

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CLASS**

The PSYCHIATRIC SOCIAL WORKER provides individual, family, and group social work counseling and other social work treatment interventions to psychiatric hospital patients and assumes primary responsibility for discharge planning.

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURES**

This is a single classification and not currently part of a series of classes.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1.**Individual Evaluation and Assessment.** Typical tasks: develops patient evaluations or court letters based on patient interviews and interviews of family members, friends, and other contacts in the community; describes psychosocial functioning, nature and extent of disability, potential for rehabilitation, assessment of dangerousness, and identification of resources needed upon discharge; initiates and secures available resources.
- 2.**Treatment and Discharge Planning.** Typical tasks: participates as a member of a treatment team to determine eligibility of persons for admission to the institution and identifies community resources as an alternative to admission; works with treatment team to formulate and periodically evaluate a plan of treatment which is in compliance with Federal entitlement programs and regulatory agencies; develops and implements discharge/aftercare plans for all patients; assists patient in planning return to community and arranges needed resources for continuing care; identifies, coordinates, and plans for financial needs of patients, assists patient in management of financial resources as needed, and acts as patient advocate in obtaining needed services.
- 3.**Counseling.** Typical tasks: conducts individual, family, and group therapy sessions to reach therapeutic goals determined in consultation with the treatment team; trains students and interested staff in various therapy techniques.
- 4.**Documentation of Services.** Typical tasks: maintains ongoing documentation of social work intervention, planning, and outcome by preparing reports and making necessary entries to treatment plan documents.
- 5.**Liaison Functions.** Typical tasks: acts as a community and family liaison by initiating and maintaining necessary contact with the patient's family, the courts, Psychiatric Security Review Board, district attorneys, human resource agencies, mental health agencies, parole and probation personnel, residential care facilities, and related resource and regulatory agencies; provides support and consultation to community service providers in the form of guidance and counseling; compiles data and conducts studies on program effectiveness via follow-up of discharged patients.

## **RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS**

Employees in this class have daily contact with patients, relatives of patients, and treatment team members from a variety of professions to assess patients' needs, provide direct patient services, or arrange for services to be provided to the patient by others. Employees in this class are also frequently in contact (by telephone or in person) with other human resource agency staff, police agencies, court and Psychiatric Security Review Board personnel, attorneys, Social Security Administration and Veterans' Administration personnel, and certified residential care facility personnel to provide other necessary services to the patients.

## **SUPERVISION RECEIVED**

Employees in this class work under general supervision. Work is reviewed by the unit program supervisor and social work department head for conformance with established policies and procedures, Federal regulations and current social work standards. Treatment and services being provided to the patients on a daily basis are also reviewed by the treatment team for conformance with the objectives outlined in the patient treatment plan.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Positions are primarily found within mental health facilities and institutions. They require the willingness to work in the environment associated with the positions' location and purpose.

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

General knowledge of normal and abnormal human development and behavior.

General knowledge of recognized treatment interventions such as behavior modification; family, group, and individual psychotherapies; psychosexual education; substance abuse interventions; and use of psychotropic medications.

Skill in developing and maintaining a therapeutic relationship with mentally ill patients.

Skill in communicating with patients and families who may be experiencing distress.

Skill in conducting and teaching individual, family, and group therapies.

Skill in patient and family education regarding various aspects of mental illness.

Skill in interviewing to gather data needed to diagnose the needs of individuals and their families.

Skill in preparing clear, concise written case narratives and reports.

Skill in functioning as patient advocate to ensure that appropriate social services are being delivered which could include working with State and Federal agencies and community organizations for the coordination of services.

Ability to work with resistive, acutely, and chronically mentally ill; character disordered; and substance abusing patients.

Ability to understand and reduce the effects of institutionalization on patients.

Ability to maintain effective working relationships with both professional

and paraprofessional institution staff and public and private sector professional staff.

Ability to understand organizational systems and how to work within them for the benefit of the patient.

Ability to assess the level of dangerousness of patients and the potential for explosive behavior.

Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with representatives of a wide variety of community agencies.

Ability to work as a member of a treatment team.

Some positions in this class will require the following ability:

Ability to testify clearly, effectively, and professionally in Psychiatric Security Board hearings or in court as an expert witness.

**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.