

NUTRITIONIST III - LOCAL

Work in this class involves two major activities: 1) providing complex clinical nutrition services and medical nutrition therapy to medically-high risk clients requiring comprehensive care or; 2) program management, including: planning, managing, implementing and evaluating local agency nutrition programs or services. Employees in this class may perform one or both of these functions in a Public Health Agency.

As a clinical nutrition provider, employees in this class provide complex clinical nutrition services and medical nutrition therapy to medically-high risk clients with a multitude of medical/nutritional problems requiring advanced knowledge and skill. Clients may include, for example, pregnant women with complex medical conditions affecting pregnancy outcome; seriously ill or disabled children who require care in order to reside at home rather than in the hospital or long-term care facility; adults with chronic conditions requiring case consultation or management. Nutrition care can include complex therapeutic interventions and counseling; micro- or macro-nutrient supplementation; or enteral or parenteral nutrition support.

In the area of program management, employees administer a nutrition program or programs; develop plans for service delivery; assess community nutrition needs and design programs to meet those needs; interpret and disseminate current scientific knowledge to professionals and clients; perform business administrative functions; evaluate program effectiveness and indicators; and supervise administrative and/or lower level nutrition staff.

This level is distinguished from the Nutritionist II by program scope, supervisory accountability, and the advanced, technical level of nutrition assessments and counseling. Employee often is the lead clinical and/or administrative nutrition professional in a Local Health Agency or service area. Work may include other related programmatic assignments as determined by the management. Employees usually report to a higher level Program Manager or Local Health Director.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope – Employees provide complex clinical nutrition services and medical nutrition therapy to medically-high risk clients with a multitude of medical/nutritional problems requiring advanced knowledge and skill, particularly in areas of disease pathophysiology and medical rehabilitation. Employees receive referrals from lower level Nutritionists; these require independent analysis of clients' medical condition, researching nutritional requirements of the respective medical problems, and recommending a treatment plan in concert with an interdisciplinary team approach. Employee may provide technical consultation and training to clinicians in developing the nutrition component of the care plan.

Employees with program management responsibilities plan, implement, manage, and evaluate a Local Health Agency's nutrition and/or health program or programs, including developing and carrying out an operational plan for service delivery to specific populations. This includes direct supervision, clinical oversight, determination of daily work efforts, modification of state policies into systematic operational procedures, provision of programmatic or clinical training, and customer service problem-solving. Employees often provide technical expertise to other health professionals, and often speak on nutrition and health issues through community groups and advisory committees, newspaper, or radio. Employee may also develop nutrition education materials or curricula or create community-based nutrition interventions.

Intricacy – Employees provide advanced level nutrition care to ill and disabled children and adults, who require sophisticated knowledge and skill in nutrition care planning, case management and care

coordination, health care ethics, quality assurance, and management of nutrition services. Application of current scientific information and best practices regarding nutrition assessment and diet therapy is essential for problem diagnosis, counseling, and evaluation of medically high-risk clients. Some positions require additional in-depth expertise in a specialty area, such as maternal health, pediatrics, or diabetes. Program management requires full range of skill in program administrative, staff and program development, and supervision and the ability to analyze information related to program objectives, strategies, and existing delivery systems. Employees may set clinical or programmatic standards of care.

Subject Matter Complexity - Responsibilities are broad in scope and involve many variables and unanticipated circumstances that reflect the constantly changing science and practice of nutrition, public health, and medicine, and the dynamics of a population's need for nutrition programs. Work requires the employee to apply specialized in-depth knowledge of clinical nutrition and dietetics and apply principles of interdisciplinary health care for both individuals through clinical care and populations through program management.

Guidelines - Guidelines include standard assessment procedures, professional reference materials, nutrition program reference manuals, and professional standards. Employees independently apply these guidelines and rarely seek advice from a higher level Nutritionist, the State Office, or Local Health Director.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions – A high degree of professional responsibility in providing complex nutrition care and program management is required. Considerable independent judgment is required to adapt and apply organization guidelines, protocols, and professional standards of care to new and changing needs of medically high-risk clients. Considerable independence of judgment and creativity is expected in directing staff, developing training, monitoring staff, and resolving on-the-job problems related to staff performance and conflict resolution. Continuing professional development is needed to carry out responsibilities.

Nature of Review - Periodic reviews are conducted by higher level specialists through quality assurance reviews or technical reviews by the Local Health or State Agency. Established cyclic work performance reviews are typically done.

Scope of Decisions – Decisions offer a major contribution to the health, nutritional status, and medical prognosis of medically high-risk clients. Work involves authoritative application of organizational policies and standards of practice to complex and important aspects of clinical nutritional care for the population, including possible emergency preparedness planning and implementation.

Consequence of Decisions - Professional decisions can have a profound effect on the clients'/patients' health and well being. Program management decisions can affect the program purpose and impact upon the clients participating in the program. Decisions in both areas can contribute to reduced health care costs for individuals and communities.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Contacts vary depending upon agency and primary work role. They usually include: clients and their families; other health professionals (within and outside the Agency), other administrative staff (within the Agency), community members, and the general public.

Nature and Purpose - Clinical contacts are for the purpose of determining client nutrition needs; and ensuring that clients receive appropriate nutrition services. Employees work with clinicians and other

health care professionals in an interdisciplinary approach to the assessment and treatment of clients/patients. Work also can require the employees to serve as a technical resource to clinicians and provide training as necessary. Program management contacts are to plan, direct, supervise, and evaluate public health nutrition programs and personnel or provide community-level services.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Employees work in Local Health Agencies, clinical settings or home environments which may be characterized as mildly disagreeable.

Hazards - Employees are exposed to clients with a multitude of medically related problems which could pose a danger to the employee through contagions. Rarely, behavioral problems, such as aggression, by some clients or their family members could cause bodily harm.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities – Advanced knowledge and skill in comprehensive nutrition assessment and care planning, including problem diagnosis, counseling, and evaluation of clients from diverse backgrounds and ages, who have a multitude of complex, high-risk medical needs. Advanced knowledge and skill in theoretical principles and practices of normal and clinical nutrition and dietetics, particularly in areas of disease pathophysiology and medical rehabilitation. Advanced, in-depth expertise in a clinical specialty area may be required. Advanced level of knowledge in case management and care coordination, health care ethics, documentation in the medical record, quality assurance, management of nutrition services. Advanced skill in interpreting nutrition standards to other health professionals and the public is needed. Advanced level of knowledge of the organization and delivery of medical, hospital, hospice, and home care in the community, of medical terminology, and of the roles of the various members of the interdisciplinary health care team. Demonstrated ability in staff development, assuring staff accountability, and conducting personnel performance evaluations. Ability to adapt to emerging or unprecedented problems by extending accepted methods or developing new methods and interventions. Ability to prepare and justify budget requests as well as, monitor, analyze, and manage allocated resources. Basic skill in the consultant process, both as consultant and consultee. Strong knowledge of current scientific information regarding nutrition, diet, and health and the ability to relate this information to clients, professionals, and the general public. Full range of skill in conducting a nutrition education or community needs assessment. Strong ability to interpret policy and protocols into operational procedures and work priorities. A full range of skill in organizing and coordinating the work of others. Full range of skill in presenting ideas orally and in a writing a clear, concise manner.

Minimum Education and Experience – Registered Dietitian with the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education with a Master's degree in Dietetics, Public Health Nutrition or Nutrition from an accredited college or university and one year experience; or Registered Dietitian with the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education and two years nutrition experience.

Administering the Class - Candidates should provide documentation of registration status from the Commission on Dietetic Registration and university or college transcripts.