

MENTAL HEALTH NURSE I

This is independent professional nursing work in providing nursing care and services to emotionally disturbed and mentally ill patients and their families in the community. This work is performed in local mental health outpatient programs in the Department of Human Resources under a nurse or program supervisor. The nurse is responsible for observing and assessing medical psychiatric, economic, and social conditions.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Work involves a variety of related recurring and non-recurring duties and responsibilities in ensuring continuity of care to these patients. The employee will work in one of the following roles: (1) visits private homes, schools, group and nursing homes to assess the after-care of a patient and the environment, and ascertains that the patient is following physician's orders and taking medications properly; employee may refer the patient to a treatment team to plan the patient's care; the nurse does follow-up visits, counsels and performs nursing care, and may lead therapeutic activities as recreation arts, and crafts; holds prolixin and medications clinics; (2) coordinates therapy for patients in a partial hospitalization program; the Nurse will monitor medications and the patient's physical and mental condition, and lead some group therapy.

Intricacy - Employees perform the same assessment and counseling duties in most environments, requiring little interpretation of the work standards and protocols.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires a complete understanding of the nursing, agency and program techniques, policies, and procedures as they relate to the emotionally disturbed and mentally ill.

Guidelines - Nursing, agency, and program techniques, policies, and procedures are understood and relate to most work situations.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Daily and weekly work is usually self-planned. Unusual problem and conditions are discussed with the supervisor.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed on a periodic basis by the nurse or program supervisor through written reports and oral conferences. Work is reviewed by peers in case presentations to the treatment team.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions could have some physical or emotional effect on the patient population served, especially if the nurse fails to observe change in a patient's condition.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Employee has contact with a special group of patients (retarded, mentally ill, alcoholics, etc.) who may not understand the employee's work function. The employee also has contact with other disciplines and community groups.

Nature and Purpose - Employees direct, motivate, and influence patients in delivering nursing services and to follow a physician's orders.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Hazards - Employee will have periodic exposure to hazards in the field (driving, rural or inner-city settings, inclement weather, patients) and to a lesser degree in clinic setting

Work Conditions - These may be mildly disagreeable if working in poor home environments or with difficult patients.

V. JOB REQUIREMENTS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of and skill in the application of nursing theory, techniques, and practices employed in the field of mental health; considerable knowledge of medications used in the area of work, their proper dosage, and effects and contraindications; and working knowledge of available resources and organizations.

Ability to secure the cooperation of patients and their families, and to elicit needed information; ability to interpret and explain physicians' instructions to patients and family; ability to record accurately services rendered and to interpret records and reports; ability to exercise good judgment in appraising situations and making decisions; ability to plan and execute work effectively; ability to deal tactfully with the public.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from a State accredited school of nursing and one year of experience in psychiatric nursing; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Minimum Education and Experience for a Trainee Appointment - Graduation from State accredited school of nursing.

Necessary Special Qualification - Licensed to practice as a Registered Nurse in North Carolina by the N. C. Board of Nursing