

United Sex Workers, North Queensland, (US, NQ)

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Phone:

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Queensland Health
Via Scarlet Alliance

Reference: Review of Sex Worker services in Queensland

To Whom It May Concern:

We are a new group which has formed slowly over the last twelve months, since the closure of SQWISI in Townsville in March 2007. Since this time, we have established a committee which meets once a month with executives which meet more regularly to follow through with delegated duties which are given to the most relevant members of our group. Membership numbers are increasing each week as more Sex Workers identify themselves as wanting to be involved in this growing organization.

We are an affirmative action group and our members are all identifying organised Sex Workers from a wide variety of business frameworks, skills and knowledge base. We all share the belief that to provide an appropriate and professional support service to our peers, we need to be open, honest and proud of our work experience as Sex Workers.

We are endeavoring to promote and encourage membership from Sex Workers within the following regions so as to then provide peer education and support services in the geographical locations including Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns and Mt Isa. We are aware that many workers are transient and some do travel to and work within smaller communities within north Queensland, such as mining communities, although we have found that many of these workers do travel through and/or reside in the larger communities due to discrimination, family needs, etc.

To date, we have submitted two applications for funding and are planning on continuing to apply for funding which will enable us to provide a holistic service encompassing Workplace Health and Safety, Emotional Health, Legal rights and responsibilities, Taxation rights and responsibilities and Responding to violence and discrimination, etc.

The submissions that were lodged on the 28th March 2008 were;

Department of Justice and Attorney-General

We propose to produce resources to facilitate access to relevant legislation to socially isolated Sex Workers in North Queensland. It will include information about how to design and operate their sex work business within a legal framework and information to facilitate access to the legal system and services. This project will also collect data which can be used to advocate for the advancement of law reform for the benefits of the workplace health and safety rights of sex workers. This will then be distributed through out North Queensland (Rockhampton, north)

Townsville City Council

We are endeavoring to provide a safe and secure office which Sex Workers can access at least in Townsville. This funding will be the rent used to provide this aspect of the project. This office will also create an opportunity for US, NQ to coordinate our education and support services to the Sex Workers in the larger North Queensland area and to provide an area that our members who volunteer their time to assist in resource development, peer support and peer education.

Below is our Mission Statement and Objectives. These were first used in the credentialing process to become members of Scarlet Alliance but are a living document that will be reviewed as more members become involved.

Mission Statement

To provide a variety of services to Sex Workers in North Queensland within a peer based approach relevant to their workplaces.

Aims and Objectives

1. We aim to provide peer based support and education within an affirmative action group.
2. To provide resources which will support Sex Workers in their workplaces in regards to their health, safety, emotional wellbeing, legal and taxation rights and responsibilities.
3. To provide a legitimate voice for North Queensland Sex Workers to advocate for legal and other social policies to be designed to support Sex Workers rights and remedies.
4. To advocate for Sex Workers human and civil rights.
5. To advocate against discrimination against Sex Workers, past and present.
6. To lobby government to provide Sex Workers the legal avenues to work within any area of the Queensland sex work trade industry (escort, in-house, agency, sole trading, co-operatives and/or street) as they choose.
7. To lobby government to provide legal rights and remedies to enhance workplace health and safety initiatives.

On the Office of Economic and Statistical Research website, they outline the population in each region of Queensland. This shows us that the population south of Rockhampton is 3 202 711 and the population of Rockhampton, north is 850 863 which is over 26%. As our distances between major communities is greater, we are requesting the additional 4% to assist with travel expenses such as airfares, travel time, etc.

We would like to be given the opportunity to apply for approximately 30% of the monies allocated by Qld Health as a North Qld service with the geographical area including Rockhampton, Mackay, Mt Isa, Townsville and Cairns.

This would provide us with the opportunity to have two Peer Health Educators, one based in the office to provide phone, email and drop in education amongst other roles include resource development and play a key role in systematic advocacy. Then a second Peer Health Educator who can travel to the other four major communities to provide on the ground education to Sex Workers and other health and welfare organizations. The remaining monies would be used for organizational costs and project work such as a newsletter.

We appreciate this opportunity to present ourselves by Scarlet Alliance and would also appreciate an opportunity to apply for a portion of the funding from Queensland Health that will be allocated to the new Sex Work service/s. We can be contacted direct through the old SQWISI number which is being maintained by Jackie Kneipp, 4724 4853, alternatively Jenny King, 0439 684 411.


Yours truly,



Elly Mende
Chairperson



Jenny King
Treasurer



Jackie Kneipp
Secretary