

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CLASS**

The MENTAL HEALTH THERAPIST 1 under the supervision of professional staff participates in the development and implementation of individual treatment plans for patients who are mentally, emotionally, behaviorally or physically impaired. Employees in this class carry out educational and therapeutic activities for, and participate in, the basic care and treatment of patients, provide security and escort services and contribute to the general therapeutic atmosphere of the work unit.

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES**

This is the second level of a three-level series. It is distinguished from the lower level by increased responsibility for treatment interventions and case monitoring duties and, under the supervision of professional staff, assisting with individual counseling, group therapy, skill training, and diversional recreational activities for patients. This level is distinguished from the higher level by the absence of responsibility for case management duties which involve working under the supervision of professional staff, to design, develop and organize programs in a specialty area of a treatment plan (e.g., criminal behavior and/or addiction). The absence of responsibility for carrying out behavioral therapy to patients, under the supervision of professional staff, further distinguishes this class from the higher level.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Depending on program area and/or shift assignment, employees in this class may perform any combination of the duties or tasks listed below. All nursing care functions are supervised by a Registered Nurse. Employees in this class perform clinical functions as allowed by hospital credentialing and clinical privileging or as permitted under appropriate clinical supervision.

1. **Treatment.** Typical tasks: under the supervision of professional staff, conducts classes in areas such as drug and alcohol abuse, assertiveness, human sexuality, independent living skills and personal effectiveness to aid in treatment of patients; with direct supervision, assists with individual counseling and group therapy; provides activities for patients such as recreation, operation and maintenance of the ward canteen, cultivation and care of the unit garden and other goal-oriented projects; works with professional staff to develop daily living skills and specific treatment programs for assigned patients.
2. **Case Monitoring.** Typical tasks: serves as a resource person for a small group of assigned patients and works with professional staff to provide the consistency necessary for effective treatment and to provide patients with a specific ward staff member to whom they can relate and on whom they can rely; spends time daily/weekly interacting with patients individually or as a group; becomes familiar with aspects of treatment plan as assigned; explains to patients aspects of treatment plan as assigned; assures that assigned patients have such personal items as soap, toothbrushes, and shampoo and are groomed, bathed, clothed and fed; observes and documents patients' behavior; documents patients' progress in relation to goals and objectives of treatment plan; attends and participates in treatment team meetings to facilitate the flow of information regarding patients' response to treatment and to provide input in developing or revising treatment programs for individual patients; assists in the planning of and participates in patient activities such as hiking and skating outings, family nights, picnics, pet projects, games and other activities.

- 3. Behavioral Management.** Typical tasks: monitors a potentially violent group of patients by ensuring that patients follow rules; observes patient potential for violence and socially destructive behavior and intervenes following hospital policies and procedures; spends time interacting with individual patients to develop rapport with patient in order to facilitate treatment process.
- 4. Recordkeeping.** Typical tasks: maintains record of patient care and treatment; observes and records patient behavior, incidence of illnesses and violence and interventions used; completes weekly summaries for use by treatment team; may be responsible for entering, retrieving, updating and deleting information from computer system.
- 5. Safety/Security Measures.** Typical tasks: observes and maintains security procedures; assists in random searches of patient areas and facilities for contraband and weapons; under direction and supervision from a physician or Registered Nurse, uses restraining and seclusion procedures on out-of-control patients, as necessary; enforces safety procedures against rule violations such as smoking in rooms and the presence of potentially harmful objects; protects patients from other patients who present a threat to their safety; makes regularly scheduled ward checks to account for whereabouts of patients; monitors patients on suicide precaution observation; may execute fire and emergency procedures pertaining to evacuations, life-threatening or medical emergencies, as required; escorts patients during various off-ward activities such as doctors appointments, court hearings and community outings.
- 6. Basic Patient Care.** Typical tasks: monitors and/or assists patients in daily living activities such as bathing, feeding, grooming and dressing; assists with lifting, moving, turning, and walking patients; assists with medical care such as collecting specimens (urine, and sputum), measuring blood pressure, pulse and respiration; under RN supervision administers oral medications and simple first aid treatments; assist with admitting and discharging patients to and from the wards (this includes taking vital signs, completing necessary paperwork and orienting patients to ward).
- 7. Physical Environment.** Typical tasks: ensures appropriate ongoing cleanliness to meet infection control standards; these tasks could include several of the following: sweeping, vacuuming, dusting, mopping, cleaning surfaces, emptying trash cans, washing and folding patient clothing, changing and making beds; supervises and directs patients in performing housekeeping tasks; assists with setting up and serving meals.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

