

Date Established:

County of Humboldt Job Specification
SENIOR PSYCHIATRIC NURSE
Classification 0925
FLSA: Non-Exempt



DEFINITION

Under general direction, coordinates, leads, and participates in the work of staff providing professional nursing and psychiatric care to individuals striving to overcome behavioral health challenges; collaborates with other medical staff and interdisciplinary health treatment teams to evaluate and prepare treatment plans; provides direction and oversight of nursing activities as assigned; performs related work as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives direction from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises technical and functional direction over and provides training to lower-level staff. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the advanced journey-level classification in the Psychiatric Nurse series responsible for performing the most complex work assigned to the series. Incumbents regularly work on tasks which are varied and complex, requiring considerable discretion and independent judgment. Positions in the classification rely on experience and judgment to perform assigned duties and ensure efficient and effective servicing function of the assigned program area. Assignments are given with general guidelines and incumbents are responsible for establishing objectives, timelines and methods to deliver services. Work is typically reviewed upon completion for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements. This class is distinguished from the Supervising Psychiatric Nurse in that the latter is the full supervisory classification with responsibilities for the supervision and evaluation of assigned staff.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignment of different positions.

- Provides lead direction, training, and work review to staff providing direct medical and psychiatric nursing services to behavioral health patients; organizes and assigns work, sets priorities and follows up to ensure coordination and timely completion of assigned work; provides input into employee selection and other personnel decisions.
- Reviews psychiatric nursing work practices, procedures, and service delivery methods for compliance and recommends improvements.
- Assesses patients upon admission to unit and makes presentation of physical and mental condition findings to attending physicians.

- Provides professional nursing care to patients; observes and charts vital signs, including temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiration.
- Provides equipment and supplies required for patient examination or treatment; observes and records patient reactions and behaviors and explains procedures.
- Administers oral and hypodermic medications and observes and records their effects; obtains and records all orders from physician to facilitate patient treatment.
- Participates in the preparation of the nursing component of patient treatment plans, including physical assessments on new patients; as a member of an interdisciplinary treatment team, oversees and participates in evaluation and therapeutic activities.
- Performs crisis intervention, in person and on the phone, management of assaultive behavior, and general supportive counseling; coordinates or arranges for the provision of needed services including emergency detention when patient is a danger to self or others.
- Provides supportive services including individual, group or family counseling, and various group activities such as exercise and art.
- Confers with medical, mental health and inter-agency staff regarding client needs and ways of improving staff's ability to impact on clients.
- May serve as case coordinator for assigned patients or clients.
- Participates in case conferences and provides input regarding mental health cases and problems.
- Maintains prescribed standards of mental health treatment and ensures services are rendered in conformance with policy and procedural guidelines.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge and ability required.

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of leadership.
- Principles of providing functional direction and training.
- Principles and practices of planning, assigning, reviewing, and evaluating the quality of work of assigned staff.
- Training principles and practice.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances related to the work.
- Principles and practices of general psychiatric nursing care, as defined by the State of California licensing requirements.
- Techniques for dealing with disturbed individuals and their families.
- Medical and psychiatric terminology and first aid methods and procedures.
- Psychiatric medicines, including narcotics, and their effects on patients.
- Standard medical recordkeeping, including patient charting and the processing and maintenance of required documentation.
- Principles, practices and methods of community mental health treatment including interviewing, assessment and family and group counseling.

- Requirements for utilization review and infection control.
- Organizational and management practices as applied to the analysis and evaluation of programs, policies, and operational needs.
- Basic business mathematics and basic statistical techniques.
- Record keeping principles and practices.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Conduct psychiatric assessments and evaluations and report physical and mental condition findings to medical staff.
- Assign, direct, review and evaluate the work of assigned staff.
- Train staff in work procedures.
- Assess mental and/or emotional health status and develop effective patient treatment plans.
- Perform crisis intervention, manage assaultive behavior, respond promptly to patient emergency situations and take effective action to control potentially violent incidents.
- Prepare clear and complete reports, patient document and other written correspondence.
- Perform utilization review and infection control functions.
- Maintain accurate records of work performed.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Equivalent to a level of education and course of study, as determined by the State of California Board of Registered Nursing, which would qualify as an accredited program for incumbents to obtain licensure as a Registered Nurse. Typical ways of qualifying would be completion of an associate degree from an accredited educational institution with major coursework in nursing, psychology, or a related field

and

three (3) years of increasingly responsible experience in psychiatric nursing. Experience as a charge or lead nurse is desirable.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Must possess a valid US driver's license upon date of application. Must obtain California driver's license following hire date per California DMV regulations.
- Possession of a valid Registered Nursing license issued by the State of California Board of Registered Nursing.
- Possession of a valid CPR/AED certification.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- Mobility to work in a standard office setting, or clinical setting, and use standard office equipment, including a computer, and medical equipment; standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required, and travel to visit outpatient and rural clinics may be required; occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information; ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 45 pounds or heavier weights, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.
- Vision to assess emergency situations, including medical incidents and to read printed materials and a computer screen.
- Hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone.
- Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office and medical equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- Employees work in an office, out-patient, clinic, jail, juvenile facility or locked psychiatric facility environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.
- Employees may work outdoors and are occasionally exposed to loud noise levels and cold and/or hot temperatures.
- Employees interact with clients with behavioral disorders/erratic and assaultive behavior, including those which require emergency crisis intervention.
- Incumbents may be exposed to blood and body fluids in performing their assigned duties.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Some departments may require pre-employment screening measures before an offer of employment can be made (i.e. background screening, physical examination, etc.).