

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR SERIES

| <u>Code No.</u> | <u>Class Title</u> | <u>Occ. Area</u> | <u>Work Area</u> | <u>Prob. Period</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 4620(0966) | Mental Health Counselor I | 02 | 444 | 6 mo. | 05/01/82 |
| 4621(0966) | Mental Health Counselor II | 02 | 444 | 6 mo. | 05/01/82 |

Promotional Line: 284

Series Narrative

Employees in positions allocated to this series work in a paraprofessional capacity with patients in an in-patient or out-patient psychiatric medical care or mental health facility, in cooperation with the clinical staff. They use principles and techniques of psychology to provide individualized health care designed to achieve an improved mental state for psychiatric patients. Mental Health Counselors may supervise lower level staff and assist in administration and/or coordination of services.

DESCRIPTIONS OF LEVELS OF WORK

Level I: Mental Health Counselor I

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Employees in positions allocated to this level apply basic behavioral science principles and techniques to the observation and treatment of psychiatric patients. They work under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse in cooperation with clinical staff.

A Mental Health Counselor I typically--

1. systematically observes, assesses, reports, and documents subjectively and objectively the covert and overt baseline data regarding patients' psychiatric states, such as affect (depressed, sad, elated), thought content (logical, illogical), and behavior (withdrawn, agitated)
2. develops and maintains therapeutic alliances with patients and their families; participates in individual or group therapeutic activities (such as goals groups, family support groups, exercise, art, or music groups); coordinates such activities with professional staff members
3. plans group sessions and field trips; assists patients with the activities of daily living
4. assesses the value of activities as they apply to the improved mental state of the patient
5. in direct cooperation with a Registered Nurse, develops, implements, and evaluates a course of action for each patient (such as behavior modification)
6. performs routine assessment of the state of the patient's physical health (such as measuring and recording temperature, blood pressure, weight and respiration)
7. implements portions of the nursing care program as assigned by the Registered Nurse, such as continual observation of patients, behavior modification, and assessing calorie counts (anorexics)

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8. assesses patient response and attempts to modify behavior
9. assists with controlling and secluding patients
10. participates in staff meetings, in-service training, and continuing education programs
11. performs other related duties as assigned

Level II: Mental Health Care Counselor II

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Employees in positions allocated to this level apply advanced behavioral science principles and techniques in the observation and treatment of more acutely ill psychiatric patients, under the general supervision of a Registered Nurse and in cooperation with the clinical staff. they also act as lead workers for Mental Health Counselor I's under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse.

A Mental Health Care Counselor II typically--

1. in cooperation with the Registered Nurse, and with responsibility for maintaining a safe environment, assesses and plans unit activities which emphasize close observation of psychiatrically unstable patients. Such activities include one-to-one coverage, 15 minute checks, on-unit and/or off-unit activities
2. in cooperation with the health care team (resident; psychiatrist; occupational, activity, physical therapists; social worker; etc.) develops, maintains, implements, and evaluates patient care plans. In cooperation with the Registered Nurse, develops, maintains, implements, and evaluates nursing care plans
3. as a member of the clinical team, refines the departmental philosophy of care and develops policies, procedures, and orientation for new staff which implement that philosophy
4. supervises Mental Health Counselor I's by providing guidance and direction; meets with Administrative Nurse to evaluate employees
5. conducts in-service classes to teach other health team members the theories of psychiatric care and interviewing techniques
6. performs duties of a Mental Health Counselor I as required
7. performs other related duties as assigned

MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE QUALIFICATIONS FOR ENTRY INTO:

Level I: Mental Health Counselor I

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CREDENTIALS TO BE VERIFIED BY PLACEMENT OFFICER

1. (A) Baccalaureate degree with 18 semester hours in one or more of the behavioral sciences (such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, criminal justice, political science, etc.)

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or

- (B) three years of direct patient care experience in a psychiatric or mental health care setting

or

- (C) any combination of college course work, with emphasis on one or more of the behavioral sciences, and direct patient care experience in a psychiatric or mental Health care setting which totals 3 years

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES NEEDED TO UNDERTAKE JOB

1. basic knowledge of principles and techniques of psychology such as psychotherapy, and behavior modification
2. knowledge of the causes, nature, and treatment of mental illness
3. skill in therapeutic communication
4. skill in recognizing patients' needs

Level II: Mental Health Counselor II

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CREDENTIALS TO BE VERIFIED BY PLACEMENT OFFICER

1. possession of qualifications for entry into Level I of this series
2. one year of experience comparable to Level I of this series

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES NEEDED TO UNDERTAKE JOB

1. skill in assessment techniques
2. skill in recognizing patient needs
3. knowledge of the causes, nature, and treatment of mental illness
4. supervisory ability

Mental Health Counselor I
Mental Health Counselor II

(NEW)
(NEW)