

PSYCHIATRIC NURSE

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, to provide professional nursing care to emotionally disturbed and/or mentally ill patients for Behavioral Health and Recovery Services; to work with clinical and case management staff to coordinate care and assist in treatment plans for clients; and to perform related work.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED AND RECEIVED

Receives direction from the Human Services Director, the Deputy Director of Behavioral Health, or the Psychiatrist.

May exercise supervision over lower level staff.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Conducts intake assessments through interviews with patients and relatives to gather case history.

Plans and provides nursing care for patients.

Makes nursing diagnosis of the medical and emotional status of patients and recommends treatment options.

Consults with psychiatrists and other behavioral health staff in designing appropriate treatment plans for clients.

Administers and notes reactions to psychotropic drugs and other medications.

Arranges further medical attention when necessary.

Assists the client in understanding the nature of emotional disturbances and accepting the need for treatment.

Assists in maintaining a safe and secure environment for staff and patients.

Test for vital signs of pain and ensures treatments of pain.

Documents all patient information on medical charts and follows physician's written orders.

Maintains patient confidentiality.

Maintains accurate records and documentation of patient treatments, immunizations and laboratory results according to standard medical recordkeeping.

Performs administrative assignments such as filing, answering phones, typing, and completing progress notes in the computer system.

Provides courteous, high quality service to patients and members of the public by personally responding to requests for service or making appropriate referral.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledge of:

Professional nursing principles, procedures, and techniques used in the care and treatment of psychiatric patients.

Social, psychological, and physical factors of mental and emotional disorders.

Medical and psychological terminology.

Medications, including psychotropic drugs, and effects on psychiatric patients.

Control, preparation and administration of medications.

State of California laws and regulations for the nursing profession.

Regulations pertaining to psychiatric nursing and the treatment of the mentally and emotionally disturbed patients.

Theories, principles, and techniques of group and individual psychotherapy.

Symptoms and behavior patterns of emotionally disturbed mentally ill patients.

Medical and psychiatric emergency procedures.

Basic computer programs.

Ability to:

Apply professional nursing care principles and procedures in the evaluation and treatment of psychiatric patients.

Develop interpersonal therapeutic relationships with psychiatric patients.

Keep accurate written charts and records of patient activities and progress.

Comply with laws, rules, regulations, protocols, and procedures.

Use professional judgment to ascertain and to apply appropriate intervention techniques with patients in crisis.

Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals and function calmly in situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact, and diplomacy.

Provide prompt, efficient, and responsive service.

Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

Communicate effectively orally and in writing.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is normally performed in an office environment. Interaction with clients requires adaptability when confronted with emergency, critical, unusual, or potentially dangerous situations. May be subjected to verbal and physical abuse from patients and exposed to contagious diseases.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Requires the ability to sit at a desk for long periods of time and intermittently walk, stand, stoop, kneel, crouch and reach while performing office duties: lift and/or move light weights; use hands to finger, handle or feel objects, tools or controls. Must be able to maintain effective audio, visual discrimination and perception needed for making observations, communicating with others, reading and writing, and operating office equipment. Must be able to use a telephone to communicate verbally and a keyboard to communicate through written means, to review information and enter/retrieve data, to see and read characters on a computer screen. Requires the strength and stamina to perform clinical duties.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education:

Graduation from an accredited program of registered nursing and possession of a valid and current Registered Nurse license issued by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

Experience:

Three years of psychiatric nursing experience.

OR

Education:

National certification as a Psychiatric Nurse.

Additional Requirements:

Possession of a valid California driver's license. Under certain circumstances, the Personnel Director may accept a valid driver's license from another State if applicant acknowledges his/her intent to acquire a California driver's license within three months by signing an acknowledgement form.

This class specification lists the major duties and requirements of the job and is not all-inclusive. Incumbents may be expected to perform job-related duties other than those contained in this document.