

PHYSICIAN EXTENDER I

This is beginning level, professional work in augmenting the primary health care physician in a specialized or general patient area. An employee in this role has received specialized training to function as an assistant to or extension of a physician. Before performing in this role, the physician assistant or nurse practitioner must be approved to practice medical acts by the appropriate State Board. Approval to practice medical acts includes giving a medical diagnosis, ordering therapy, and prescribing medications outlined in the approved formulary. Employees obtain a thorough patient history and physical examination, perform appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, record and present this information to the physician, develop and maintain health care or therapeutic plans, and counsel patients. These employees are practicing with a physician who is ultimately responsible for the employee's medical practice; supervision from the physician includes a set of mutually agreed to patient care protocols and medical guidelines with the physician immediately available by telephone or physically, if needed, for consultation. The employee always functions under the supervision of primary or secondary physician. In addition, the employee may also function under the direction of non-medical personnel, i.e., nursing or administration while performing non-medical acts. This work has been identified in State hospitals, university infirmaries, local government public health and mental health programs, correctional units, and in other agency clinic settings.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Work is performed in one specialized area, as family planning, where the employee treats a limited variety of related recurring and non-recurring medical conditions. Or the employee works in a generalized area where patients present with routine, recurring conditions, limiting the variety, scope, and complexity of duties and judgments.

Intricacy - Work requires judgment in the application of accepted patient care protocols and medical guidelines in the area of assignment to determine the appropriate course of action. The employee will make few decisions that affect the total care of the patient.

Subject Matter Complexity - The employee must have a complete understanding of the patient care protocols and medical guidelines used -in the work area, and the knowledges, skills, and abilities needed to perform the work.

Guidelines - The protocols and guidelines are established and relate to specific work procedures; unusual and complex patient conditions in the area must be referred to the supervising physician for diagnosis and treatment. Guidelines include the medical protocol approved by the physician, agency policies and procedures, reference manuals, and program guidelines and standards.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Daily work is self-planned and performed with considerable independent. Major changes or short-range plans are coordinated with supervising physician and other members of the health care team (i.e., pharmacist, physical therapist, nutritionist, etc.).

Nature of Review - All written histories, medical and therapeutic treatment plans, and drug prescriptions must be reviewed and signed by the supervising physician within a 72-hour period of the documentation (time frames for review vary from agency to agency). Employees at this level receive some technical review periodically during the work process. The employee makes medical decisions in a limited area and the physician assists as needed. Unusual conditions, complex problems, and conditions outside the approved area of expertise are referred to a physician, as outlined in the patient care protocols and medical guidelines.

Scope of Decisions - Work has a direct affect on the patient population served.

Consequence of Decisions - The consequence of this employee's decisions has substantial impact on the patient's safety and well being.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts- Work requires contacts with specific patient populations and families who may be unfamiliar with the work function, or with special groups as mental patients or prisoners.

Nature and Purpose - Contacts frequently require persuading and influencing patients to pursue medical treatment or another course of action.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Hazards - Periodically exposed to moderate hazards which could result in injury/illness.

Work Conditions - Some exposure to patients who may be difficult to work with and a mildly disagreeable work environment.

V. JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Thorough knowledge of techniques of interviewing, medical and relevant history taking, principles and practices of general medicine and disease states as they relate to the area of work; considerable knowledge of health appraisal tools, laboratory tests and findings, material medical, and therapeutic procedures as relate to the area of work; considerable knowledge and ability to plan a regime of care based on assessment and findings; working knowledge of available resources and appropriate referral methods.

Skill in performing clinical functions.

Ability to examine patients and detect abnormalities; ability to record accurately and completely all information necessary to evaluate and plan care and to convey this to the physician; ability to communicate orally; ability to teach and counsel individuals, families, and groups in areas of health maintenance, preventive medicine, and care of the sick; the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, and to gain the confidence of patients and families and work effectively with them.

Minimum Training and Experience - Licensed as a Physician Assistant by the North Carolina Medical Board or approved to practice as a Nurse Practitioner by the North Carolina Board of Nursing and the North Carolina Medical Board.

Special Note - This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA. Examples of work are primarily essential functions of the majority of positions in this class, but may not be applicable to all positions.