

## MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR SERIES

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Occ. Area</u>	<u>Work Area</u>	<u>Prob. Period</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
4620 (0966)	Mental Health Counselor I	02	444	6 mo.	00/00/00
4621 (0966)	Mental Health Counselor II	02	444	6 mo.	00/00/00

### *Promotional Line: 000*

#### Series Narrative

Employees in this series work in a paraprofessional capacity, with patients in either an in-patient or out-patient psychiatric medical care or mental health facility, in cooperation with the clinical staff. Incumbents use principals and techniques of psychology to provide individualized health care designed to achieve an improved mental state for psychiatric patients. Mental Health Counselors may supervise lower level staff and assist in administration and coordination of services.

#### DESCRIPTIONS OF LEVELS OF WORK

#### **Level I: Mental Health Counselor I** **4620 (0966)**

Employees in this position apply basic behavioral science principals and techniques to the observation and treatment of psychiatric patients.

A Mental Health Counselor I typically –

1. observes, assesses, reports, and documents subjectively and objectively covert and overt baseline data regarding patients' psychiatric states, such as affect (depressed, sad, elated), thought content (logical, illogical), and behavior (withdrawn, agitated)
2. develops and maintains therapeutic alliances with patients and their families; participates in individual or group therapeutic activities (such as goals groups, family support groups, exercise, art, or music groups); coordinates such activities with professional staff members
3. plans group sessions; assists patients with the activities of daily living
4. assesses the value of activities as they apply to the improved mental state of the patient
5. in direct cooperation with a Registered Nurse, develops, implements, and evaluates a course of action for each patient (such as behavior modification)
6. performs routine assessment of the state of the patient's physical health (such as measuring and recording temperature, blood pressure, weight, and respiration)
7. implements portions of the nursing care program as assigned by the Registered Nurse, such as continual observation of patients, behavior modification, and assessing calorie counts (i.e. for anorexics)

8. assesses patient response and attempts to modify behavior
9. assists with controlling and secluding patients
10. participates in staff meetings, in-service training, and continuing education programs
11. performs other related duties as assigned

**Level II: Mental Health Counselor II****4621 (0966)**

Employees at this level apply advanced behavioral science principles and techniques in the observation and treatment of more acutely ill psychiatric patients, under the general supervision of a Registered Nurse and in cooperation with the clinical staff. Employees in this position also act as lead workers for employees at the next lower level of this series under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse.

A Mental Health Counselor II typically –

1. in cooperation with the Registered Nurse and with responsibility for maintaining a safe environment, assesses and plans unit activities which emphasize close observation of psychiatrically unstable patients. Such activities may include one-to-one coverage, 15-minute checks, and on-unit as well as off-unit activities
2. in cooperation with the health care team (which may consist of resident, psychiatrist, occupational/ activity/physical therapists, social worker, etc.) develops, maintains, implements, and evaluates patient care plans. In cooperation with the Registered Nurse, develops, maintains, implements, and evaluates nursing care plans
3. as a member of a clinical team, refines the departmental philosophy of care and develops policies, procedures, and orientation for new staff which implement that philosophy
4. supervises next lower level of this series by providing guidance and direction; meets with Administrative Nurse to evaluate employees
5. conducts in-service classes to teach other health team members the theories of psychiatric care and interviewing techniques
6. performs duties of the next lower level of series
7. performs other related duties as assigned

**MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR ENTRY INTO:**

**Level I: Mental Health Counselor I****4620 (0966)**

## CREDENTIALS TO BE VERIFIED BY PLACEMENT OFFICER

1. (A) Baccalaureate degree with 18 semester hours in one or more of the behavioral sciences (such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, criminal justice, political science, etc.)  
OR
- (B) three years of direct patient care experience in a psychiatric or mental health care setting  
OR
- (C) any combination of college course work with emphasis on one or more of the behavioral sciences and direct patient care experience in a psychiatric or mental health care setting which totals 3 years

## PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES NEEDED TO UNDERTAKE JOB

1. Basic knowledge of principles and techniques of psychology, such as psychotherapy and behavior modification
2. Knowledge of the causes, nature, and treatment of mental illness
3. Skill in therapeutic communication
4. Skill in recognizing patients' needs

**Level II: Mental Health Counselor II****4621 (0966)**

## CREDENTIALS TO BE VERIFIED BY PLACEMENT OFFICER

1. (A) Baccalaureate degree with 18 semester hours in one or more of the behavioral sciences (such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, criminal justice, political science, etc.)  
OR
- (B) three years of direct patient care experience in a psychiatric or mental health care setting  
OR
- (C) any combination of college course work with emphasis on one or more of the behavioral sciences and direct patient care experience in a psychiatric or mental health care setting which totals 3 years

AND

- 2. one year of experience comparable to that gained as a Mental Health Counselor I

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES NEEDED TO UNDERTAKE JOB

- 1. Skill in assessment techniques
- 2. Skill in recognizing patient needs
- 3. Knowledge of the causes, nature, and treatment of mental illness
- 4. Supervisory ability

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Mental Health Counselor I.....	REVISED
Mental Health Counselor II .....	REVISED