Employees in this class are in daily contact with psychiatric patients to provide care and treatment. They interact with families of patients to gather pertinent information to aid in treatment process. Employees have periodic contact with police to obtain information and respond to inquiries. Employees also meet with other hospital staff to obtain and relay information.

## SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Employees in this class receive general supervision from a unit supervisor or other designated staff. All nursing functions/tasks must be supervised by a Registered Nurse. Clinical responsibilities are supervised by appropriate professional staff. Clinical responsibilities are performed in accordance with employee's level of credentials and privileges as granted by hospital. Work assignments are received verbally or in writing from the assigned supervisor and the ward management team. Work is reviewed through oral and written communications at weekly meetings designed to discuss and solve problems relating to the functional

operations of the unit. The following guidelines establish the standard under which these employees work: Oregon Administrative Rules, Oregon Revised Statutes pertaining to institutional health care, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals regulations, Nurse Practice Act, Code of Federal Regulations, agency policies and procedures and program manuals.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Positions in this class are primarily found within mental health facilities and institutions. They require the willingness to work in the environment associated with the position's location and purpose. In addition, they require the willingness to maintain a sympathetic and understanding attitude towards the mentally ill. Some positions require the willingness to work overtime, on-call and/or rotating schedules.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES (KSA)**

General knowledge of techniques and practices involved in the care and treatment of physically, emotionally, mentally and behaviorally impaired persons.

Basic knowledge of routine nursing techniques, materials and processes involved in the care and treatment of physically, emotionally, mentally and behaviorally impaired persons.

Basic knowledge of problems related to the physically, emotionally, mentally and behaviorally impaired.

Skill in providing care or treatment for physically, emotionally, mentally and behaviorally impaired patients.

Skill in communicating orally to provide or exchange information.

Skill in preparing written communications such as records, documentation, reports, etc.

Ability to use prescribed treatment interventions to effect behavior change.

Ability to learn and work within specific agency policies and procedures affecting assigned work.

Ability to understand and apply written and oral instructions and directions.

Ability to learn and carry out prescribed nursing care, custodial and housekeeping duties and security measures.

Ability to participate in conducting classes for mentally, emotionally, and behaviorally impaired patients.

Ability to assist in providing counseling and supportive group therapy.

Ability to work with professional staff in developing living skills, etc.

Ability to assist in the planning of patient activities.

Ability to participate in treatment team meetings.

Ability to guide and direct patients individually and in groups.

Some positions in this class may require the following ability:

Ability to learn to use a computer to enter, retrieve, update and delete information.

**SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Positions in this class require certification as a Basic Nursing Assistant.

Some positions in this class must obtain a Certified Medication Aide (CMA) certification to be able to administer oral medication.

Some positions in this class require the ability to obtain a valid motor vehicle operator's license.

**NOTE:** The KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS are required for initial consideration. ABILITIES may be required for initial consideration, at any time during the selection process, or during a trial service period as a final stage of the selection process. Some duties performed by positions in this class may require different KSA's. No attempt is made to describe every KSA required for **all** positions in this class. Additional KSA requirements will be explained on the recruiting announcement.

Adopted 4/90

Revised

Examples of work are typical of duties assigned to this class. No attempt is made to describe every duty performed by all positions in this class.