health, homelessness, and addictions with an understanding of trauma-informed care responses
- Strong conflict resolution skills and practice
- Demonstrated crises intervention training and experience
- Peer Support theory training and/or experience
- Experience providing assisted referral as well as familiarity with support services, agencies and community resources in the Downtown Eastside
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to work in a respectful and cooperative manner with co-workers, volunteers, and center members
- Ability to work within a chaotic environment and with a diverse community of women
- A First Aid certificate and NVCI is required
- Candidate must undergo a criminal record check
- Women with addiction issues need to be at least 2 years clean and sober

Reports to: Program Manager

Organizational Status

The Downtown Eastside Women's Centre operates on the unceded & ancestral Musqueam, Squamish & Tsleil-Waututh Territories (*xʷməθkʷəy̓əm*, *Sḵwxwú7mesh*, and *səlílwətaʔ*), to provide a safe, non-judgmental environment for women from all walks of life, who live and/or work in the Downtown Eastside. To achieve this goal, the Centre provides supportive surroundings with meals, counseling, advocacy and programs which nurture and empower members. The Downtown Eastside (DTES) as a neighborhood is well-known within Vancouver and even across Canada for its disproportionate levels of poverty and extreme marginalization. Home to populations made vulnerable including those who are homeless, mentally ill, and/or with addictions, it is also a place known for its creativity, community activism, and tenacity in the face of tremendous stigma.

DEWC staff are called to enhance connections and collaboration and promote an atmosphere of safety in all aspects of their work. DEWC acknowledges that our work environment is directly impacted by all forms of oppression and the impact of colonialism where staff will be witness to women's trauma and the consequences of injustice.