

## **POSITION DESCRIPTION MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR**

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

Mental Health Counselor will counsel with emphasis on prevention. Work with individuals and groups to promote optimum mental and emotional health. May help individuals deal with issues associated with addictions and substance abuse; family, parenting, and marital problems; stress management; self-esteem; and aging. Adheres to the policies and protocols of the Health Service Unit and works at the direction of the Health Service Administrator.

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES**

Although it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of all types of duties, responsibilities and performance standards, the following are the essential job functions:

- Maintain confidentiality of records relating to clients' treatment.
- Encourage clients to express their feelings and discuss what is happening in their lives, helping them develop insight into themselves or their relationships.
  - Counsel clients or patients regarding personal issues.
- Collect information about clients through interviews, observation, or tests.
  - Collect information about clients.
  - Interview clients to gather information about their backgrounds, needs, or progress.
- Assess patients for risk of current suicidal issues or history of suicide attempts.
- Fill and maintain client-related paperwork, including federal-and state-mandated forms, client diagnostic records, and progress notes.
  - Maintain client records.
  - Complete documentation required by programs or regulations.
- Prepare and maintain all required treatment records and reports.
  - Write reports or evaluations.
  - Complete documentation required by programs or regulations.
- Counsel clients or patients, individually or in group sessions, to assist in overcoming dependencies, adjusting to life, or making changes.
  - Counsel clients or patients with substance abuse issues.
- Guide clients in the development of skills or strategies for dealing with their problems.
  - Teach life skills or strategies to clients or their families.
- Perform crisis interventions with clients.
  - Intervene in crisis situations to assist clients.
- Develop and implement treatment plans based on clinical experience and knowledge.
  - Develop treatment plans for patients or clients.
- Evaluate clients' physical or mental condition, based on review of client information.
  - Evaluate characteristics of individuals to determine needs.
- Act as client advocates to coordinate required services or to resolve emergency problems in crisis situations.
  - Advocate for individual.
  - Intervene in crisis situations to assist clients.
- Modify treatment activities or approaches as needed to comply with changes in clients' status.
  - Modify treatment plans to accommodate client needs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of counseling programs on clients' progress in resolving identified problems and moving towards defined objectives.
  - Monitor clients to evaluate treatment progress.
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of counseling or educational programs.

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- Dialogue with families, Law Enforcement Staff, or other interested parties to exchange necessary information during the treatment process.
  - Meet with Psychiatrist periodically to review treatment plan.
  - Collaborate with other professionals to assess client needs or plan treatments.
- Discuss with individual patients their plans for life after leaving therapy.
  - Counsel clients or patients regarding personal issues.
- Collaborate with other staff members to perform clinical assessments or develop treatment plans.
  - Collaborate with other professionals to assess client needs or plan treatments.
- Plan, organize, or lead structured programs of counseling, or social activities for clients.
- Learn about new developments in counseling by reading professional literature, attending courses and seminars, or establishing and maintaining contact with other social service agencies.
  - Maintain professional social service knowledge.
  - Develop working relationships with others to facilitate program activities.
- Refer patients, community resources or to specialists as necessary.
  - Refer clients to community or social services programs.
- Gather information about community mental health needs or resources that could be used in conjunction with therapy.
  - Collect information about community health needs.
- Plan or conduct programs to prevent substance abuse or improve community health or counseling services.
- Coordinate or direct employee workshops, courses, or training about mental health issues.

**FACTOR 1 - KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION**

**A: KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED**

**Good Knowledge of**

- Medical terminology,
- computer skills,
- typing,
- record keeping,
- office administration practices,
- confidentiality requirements regarding medical information.

**Working skill in:**

- Communicating to place patients at ease, obtain complete histories, and interface with healthcare staff.
- Filing, computer data entry.

**B: QUALIFICATIONS**

- Master's Degree in Social Work or Psychology preferred with a minimum of 5 years' experience.
- Bilingual abilities a plus!

**C: LICENSE & CERTIFICATION REQUIRED**

Ideal candidate will be licensed through the RI Department of Health at a minimum L.C.S.W. level.

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**FACTOR 2 – SUPERVISORY CONTROL**

This position reports to the Health Service Administrator.

**FACTOR 3 – GUIDELINES**

Must follow all proper policies and procedures of the institution.

**FACTOR 4 – PERSONAL CONTACTS**

Not applicable

**FACTOR 5 – ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

Requires regular and reliable attendance. Ability to work a flexible full-time schedule to include weekends. As well as possess physical and mental endurance to respond properly and professionally to stressful situations.

**FACTOR 6 – PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The work does involve some walking, standing, driving personal motor vehicle, lifting objects up to 25lbs, bending, stooping, reaching and speaking clearly.

**FACTOR 7 – WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The correctional environment is a fast paced, stressful area of nursing specialty. Applicant must possess a professional work ethic, and work well under pressure.

**TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE:**

EXPERIENCE PREFERRED