

PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A FUNDED POSITION OF A QUALIFIED AND EXPERIENCED SOCIAL WORKER TO CO-ORDINATE WELFARE AT GWUC.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

- **Initial guidelines for the GWUC Welfare Committee, established in 2003. This recommends that the Convener of this Committee 'should have professional qualifications in the health/welfare field.'**
- **Revised guidelines and duties, 2014**
- **Australian Association of Social Workers documents-
"What is Social Work?"
"What can a Social Worker help me with?"**

HISTORY: As a practising Social Worker I became a member of the GWUC Welfare Committee about 2005 and have been its Co-Coordinator since 2008. I have since retired from paid work.

It has not been possible to locate an alternate trained Social Worker to work voluntarily to replace me in this role.

While I continue to be happy in the role, am competently supported by other Committee members, and can certainly continue to work with the Welfare Committee at this stage, I am more than aware that a change in leadership is normally beneficial and also that I am not getting any younger!

ROLE/DUTIES OF THE PROPOSED SOCIAL WORKER; (Please see enclosed.)

It must be noted that due to time constraints, the Welfare Committee primarily operates re-actively i.e. responding to various needs and requests,

With more time, there are many more pro-active Welfare related tasks that an alternate professional (ideally Christian) could offer, eg counselling and Psych-social group work aimed at assisting members to be more independent . One example is "Budgeting."

Another example which would come under "community work" is the training of future Welfare volunteers in our Church and surrounding agencies. Committee members meet regularly with other Welfare providers in the region, and a local training Course for interested future Welfare providers at local Welfare agencies is urgently required. This could be a collaborative project with similar agencies wishing to train their new volunteers regarding local resources, values, counselling etc.

It is my hope, that in the future, the GWUC Welfare Committee will continue to attract members who have human services experience including counselling , and a knowledge of the many community resources to which we refer our Welfare recipients, or to consider some appropriate training.

A wide range of people present at GWUC requesting assistance.

In our face to face contact we need continue to:

- *privately acknowledge that in serving our Welfare recipients, we are serving God.**
- *be empathic and reflective**
- * have strong assessment and counselling skills;**
- * empower rather than create dependency;**
- * be able to be objective and non-judgmental.**
- * maintain confidentiality**
- * respect the various cultures of our Welfare recipients and respond to the importance, (or not), of their many religious and other beliefs ,thus providing a "culturally competent" service to people of all races and faiths,(or none).**

Dorothy Lockhart.

**Dorothy Lockhart
GWUC Welfare Co-coordinator**

GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING CHURCH
GUIDELINES FOR THE WELFARE COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION:

This committee was established on 14 October 2003 and its guidelines updated on 26 October 2006.

PURPOSE:

This group operates within the framework of the Glen Waverley Uniting Church to support people who are members or attend regularly, whose long term needs cannot be met within existing committee frameworks. Support will include "personal support, welcoming and encouraging, and integrating within the congregation (e.g. FISH groups, Youth groups).

Support will be available for refugees to become assimilated in the Australian community and learn to manage independently. After approximately two years support will taper off to responding to occasional emergencies and maintaining supportive friendship and moral support.

The Convenor of the committee should have professional qualifications in the health/welfare field. It was agreed that initially Mary Ward would fulfill this role, with the title of Welfare Convenor.

She/he will be a person:

- in whom is invested authority to call together a support group of people who will possess skills and qualities which could be utilised in each particular situation.

Who will

- operate in consultation with the Ministers.
- activate whatever resources are required, both within the congregation and with other agencies.
- keep a log of all interventions, and each person should report to her so that their actions can be recorded.
- in many cases act as a broker, referring people to appropriate community resources, or if need be act on their behalf in resourcing other agencies.
- establish a resource file including documents which already exist within other committees, as well as a listing of community agencies and names of individual workers where appropriate.

The functions of the group will be under the auspices of the Pastoral Committee. Reporting will be in brief dot form, because of the extremely confidential nature of issues.

All activities of the Convenor and the group will be led by the Spirit through prayerful consideration of each issue.

GWUC WELFARE COMMITTEE

The provision of assistance and the of recording of same

In providing and recording assistance through the GWUC Welfare Committee, the following processes are recommended.

