

Merchants Quay Ireland: Counselling Team Leader (Prison Based Counselling Service) (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/115883>)



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

Counselling Team Leader (Prison Based Counselling Service)

Covering Wheatfield, Cloverhill, Shelton Abbey, Loughan House and Mountjoy.

Reports to: Head & Deputy Head of Operations Regional and IPS Services through Addiction Services Manager of Prisons.

Responsible for: The efficient operation of the team and proper use of resources in the delivery of the service to our clients

Objective: To effectively manage on behalf of the Head of Operations all of the resources pertaining to the Team. In doing so to uphold the philosophy and working ethos of the Merchants Quay Ireland

Key Responsibilities:

- Ensure service delivery to our clients meets the needs and contractual obligations of the client through the management of operational activity of the team in line with recognised quality standards and best practice.
- Responsible for the direct line management of counsellors as assigned by MQI
- The team leader will carry a case load of up to 15 clients at any one time. In each 39-hour week you will be required to deliver a combination of case work and management responsibilities as required.
- You will represent MQI at various meetings within the IPS.
- Act as a daily point of contact for client work, participate in and lead where necessary operational decision relating to clients.
- Pro-actively engage with client work on a regular basis including attending clinical meetings
- Stay current on internal work processes, policies and procedures.
- Under the direction of the Addiction Services Manager, the Team Leader implements systems and processes to achieve client specific metrics while providing development opportunities to the counsellors.
- Participate in new initiatives, in line with the development of services in the Irish Prison Service and the relevant health authority.
- Engage in multidisciplinary prison-based training.

Service Delivery/Operational Responsibilities

1. Co-operate with relevant approved research, by or on the behalf of MQI and/or the Irish Prison Service.
2. Regular meeting with the IPS and local prison management, as necessary, to review the service.
3. Be familiar with the operational policies of the Irish Prison Service and be aware of fire and other safety precautions as outlined in the Health and Safety Statement.
4. Responsible for understanding and complying with all IPS and company policies and procedures.

Caseload/Engaging with Prisoners

- Provide individual counselling and facilitate group work.
- Comprehensively assess prisoners referred.
- Engage in Crisis Intervention.

- Develop comprehensive care plans in conjunction with the multidisciplinary team.
- Ensure prisoner confidentiality in the context of a multidisciplinary team. In certain circumstances, issues may need to be discussed with the Consultant Psychiatrist and multidisciplinary team against the wishes of the prisoner.
- Implement and facilitate appropriate treatment strategies focusing initially on short term targeted interventions.
- Provide information regarding the details of counselling i.e., the nature, objectives, duration etc.
- Ensure regular review of individual treatment plans and goals identified.
- Refer to other agencies where appropriate. This can be within the prison and within the community and is dependent on shared care plans and integrated care pathways.
- Provide information and advice supporting health promotion and the reduction of risks associated with substance misuse and dependency.
- Complete formal case closure following completion of counselling or if the individual has left counselling before completion.
- Keep computerised records and observe professional standards in respect of ethics and confidentiality as outlined by MQI, the Irish Prison Service and relevant professional accreditation bodies.
- To act in accordance with the MQI policies and procedures compliant with best practice & legislation in the field of counselling and social care.
- Compile weekly and monthly excel and written reports as required detailing counsellor activity and identifying blocks to service provision.

Managing Staff

- Management responsibility to include performance management and HR policy adherence.
- Development of team skills through training, coaching, mentoring and up-skilling.
- Work with the Addiction Services Manager and the Human Resources Department to resolve personnel issues in a professional and timely manner.
- Ensure that counsellors have a clear understanding of performance expectations, that they are properly trained and that they have the tools they need to perform at high levels of productivity.
- Conduct meetings with counsellors in all locations to ensure communication of relevant information and as an open forum for input from counselling staff.
- To collaborate with the Addiction Services Manager and HR in the recruitment, selection and allocation of staff within the service.
- To co-operate with the Addiction Services Manager in the identification and implementation of appropriate on- going training for all staff.
- To provide line management supervision to staff members.
- To ensure adherence to good work practices and employment legislation.
- To ensure that Health and Safety standards are maintained in accordance with the H&S Statement of MQI and the Irish Prisons Service.
- Be available to support other counsellors in the service if their team leader is unavailable.

