

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST I

### DESCRIPTION OF WORK

This is highly skilled rehabilitative work with patients whose abilities to cope with tasks of living are threatened or impaired by developmental deficiencies, the aging process, poverty or cultural differences, physical injury or illness, or psychological and social disability.

Employees serve as therapists in a State institution or local agency. Work involves initial evaluation of physician referred patients through interaction, behavioral assessments, perceptual testing and/or anatomical and functional examination depending on the disability, and in designing and implementing a treatment plan that is rehabilitatively specific for each patient. Duties in the psychosocial area include the design and implementation of programs that encourage the patients to develop interpersonal and behavioral skills that restore or improve their performance capacities in life tasks and situations.

Responsibilities in physical dysfunction area include evaluating patients to determine the degree of physical deficits and implementing a program to improve the patient's ability to function which may include the design, fabrication, fitting, and instruction of a variety of dynamic, static or functional splints, or adaptive equipment. Duties in the developmental disabilities area include evaluation through standardized and/or formal testing procedures and behavioral assessments and designing and implementing a treatment program specific to the evaluative findings to habilitate or rehabilitate the patient's deficiencies that will improve their functioning. Responsibilities of employees in all areas include reporting patient progress in medical conferences, multi-disciplinary team meeting; recording in patient's chart and department records, and may include the supervision of supportive staff. Work is performed under the general supervision of an occupational therapy supervisor and is evaluated through observation of supervision, observation of work, oral conferences, and patient progress.

### EXAMPLES OF DUTIES PERFORMED

Evaluates patients with psychosocial dysfunction through the use of functional and behavioral assessments and then initiates a treatment plan that might include the use of activity media, group process, or individual treatment.

Schedules patient treatment for supportive staff as needed.

Conducts a variety of physical tests on patients such as range of motion muscle function, coordination sensation to determine the levels of physical abilities and disabilities; treatment may entail providing adaptive equipment for more independent self-care activities, determining irregularities in perceptual motor functioning, stimulating motivational attitudes and assessing work skills and interests through formal and informal evaluation procedures.

Designs, personally constructs, and fits or supervises technicians and assistants in the construction of a variety of splints and devices to prevent or correct joint deformities or facilitate muscle function or joint range of motion that will minimize substitution patterns and design and use equipment for therapeutic exercises.

Plans and conducts programs for patients aimed at restoring or improving physical and psychological functioning through graded activities and/or exercises.

Writes progress notes in the patient's chart and departmental records and reports orally in patient conferences.

Performs related duties as required.

## RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

### Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities

Considerable knowledge of the principles, techniques, and methods of occupational therapy as applicable to patients with psycho-social dysfunctions and/or working knowledge of functional anatomy, physiology, and skeletal biomechanics, whichever applicable area of work.

Working knowledge of the psychiatric aspects of various mental handicaps and disabilities.

Skills in the design and fabrication of a variety of splints and self-help devices rehabilitatively specific to individual patients with bodily injury.

Skill in the design of craft and interactional treatment programs rehabilitatively specific in a variety of individual cases.

Ability to evaluate patient response and progress and to present evaluative reports in case staffings and multi-disciplined team meetings.

Ability to work effectively with patients, patients' families, medical nursing, and other staff members and to deal tactfully with the public.

### Minimum Education and Experience

Licensed to practice as an Occupational Therapist in the State of North Carolina.