- **Requests** are generally made through the Church Office or by a Congregational member to the Welfare Committee. A Welfare Committee member will respond as soon as possible. Recipients may have to wait for an appointment.
- **Appointment** to be made to meet with the care recipient, ensuring security and confidentiality.
- **Welfare Committee resources** – cards, receipts, financial records, vouchers etc. to be accessed from the Welfare resources in the locked filing cabinet in the Church office.
- **Assessment** of the psycho-social situation will be undertaken with specific needs identified. This may include other Agencies already involved.
- **Intervention** to be considered may include spiritual, medical, legal, social, accommodation, financial etc.
- **Referrals** outside the experience of the Welfare Committee member are to be made as appropriate, consulting with the MoW as required.
- **Individual hunger** needs can be responded to immediately with the provision of a Muddings voucher and directions given to Muddings in Kingsway.
- **Shopping vouchers** (Safeway and Coles).
Questions to be considered:- Has the person presented previously? Check the cards.
 - Is this request for an individual or a family?
 - Because of limited resources, GWUC can only provide a grant once in any one year and these are limited to up to \$60 for individuals and \$100 for families. A second grant may be considered in extreme circumstances and will generally be less than the first .
 - Recipients are to be informed of the limits of our assistance
 - Direct money donations to be a “last resort”. Consider the option of purchasing eg. train ticket, medicine, together with care recipient.

- **Myki tickets.** A book of tickets is held in the drawer. A maximum grant of four tickets per person each year is to be the limit.
- **Financial Counselling** can be suggested in a non judgmental way - “It is very difficult to manage on a Centrelink payment/low income. Financial counsellors may have some suggestions that you may find helpful.” Financial Counsellors’ phone numbers are printed on the receipt.
- **Other Agencies.** A list of other local agencies that provide financial and/or material aid may be offered.
- **A spiritual perspective** to be introduced, if appropriate.
- **GWUC pamphlets** may be offered together with an invitation to attend any service, open meeting or groups etc.

Confidential Card System and Recording Processes.

- Ensure a card is filled in, dated and initialed with available details on each person presenting for assistance.
- **Place any notes taken**, and a photocopy of the amount granted, in the pocket of the card. Recipient to take away original, which contains a copy of their Centrelink card and their signature.
- **Record details** of financial, Supermarket/Subway vouchers provided in the exercise book. Liaise with Welfare Co-ordinator if required.
- **Return key** to Church Office.
- **Report intervention** at the next Welfare Committee meeting.

Dorothy Lockhart. (Procedures)
2nd June 2014.



What is social work?

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) currently adheres to the following draft definition of social work that is jointly endorsed by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and International Association of School of Social Work (IASSW):

The social work profession facilitates social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. (March 2013).

What do social workers do?

The social work profession in Australia is broad and diverse but consistent to all practice is a commitment to human rights and social justice. Social workers work with individuals, families, groups and communities in the context of their physical, social and cultural environments, their past and current experiences, and their cultural and belief systems.

In all contexts, social workers maintain a dual focus on both assisting with and improving human wellbeing and identifying and addressing any external issues (known as system or structural issues) that may impact on wellbeing or may create inequality, injustice and discrimination.

Social workers may undertake roles in casework, counselling, advocacy, community engagement and development and social action to address issues at both the personal and social level. Social workers also work in areas such as policy development, education and research particularly around issues of social justice, disadvantage and the marginalisation of people in their communities or in society.

Members tell: Why I became a social worker

During the AASW's 70th anniversary in 2016, members told us why they became a

a social worker?

1. Tertiary degree in social work
2. Membership of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)

Who sets the standards for social workers?

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is the professional body for Australian social workers, responsible for setting and maintaining the standards of practice. The AASW also sets the standards for social work education in Australia and accredits social work courses in Australian Universities.

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Social work services

What can a social worker help me with?

Common issues that social workers support others to address include:

- Gambling
- Substance abuse
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Mental health issues
- Physical health issues
- Disability
- Child and family welfare concerns
- Family violence
- Trauma
- Offending behaviour

Where do social workers work?

Social workers are employed in a diverse range of government, non-government and community agencies such as hospitals, community health centres, early intervention and child protection programs, family support services, schools, employment services, justice, housing, disability and aged care services. An increasing number of social workers are now working in private practice.

Often you can contact an agency directly and ask to speak to a social worker. If you are not sure which is the right agency for you, you could contact your nearest Community Health Centre or local government office and ask for information. The Community Help and Welfare Services pages at the front of the telephone directory also list settings where social workers may be located. You could also refer to the AASW Find a Social Worker directory where many social workers in private practice are listed.

What qualifications/credentials should I look for in