



## **REGIONAL ESSENTIAL ACCESS TO CONNECTED HEALTHCARE NIAGARA INC**

### **Social Worker – Safer Opioid Supply (SOS) Program**

**1.0 FTE (37.5 hours/week) Contract Position**

REACH Niagara operates primary care clinics staffed by healthcare professionals serving people who do not have a family doctor and are homeless or marginalized in Niagara. REACH serves 11 locations across Niagara Region and, as an organization, represents a collaboration between primary care, critical stakeholders across the health and social care sectors, people with lived experience, and several academic institutions, including McMaster University, Brock University, University of Waterloo & Niagara College.

**General Responsibilities:** We seek a Social Worker to work in our Safer Opioid Supply (SOS) program. This program has been funded to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, with a possible extension. The Safer Opioid Supply (SOS) program provides clients using street-based drug supply who are at high risk of overdose in the community and medical complications due to drug use. A regulated supply of prescription opioids to reduce overdose and overdose deaths. The Social Worker will work within a harm reduction framework to assess SOS clients and work with the broader SOS team to provide wrap-around support for each client.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

**The SOS Social Worker is a senior-level harm reduction role responsible for ongoing focused psycho-social client work for individuals enrolled with SOS. SW is expected to collaborate with other SOS colleagues, including program management, to ensure that the SW provides high-quality service delivery and makes corresponding service adjustments to meet the project deliverables. SWs are expected to lead the psycho-social client planning and work closely with the SOS team to identify tasks for the appropriate wraparound role.**

### **ACCOUNTABILITIES:**

**Reporting to the REACH Executive Director and Medical Director**

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **Program and Service Delivery:**

- 1. Provides client-centred case management and coordination of services to overcome barriers to services and to promote an equitable treatment for people who use drugs**
- 2. Provides information and referral regarding community resources**
- 3. Identify which system areas SOS clients require support (CAS, PGT, OW/ODSP, criminal justice system, taxes, immigration, legal, housing, transportation, food security) and develop an action plan to address the social determinants of health that are impacting client health and wellbeing.**
- 4. Support the SOS team in developing client engagement initiatives**
- 5. Leads case conferencing for SOS clients and follows up with other team members of the community and health system and outside agencies and institutions.**
- 6. Completes necessary follow-ups**
- 7. Leads the completion of referrals both internally and externally for required services or resources**
- 8. Develop in-house service capacities for SOS clients (tax clinics, ID clinics etc)**
- 9. Develops and maintains critical community partnerships and maintains accountabilities with community stakeholders**
- 10. Work with SOS clients to develop individualized plans, including strategies to work towards greater independence and collaborate with health providers to support the project's goals.**
- 11. Provides case advocacy to ensure that the client receives the community supports and health and social services to which s/he is entitled.**
- 12. Develop collateral contacts with other agencies and institutions in which the client is involved to facilitate comprehensive case planning.**
- 13. Support increased bio-psycho-social engagement strategies for SOS clients**
- 14. Complete administrative tasks promptly**
- 15. Demonstrate ongoing proficiency in using REACH's EMR**
- 16. Provide drop-in case management for clients requiring assistance.**
- 17. Exercise excellent judgement and creative problem solving to reduce SOS client barriers to care**
- 18. Participate in evaluation activities as set out by the SOS program mandates**

### **Qualifications:**

- 1. Undergraduate or graduate degree in the relevant discipline from a recognized university.**
- 2. A member in good standing with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers**

3. Ideally, 3-5 years of Social Worker experience working with individuals and groups who have concurrent mental health and substance use issues, including people who inject illicit drugs and who have faced or are at risk of homelessness and criminal justice involvement.
4. Ideally, 3-5 years working with people who use drugs, racialized populations, Indigenous peoples, people who engage in sex work, prisoners/ex-prisoners, people with mental health challenges, and people who have experienced trauma.
5. Proficiency in completing assessments, organizing and leading case conferences and supporting intake and discharge processes for SOS clients
6. Experience with mentorship and supervision of peer teams and delivering training
7. Extensive knowledge of referral pathways for internal and external resources
8. Extensive advocacy, crisis intervention and prevention, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills
9. Extensive knowledge of various systems attached to SOS clients (CAS, PGT, OW/ODSP, criminal justice system, taxes, immigration, legal, housing, transportation, food security) and capacity to navigate those systems with ease and professionalism.
10. Proficiency in current assessment, psychosocial and brief counselling techniques that are trauma-informed and strength-resiliency-based.
11. You have demonstrated the ability to work with multi-disciplinary teams.
12. Excellent written and oral communication skills.
13. Proficiency in the use of computers and various software applications.

Also responsible for working in a manner that:

1. Preserves confidentiality and seeks to minimize risk
2. Operates with professionalism, integrity and sound judgement
3. Incorporates counselling and support, harm reduction and health promotion strategies and recognizes the determinants of health
4. Collaborates with one's service team and other teams across the organization and organizational partners to identify and provide support and education to target groups
5. Respects and values equity, inclusiveness and diversity of communities and individuals
6. Contributes to REACH's activities to collect, analyze and report on data, and participates in research and knowledge/exchange/transfer activities as applicable
7. Supports student and volunteer placement within REACH as required
8. Maintains competence and, where applicable, a professional license to practice with insurance
9. Follows REACH's policies and procedures
10. Employ principles and objectives of harm reduction, social justice, and community development.
11. Communicates clearly, listens accurately, is open to feedback, handles conflict appropriately, and displays sensitivity to others.

**To Apply:**

Forward resumes electronically to the attention of David van Velzen, REACH Executive Director, to [Davidv@reachniagara.com](mailto:Davidv@reachniagara.com). Resumes will be accepted until June 24, 2022

REACH Niagara, thanks all who apply for this position; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.