

CLINICAL DIETITIAN I

Work in this class involves the nutritional care of patients treated in both the outpatient clinics and in the inpatient units at North Carolina Memorial Hospital and in Department of Human Resources institutions. Work is performed through the application of the science and art of human nutrition in selecting and obtaining food/ food substitute for the purpose of nourishing their bodies during healthy and disease conditions. Employees perform nutrition assessments, plan and implement care programs in consultation with the physicians. Work may include participation in a nutrition course for medical students and supervision of graduate students in dietetics doing pre-professional training. Employees report to a higher level Clinical Dietitian.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Work assignments include direct, individualized patient care including interviewing, assessing, planning and teaching nutritional care plans for optimal recuperation and maintenance of good health. Employees are involved in the training and evaluation of supportive personnel, in the training of physicians, and in the clinical experiences of students in dietetics.

Intricacy - In addition to developing and implementing individualized treatment programs and participating in development of team treatment plans, employees monitor pertinent subjective data, anthropometric measurements, and laboratory values to evaluate patient's compliance and response to the prescribed program. Employees record their findings in the medical record and make modifications in the nutrition care plan as needed.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires considerable knowledge of medical dietetics, feeding techniques, food service operations, and appropriate application to various patients.

Guidelines - Guidelines include professional publications and textbooks; government food composition tables; departmental and divisional policies and procedural manuals; Nutrition Care Committee minutes; and many others. Guidelines for treatment are also provided through doctors' referrals, rounds, and interdisciplinary team conferences.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employees are expected to function independently with regard to nutritional assessments, care plan development, and monitoring. General instructions and assignments are received from a higher level Clinical Dietitian.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed and evaluated by higher level Clinical Dietitian, the Food Service Director and other professionals through periodic observation of work, analysis of reports, periodic conferences, and patients' progress.

Scope of Decisions - Employees' decisions affect the assigned patient population served, the medical treatment team, support staff, patients' families, and members of the dietary staff.

Consequence of Decisions - Decisions regarding nutritional assessments, nutritional care plans, and diet instructions can have an effect in restoring a patient to a healthy condition and maintaining good health.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Work requires contact with patients, patients' families, students, dietary employees, a variety of professional disciplines including nurses, physicians and hospital administrators, university faculty, and sales representatives from private industry.

Nature and Purpose - The nature and purpose of the work is to assess and recommend appropriate nutritional care plans for acute and chronic conditions; to monitor and direct progressive nutritional care during recovery and recuperation; and to instruct the patient and patient's family in a medically prescribed dietary plan for long-term use.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Working conditions in a hospital or medical complex may be mildly disagreeable according to the type and condition of the patients served.

Hazards - Employees work with patients and their families, but they could rarely be considered potentially dangerous or hazardous except in DHR institutions, where employees may have daily contact with potentially dangerous and combative patients.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of accepted principles and practices of nutrition and dietetics. Considerable skills in teaching, diet counseling, and communicating. Ability to develop and use effective audio-visual aids. Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships.

Minimum Education and Experience - Bachelor's degree in foods and nutrition, dietetics, or related area from an appropriately accredited institution and completion of an ADA approved coordinated undergraduate program or Dietetic Internship with the ADA Commission on Dietetic Registration eligibility preferred, or a master's degree in nutrition, food service, or dietetics from an appropriately accredited institution with the ADA Commission on Dietetic Registration eligibility preferred; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Minimum Education and Experience for a Trainee Appointment - Bachelor's degree in foods and nutrition, dietetics, or related area from an appropriately accredited institution. Employees obtaining an appointment in a three-year training program will begin at the minimum rate of the trainee progress; whereas, employees obtaining an appointment in a coordinated undergraduate program will begin at the 24-month trainee rate.