

SOCIAL WORKER III

Work in this class involves providing intensive social work services in serious and complicated cases which require the flexible use of a wide range of social work skills and intervention techniques. Services are provided in a variety of settings including local human services agencies, public health departments, correctional facilities, teaching hospitals, medical schools, juvenile training centers, and state institutions. Work may involve investigation of alleged neglect or abuse; providing in-depth assessment of family dynamics and needs, assessment, intervention and treatment of patients and or families with acute to severe medical and/or emotional disorders and mental illnesses; serving as expert witness at court hearings; or advanced social work intervention, instruction, and research in a teaching hospital. Work is distinguished from the Social Worker II classification by greater involvement in sensitive and traumatic situations such as custody and removal of client from homes, catastrophic and terminal illness, and/or family dysfunction. Employees supervise and train lower level social workers, students, and interns. Employees report to clinic managers, program directors, or unit supervisors.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Employees provide social work services in the areas of adult and child protective services, custody and adoption, and foster care work which involve the assessment of individual and family dynamics and needs, serving as expert witness at court hearings, crisis intervention, and counseling. Work involves explaining diagnosis and treatment alternatives to patients and families, counseling and participating in education endeavors for physicians, psychologists, nurses, other health disciplines, students and social work interns, and participating in research activities.

Intricacy - Employees use considerable judgment in conducting individual assessments, selecting and providing treatment techniques or dealing with psychosocial aspects or researching catastrophic or terminal diseases. Employees provide in-depth assessment of family dynamics, determine the extent of neglect or abuse, and provide counseling for clients with complex needs. Employees usually refer the most severe cases, such as severe phobias or unusual violence patterns to a higher level social worker or therapist. Employees educate and consult with other staff and community professionals for information purposes and joint case planning. Some didactic consultation may also be involved.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires a thorough understanding of social work assessment techniques and treatment approaches primarily of a crisis, supportive, and behavioral nature. Considerable knowledge of legal and administrative aspects of programs. Employees may require knowledge of medical diagnoses, treatment alternatives, disease pathophysiology, biopsychosocial, adaptive, and coping responses to illnesses.

Guidelines - Includes state and federal laws and regulations, JCAHO standards, professional ethics, theories of standard methods and procedures, and quality assurance standards. Employees may participate in development of new theories or adaptation of techniques in the field of social work.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Work involves comprehensive child and adult services that are jointly planned with other members of a multi-disciplinary team or protective services committee and supervisors. Assessment and intervention are performed with considerable independence. Medication issues are referred to physicians and legal precedents are utilized in some settings.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed by unit supervisor, program manager, or higher level clinician, usually on a general basis except for review of sensitive legal, abuse, or commitment situations.

Scope of Decisions - Directly affects clients, their families, foster homes, adoptive parents, adult care facilities and community agencies, depending on case load.

Consequence of Decisions - Assessments, service/treatment decisions affect the safety and well-being of clients in neglect or abuse situations, affects adjustments in adoptive and foster care placements and in long term placements; or the adaptive coping response to illness and surgery.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Includes clients and families, a variety of professional disciplines, community agency groups, court officials, students, interns, or residents.

Nature and Purpose - To determine extent of neglect, abuse, and facilitate move to appropriate setting to assess strengths and risk factors related to physical and mental health; and provide counseling to alleviate family crises. Employees also communicate to facilitate adaptive coping responses to illness and surgery, provide expert opinions to legal officials or medical staff, and provide didactic experiences for students, residents, or interns.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Employees work in settings which range from human services agencies, clinics, hospitals, or offices, but often involve visits to client's home or contacts in institutions or correctional facilities.

Hazards - Includes contacts with clients and/or family members who may be hostile, resistant, and violent.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Thorough knowledge of social work principles, techniques, and practices, and their application to complex casework, groupwork, and community problems. Considerable knowledge of a wide range of medical, behavioral, and/or psychosocial problems and their treatment theory. Considerable knowledge of family and group dynamics and a range of intervention techniques, governmental and private organizations, and resources in the community, laws, regulations, and policies which govern the program. General knowledge of the methods and principles of casework supervision and training. In certain settings, considerable knowledge of medical terminology, disease processes and their treatment as they relate to decisions regarding clinical interventions and appropriate therapies based on medical or psychological diagnosis. Skill in establishing rapport with a client and in applying techniques or assessing psychosocial, behavioral, and psychological aspects of client's problems. Ability to supervise, train, or instruct lower-level social workers, students, or interns in the program. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with members of case load and their families, as well as civic, legal, medical, social, and religious organizations. Ability to express ideas clearly and concisely and to plan and execute work effectively.

Minimum Training and Experience Requirements - Master's degree in social work from an accredited school of social work; Bachelor's degree in social work from an accredited school of social work and completion of the Child Welfare Collaborative (Child Welfare positions only); Bachelor's degree in social work from an accredited school of social work and one year directly related experience; Master's degree in a human services field and one year of directly related experience; Bachelor's degree in a human services field from an accredited college or university and two years directly related experience; Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and three years of directly related experience