

Get real satisfaction,
helping clients to
achieve independence.



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Lucas
Clinical Senior Occupational Therapist,
Nuriootpa

Hello, I'm Lucas. 'Though I grew up in the city I was keen to move to the country as I did rural placements in Mt Gambier and Wallaroo when I was studying at university.

'I graduated from the University of South Australia as a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy and started with SA Health in Port Pirie. Then I moved to Clare to take up a permanent position in mental health and got involved in the community, playing cricket and footy.

'I benefited from doing compressed hours, and flexible working arrangements, so I could take a long weekend every now and then.'

An opportunity like no other.

'I previously worked at the Wondakka Community Rehab Centre (CRC) in Elizabeth East for a while. CRCs are highly innovative, a model like no other, where you can be creative and provide a mix of assessment and rehabilitation services to clients.

'Working in a CRC is great for Occupational Therapists as clients can stay for up to two years - though nine to twelve months is the average - which gives you a chance





to build relationships. You can see the improvement in your client's independent living skills as they re-establish positive habits and build self-confidence.

'You need to be able to work with a wide range of people from clinical and non-clinical backgrounds; you've got to be sociable and personable.'

The new structure benefits me.

'The Clinical Government Structure has changed recently so that everyone in allied health receives discipline-specific assistance.

'What this means is that as a Clinical Senior Occupational Therapist, I provide clinical supervision and support to less experienced Mental Health OTs within Country Health SA, via video conferencing, the phone and face-to-face meetings.

'This helps staff to reflect on their practice, trouble shoot and problem-solve, and also enables peer shadowing. There's a sharing culture, a cross-pollination of skills.

'It's certainly a drawcard for graduates and less experienced staff as it gives them the confidence they need as they learn.'

A faster career path.

'I'm responsible for supervising Occupational Therapists from around the State.

'There's an opportunity to get together once a year at a conference at Glenside Hospital for a professional link up.

'It's a good structure – as a new graduate you need support and guaranteed supervision when moving to the country. There's now more opportunity for promotion.

'Also, the country provides graduates with exposure to a broader set of experiences as they tend to take on more responsibilities earlier on in their careers, so they can develop their skills faster.

'SA Health provides a great springboard for a career in mental health. My next step? I'd like to follow this path through to management.

'It says something for SA Health that I'm happy to stay in the country, when I could move back to Metro.'