

COUNTY OF SOLANO

PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIAN (Entry)

Rev. 10/00

Under administrative supervision and technical direction of licensed staff and in a learning capacity, assists in the provision and coordination of crisis intervention and support counseling services for people with urgent emotional, mental health, and substance abuse problems; within defined policy and practices performs assessment, evaluation, referral, hospitalization and initial casework management; maintains records related to patient or client services; provides medical services within the scope of their license; and performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Mental Health Psychiatric Technician (Entry) is the entry level in this class series. All work is performed within the limits of licensing and professional standards. Incumbents work under the technical direction of licensed professional staff to provide medical services within the scope of their licensure; assist in the performance of casework duties in providing crisis intervention, initial support counseling, identifying client needs, determining need for hospitalization, using community resources, assisting clients with immediate problems, and in client advocacy. Final disposition of cases is subject to review and approval by medical and/or licensed clinical supervisory and professional staff.

The work is characterized by the performance of medical duties within the scope of the license, performance of crisis intervention, intake, assessment, and initial establishment of limited scope, difficulty, and complexity. Incumbents are expected to acquire greater independence and demonstrate proficiency in the full range of duties required for promotion to the Mental Health Psychiatric Technician. The Mental Health Psychiatric Technician (Entry) class is distinguished from the Mental Health Psychiatric Technician class in that the latter class requires independence of action, performance of the full range of duties, and broader participation in treatment team consultations. The Mental Health Psychiatric Technician (Entry) class is further distinguished from classes in the Mental Health Specialist class series and the Crisis Specialist in that the latter classes are not assigned medical duties and primarily perform crisis intervention, initial case management, short term support counseling, casework maintenance, and in the provision of initial rehabilitative services.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

1. Assesses client's physical condition and recommends appropriate medication and/or treatment according to a system of priorities and facility protocols.
2. Administers medications orally, externally, and/or by injection under supervision, as defined and regulated by State laws and posts to the client's chart; observes client's responses to medication and notifies appropriate staff when necessary.
3. In accordance with established procedures and format, learns to conduct initial interviews with clients and significant others to obtain and record information concerning medical, social history, and client's current mental condition; establishes case files.
4. Learns to determine potential for harm to self and others; identify initial level of services needed; recommend alternative treatment solutions including immediate hospitalization; observe and report client's behavior.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES, Continued

