

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE II

This is intermediate level professional nursing work in providing primary, preventive, and rehabilitative care to individuals and families in Public Health programs. Employees independently demonstrate and implement techniques of nursing care and counsel for promotion of health and prevention of disease through outreach in homes and schools, serving as team leader for a sub-group within a larger project and/or serving as charge nurses in clinics. Employees will be expected to assist in data collection and review in any project that they are associated with. Employees at this level will spend a minimum of 25% of their time in one or more of the following roles:

1. Serve as charge nurses in one or more clinic settings. Responsibilities include directing the work done during the clinic, assigning tasks to lower-level staff appropriately, managing clinic flow, and advising other clinic staff about management of unfamiliar patient situations. Employees may independently manage nurse-screening clinics held outside of the health department, requiring strong patient assessment skills.
2. Provide community outreach services by making home visits for the purpose of case management or any other nursing activity that involves functioning independently outside of the agency. Employees in these roles carry a caseload of patients and/or families and work in partnership with them to identify strengths and needs and develop a plan for health maintenance or improvement. Employees provide a combination of case management and nursing assessment to help patients and families manage health care needs. They make referrals to medical facilities, social service agencies, etc. when needed and agreed on by the patient or family. Employees take a lead role in coordinating all plans and resources for these clients.
3. Provide School Health or Child Care Health Consultation services. Employees functioning in these roles are expected to work with the administration of the school or child care facility to develop goals, do assessments of children when requested, assure that care plans are in place for children with potentially serious chronic or recurrent health problems, teach school staff to perform skilled procedures, and assure that policies are in place for safe medication administration. They also interpret and explain health information to parents, students, and staff.
4. Work with considerable independence in a community-based health promotion project that involves developing programs or support groups, promoting community advocacy, and developing strong partnerships with residents. Serve as team leaders by coordinating the work assignments and quality of services delivered by a small team of lower-level nurses and subprofessionals that are part of a sub-group of a full project. Employees have limited administrative and personnel responsibilities; unusual situations and problems are discussed with and/or referred to a higher level supervisor.

Other responsibilities include managing a program-level support activity, such as In-Service or Quality Assurance; participating in program or agency-wide planning and quality assurance activities (in this capacity, they will contribute observations or data related to patient or community trends or practices, ideas for improved program performance, and will participate in record audits and other program reviews); participating in Public Health Preparedness activities as directed by agency management.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employees assigned to clinics will work in the same roles as the Public Health Nurse I and in addition assume varying assignments in team leading and clinic management. Alternatively, employees will work independently in outreach settings such as homes, schools, child care centers, or community settings.

Intricacy - Work involves developing patient care plans with assigned clients. In clinic settings, the employee functions as a charge nurse and will be responsible for planning and reviewing the work of other nurses. This requires more independent judgment and application of professional knowledge, skills, and abilities than the Public Health Nurse I. Nurses in other outreach settings often review and assess complex or potentially complex conditions, taking into account both the physical aspects of the issue and the impact of other factors such as patient or family strengths and resources, income, culture, and family dynamics in order to help families develop and implement a usable plan of care.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires a strong understanding of public health concepts, nursing theory and practice.

Guidelines - The North Carolina Nurse Practice Act, public health nursing standards, clinic protocols, agency work standards and program protocols. Work requires more independent judgment in applying the professional standards and guidelines.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Daily and weekly work is usually self-planned and coordinated with the team. Agency goals and patient care goals are understood. Employees will frequently have to make short-range plans and changes to meet client and program needs.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed periodically for adherence to established public health nursing standards by a nurse supervisor through review of written reports and oral conferences. Employees refer less to the supervisor than the Public Health Nurse I and make more independent clinical and program decisions.

Scope of Decisions - Employees' work and decision-making have a substantial direct effect on the client population served.

Consequence of Decisions - Employees' work and decision-making could have a substantial impact on the client population served, especially since this nurse is overseeing (when serving as clinic charge nurse) the work of others and may be the only health professional to come in contact with clients in the field when providing advanced nursing services.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Employees have contact with a patient population in an assigned area which might not be familiar with public health standards and programs. Communication with patients must demonstrate sensitivity to the person's culture, economic challenges, and other vulnerabilities, and must also recognize each patient's strengths and abilities.

Nature and Purpose - Work requires that employees work in cooperation with the patient, patient's family (particularly in homes, schools, and other community settings) and other clinic staff to assess the patient's health status and needs and assist in providing the services needed in order to maintain or improve their health. Patient education and counseling are important components of this service delivery. The employee must also be aware of health trends and practices that are pertinent to the population of patients served.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Hazard - Employees will have periodic exposure to hazards in the field (driving, rural or inner-city settings, inclement weather, clients) and to a lesser degree in clinic settings. They might be exposed to bloodborne pathogens, infectious diseases, or angry or disruptive patients.

Work Conditions - These may be mildly disagreeable if working in poor home environments or with difficult clients. Clinics are often over-crowded and noisy.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of, and skill in, the application of nursing theory, practice, principles, and techniques employed in the field of public health and related programs; considerable knowledge of and ability to apply the principles and practices of public health; knowledge of available resources and organizations and the ability to coordinate these as needed; general knowledge of current social and economic problems relating to public health, including health disparities; ability to plan, coordinate, and oversee the work of others; ability to deal tactfully with others and to exercise good judgment in appraising situations and making decisions; ability to work in partnership with patients and with other service providers to elicit needed information and to maintain effective working relationships; ability to record accurately services rendered and to interpret and explain records, reports, and medical instructions; adequate computer skills to allow communication, patient record documentation, and accessing of information.

Minimum Education and Experience – Graduation from a four-year college or university with a B.S. in Nursing which includes a Public Health Nursing rotation and one year of Public Health Nursing experience; or Master’s in Public Health and graduation from a school of professional nursing and one year of professional nursing experience; or graduation from a school of professional nursing and two years of professional nursing experience including one year of Public Health Nursing experience; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

Necessary Special Qualifications - A current license to practice as a Registered Nurse in North Carolina by the N. C. Board of Nursing.

Administering the Class - Individuals employed in a local Health Department without a B.S. Degree which includes a Public Health Nursing rotation or a Master’s in Public Health, will be required to complete the “*Introduction to Principles and Practices of Public Health Nursing*” course within one year of employment as a condition of continued employment in accordance with Health Services Commission Rule. Experience in a field of nursing that is closely related to the anticipated work assignment can be substituted for Public Health experience for hiring purposes; however, the employee will also be required to complete the “*Introduction to Principles and Practices of Public Health Nursing*” course or objectively demonstrate an adequate understanding of Public Health practice within 1 year of employment.

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.