Administration

- To manage all monies allocated to the Team.
- Oversee and be accountable for any expenses claimed by team members.
- To ensure that accurate and transparent book -keeping systems and procedures are employed.
- To comply with the Addiction Services Manager in relation to all the appropriate paperwork and computerised systems, such as clients' files, and accident reports.
- To work with the Addiction Services Manager as above in the operation and monitoring of counsellor input to the relevant client data base system.

General

- To maintain a good relationship with the IPS and other external agencies and associations on behalf of the Head of Operations.
- To attend meetings in MQI and with the Addiction Services Manager when requested.
- To assist with any other duties which the Addiction Services Manager or Deputy Head of Operations might reasonably request.

Person Specification

Education/Qualifications

- Educated to at least degree level in relevant disciplines (e.g., addiction, health or social care).
- Currently accredited with ACI or IACP or international equivalent.

Previous Experience

- Minimum of 2 years' experience at supervisory level.
- Demonstrable track record in operational management including managing and monitoring activities to agreed service levels.
- Demonstrable experience proactive problem solving.
- Ability to identify key training needs for staff and organise relevant opportunities.
- Contributing to and experience of writing local policy and protocols.
- Experience or understanding of what constitutes high quality services for addiction counselling and prison work with experience of using measuring outcomes.
- Previous experience of collating and analysing data to evidence outcomes and inform service improvement.
- Experience of writing reports and proposals.
- Experience of supervising and motivating teams to deliver to agreed target levels.
- Experience of operational planning and producing monitoring systems for outputs, outcomes and impact.
- A successful track record of effective partnership working.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- Knowledge and understanding of current homeless & substance misuse and criminal justice policy, legislation and evidence-based practices.
- Ability to provide strong leadership to a diverse workforce, using both motivational and performance management tools.
- Ability to use initiative and creativity in problem solving.
- Knowledge of Health and Safety and Risk Management.
- Ability to communicate both written and verbally with a wide variety of stakeholders both internally and externally.
- Ability to manage pressure and conflicting priorities effectively.
- Able to demonstrate excellent organisational and time management skills with the ability to manage client work and management responsibilities.
- Excellent influencing and negotiation skills and the ability to manage differences constructively.
- Ability to work closely with a range of stakeholders and other providers in helping plan the future of service provision.
- Ability to work within evidence-based practice and with due regard to diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- Excellent IT skills using Microsoft Office, in particular Word, Excel, Outlook etc.
- Ability to participate fully at clinical meetings and Irish Prison Service Prisoner Review Meetings. Comfortable building relationships with heads of function and Campus Governors.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal to be able to communicate with a wide variety of groups e.g. prison management, clients, community both internally and externally.
- Strong team skills and a proactive approach to working with colleagues to achieve results.
- Experience of designing and delivering effective group work programmes and supporting staff to deliver same.

Attitudes/Personal

- Ability to always treat services users with respect and dignity.
- An ability to make sound and timely decisions and initiate actions to solve problems.
- To be outcome and solution focused.
- To hold a belief that people can and do make changes.
- Able to build constructive relationships with warmth and empathy, using good communication skills.
- Ability to demonstrate empathy for the issues faced by people affected by substance misuse, incarceration and homelessness and the ability to learn about their information and support needs.
- A proactive people person committed to the development and wellbeing of their teams.
- Willing and able to work over and above contracted hours when necessary.
- Ability to travel/work in all MQI/IPS prison-based service and meeting locations.
- Hold a current driving licence, have access to a roadworthy vehicle and have appropriate car insurance for the purpose of the job role.

Salary: Negotiable depending on experience

Hours of Work: 39 Hours, Monday-Friday

Contract: Contact of Indefinite Duration

Location: Based in Wheatfield covering there, Cloverhill, Castlerea and Shelton Abbey Open Centre

If you are interested in applying for this role, please click the link by the 10th of June 2025
/merchants-quay-ireland/jobs/32205/counselling-team-leader-dublin
(<https://login.hirelocker.com/merchants-quay-ireland/jobs/32205/counselling-team-leader-dublin>)

Management reserves the right to amend or change this job description as required.

This Position is subject to Garda Clearance.

MQI is an equal opportunities employer.

Region

Dublin

Date Entered/Updated

27th May, 2025

Expiry Date

10th Jun, 2025

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