

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE WORKER

Work in this class involves providing paraprofessional supportive casework services and information to clients, families, and community groups in local mental health centers or institutional programs. Employees provide support services to substance abuse counselors or other professionals by conducting initial screenings and limited evaluations, holding discussions with family members, and conducting topical discussions. Work also includes providing liaison with community counselors and arranging for after-care and referral services. Employees provide basic substance abuse education-information services.

### I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Employees act as support to counselors and/or other professionals, by conducting initial screenings and evaluations, compiling social histories and treatment plans, and reviewing progress of client with the treatment team. Employees may lead group discussions or conduct individual discussions with client and/or family under the supervision of a professional counselor, and may serve as a primary therapist or substitute therapist under close supervision. Group discussions are general in nature and include orientation to programs and/or patient education/ information concerning substance abuse. Topics/subjects may include psychosocial effects of substance abuse, employment, AA, and sources for referral. Discussions are generated usually through the use of films or brochures. Employees may provide a community liaison role by arranging for after-care services and monitoring continued abstinence which includes gathering statistical information and follow-up for the institution or mental health center; may participate on a limited basis in recreational activities with the client; may arrange for transportation for such activities or for referral services.

Guidelines - Employees use guidelines set forth by JCAH standards, after-care manuals, and agency policies/standards.

### II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Work is carried out within an institution or center which cooperates with a variety of services units/agencies (internally/externally). Decisions concerning changes in treatment goals or plans are approved by the treatment team and psychiatrist. During contacts with the community, the employees' representation of services offered by the institution or mental health center reflects upon quality of services being offered to the client.

Consequence of Action - Employees' input into treatment team impacts upon active progress or recovery of the client. Errors in medical record documentation or statistical follow-up information may jeopardize the standing of the facility.

Review - Employees receive verbal instruction daily and review work with supervisor in weekly staffings. Reviews concerning performance are conducted on a periodic basis.

### III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees provide educational information to clients, families, or the community concerning substance abuse and its effect upon mental, physical, and psychosocial factors. Employees provide input to the treatment team and physician regarding client's or family's needs and progress.

Purpose - Employees' discussions with clients, families, and community influence attitudes and progress toward treatment. Employees' input into treatment team is for the purpose of information sharing and relieving regarding family systems, client's progress, and needs.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Nature of Working Conditions - Work is performed within an institution or a local community program.

Nature and Potential of Personal Hazards - Clients may sometimes display aggressive, violent behavior which may cause problems in group or individual counseling.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Ability to communicate and identify effectively with substance abusers and community groups in distributing general information and education related to substance abuse. Ability to develop effective working relationships with professionals involved in treating substance abuse.

Minimum Education and Experience - Graduation from high school and one year of experience in substance abuse in a supportive informational role; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.