5. Learns to counsel clients and other affected parties to resolve immediate psychiatric crisis situation and other situational problems; orient new patients in program requirements including client rights and responsibilities.
6. Participates in individual and group support counseling to enhance mental and emotional stability, level of social functioning and independent living utilizing a variety of support counseling modalities and social rehabilitation techniques.
7. Learns how to provide information about the availability of education and other services to clients, families, and other affected parties.
8. In accordance with established treatment plan, learns how to implement initial phases of plan, observes and records client' behavior to assure effectiveness of initial plan.
9. Learns how to refer client to other available community services and as needed contacts these organizations on client's behalf.
10. Learns how to teach clients independent living skills in such areas as public transportation, shopping, and appointment making.
11. Makes arrangements for care of clients and transportation of clients to other service providers.
12. On behalf of client, acts as liaison between relatives, guardians, employers, physicians, and other service providers
13. Participates in treatment team conferences to assist in the development of treatment plans and in the provision of services; provides recommendations on treatment plans and need for other services.
14. Assists in the preparation and revision of reports and correspondence and maintains a variety of documentation, such as charting observed behaviors, treatment plan objectives, case files, progress reports, discharge summaries, incident reports, financial and billing information and other data.
15. Attends and participates in a variety of internal and external meetings such as daily treatment team report, clinical meetings, interdisciplinary case conferences, inter-agency meetings, etc.
16. Learns how to coordinate service delivery with other caseworkers, probation officers, community and support services, and appropriate referrals for patients upon discharge; work with other agencies to obtain information, coordinate services, determine appropriate venue for service, provide training about mental illness, and related matters.
17. Assists patients with paperwork and enrollment procedures for various treatment and social support programs.
18. When certified through a "Management of Assaultive Behavior" course, may assist with physically controlling violent and/or combative clients; assists in maintaining safety and security of facilities.
19. May operate vehicles to transport patients between facilities or to perform field duties of monitoring service provision, working with patients or clients at other sites, and/or to coordinate with other agencies.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Sit for extended periods; frequently stand and walk; sufficient manual dexterity to perform repetitive motion in various duties such as: keyboarding, writing, filing, reaching and grasping above shoulder level; normal eye-hand coordination; body strength sufficient to lift and carry case files; corrected vision to normal range to read fine print and computer screen; corrected hearing to speak and hear sufficiently to communicate clearly over the telephone and in person; ability to use office equipment including telephones, calculators, copiers, facsimile, computers, and other related peripheral equipment such as printers and scanners. Some assignments may require strength to lift and move clients with appropriate assistance and color vision to distinguish medications and laboratory results.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is performed in a variety of office, clinic and field environments and includes continuous contact with staff and the public; may be required to enter private homes to make family home visits for purpose of investigation; work involves stressful situations and includes dealing with erratic and sometimes threatening behavior; may travel to community areas that are potentially dangerous where there is exposure to potential bodily injury, infections which may cause chronic disease or death; offensive odors; high noise levels; insect bites; dust and pollens.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Social and psychological needs, problems, attitudes, behavior patterns, and basic counseling methods for children, adults and older adults with emotional disorders or psychiatric disabilities.
- Dynamics of human behavior.
- Federal, State and local laws pertaining to mental health treatment.
- Availability of, and procedures for obtaining, a wide variety of community and governmental services and resources.
- Methods and techniques of interviewing and crisis intervention.
- Principles and concepts of counseling including group leader functions.
- Fundamental understanding of psychiatric and psychosocial treatment plan development and implementation.
- Basic pharmacology of medications and psychotropic drugs.
- Terminology of psychiatric social work including crisis intervention.
- Services and activities of public and private health and welfare agencies including referral sources and community resources.
- Basic techniques of rehabilitative counseling.
- Use of automated equipment and standard office support applications software related to the work.
- Drug and alcohol use, dependence and impact on psychiatric conditions.
- Strength based consumer/family focused partnership service delivery models.
- Impact of cultural, gender or socio-economical status on manifestations of emotional distress and mental illness.

Ability to:

- Assess client immediate psychiatric and psychosocial needs and insure client's receipt of needed services.
- Interview a variety of people with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, temperaments, and mental capabilities.
- Recognize factors causing reaction or changes in client's condition or behavior.
- Make referrals to other providers of mental health services.
- Assist in the development and implementation of treatment plans and in the provision of rehabilitative services.
- Prepare appropriate case files, legal and clinical documentation.
- Work in stressful, emotional and confrontational situations; respond appropriately in crisis situations.
- Understand, interpret and apply complex mental health technical materials and applicable laws, codes and regulations.
- Prepare complex and detailed reports and records and maintain confidentiality of information.
- Communicate orally and in written format and interact in situations requiring instructional, persuasive, consultative, counseling and motivational skills.
- Provide training, guidance and consultation to other staff.
- Assist in physically containing violent and/or combative clients.
- Deal effectively with clients of various ages and socio-economic and cultural groups including those with physical and/or emotional problems.
- Work collaboratively as a member of a multi-disciplinary mental health treatment team.
- Recognize and respect limits of authority and responsibility.
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with clients, children, representatives or the target population, employees of County departments, outside professional staff, and other agencies and the public.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Current licensure by the State of California Psychiatric Technician Examiners as a Psychiatric Technician.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Driver's License: Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Class C Driver's License may be required at the time of appointment. Loss of the Class C Driver's License is a cause for discipline. Individuals who do not meet this driver's license requirement due to a physical disability will be considered for accommodation on a case-by-case basis.

Assignment Requirements: Some positions in these classes may require work in an out-station location or in a setting with other professionals integrated as a team.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Travel: Independent travel may be required to various work sites and client residences.

Background Investigation: Candidates for some positions in this class will be required to pass a background investigation in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and/or policy.

