

HABILITATION SPECIALIST III

This is professional level work within a local mental health or developmental disabilities program such as Parents and Children Together, other early intervention program or itinerant teams of professionals providing in-home or consultation services to clients with or at risk for developmental disabilities, delays or atypical development (emotional/behavioral disorders) and other family members; or serving as both a habilitation coordination coordinator and manager of a developmental disability program component such as CAP-DD or ICF-MR.

Employees providing in-home or center-based consultation services are responsible for utilizing a variety of formalized assessment tools for the child and/or other family members and coordinating with other disciplines and agencies to ensure a comprehensive assessment; reviewing family resources, relationships and attitudes, and making independent clinical judgements regarding appropriate services to be provided to client and family. Employees establish both short and long-range client and family-centered goals and develop, negotiate, implement, monitor and adjust habilitation and treatment plans, and coordinate specialized services such as physical, occupational, psychological, and speech therapies. Employees provide effective utilization of program services, enablement, advocacy and providing family support; teach parents/care providers in activities and skills which enhance the development of the client. Employees utilize community resources, plan and develop parent support groups, and serve as a program consultant/liaison within the community. Tasks are independently completed with review and clinical supervision, and guidance available on an "as needed" basis. Employees serving as managers of developmental disability program components such as CAP-DD, ICF-MR are responsible for developing program services based on clients' needs. Program objectives, policies and procedures are compiled, evaluated, and revised as necessary. Employees secure program funding through grants. Employees are involved in coordinating interdisciplinary services for clients' needs and develop, negotiate, and review contracts with agencies to provide services. Employees serve as habilitation coordinator for clients and supervise in-home care provided by contracted staff. Employees may also provide consultation to community agencies, organizations, and technical guidance to staff.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Work assignments include providing comprehensive habilitative and treatment programming and individualized family service planning with clients and families or coordinating the activities of a dynamic program in which services are developed to meet specific client needs. Clients are referred from a variety of sources and employees perform a comprehensive assessment to determine clients' needs, develop an interdisciplinary treatment or habilitation or individualized family service plan, provide individual and family counseling concerning grief and acceptance of the clients' disabilities and of program services. Employees are also involved in teaching parents, siblings, and/or care providers techniques which support and reinforce the interdisciplinary approach to the clients' treatment.

Employees designated as manager or coordinator of programs such as ICF-DD and CAP-MR assess client needs and resources in order to design program services and to evaluate program objectives, policies, and procedures. Work may also involve developing and negotiating contracts with community agencies to provide services. Employees secure funding through grants and are responsible for program budget.

Intricacy - Employees provide complex habilitative services to clients with a variety of developmentally or clinically-related problems and utilize an in-depth knowledge of the field of developmental disabilities and infant and child mental health and changing professional trends in providing a comprehensive assessment of client needs. Employees also coordinate interdisciplinary services such as physical,

occupational and speech/language therapies. Employees are responsible for incorporating available and potential resources and state directives into a systematic format to meet client needs.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work requires a thorough understanding of the concepts, practices, and techniques of the field of developmental disabilities and infant and child mental health and related disciplines. Employees utilize this knowledge, as well as an in-depth knowledge of community resources/agencies and program requirements in providing client care.

Guidelines - Mental Health standards outline the basic components of program and service to be provided. Agency policies and procedures and professional resource materials are also utilized. In the case of services to infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, federal regulations related to P.L. 99-457 play a major role. NC Division of Social Services reporting procedures for abuse and neglect are also followed.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employees who are responsible for coordination of a program component independently plan their daily activities, receive administrative direction from the program director and technical advice from peers, program consultants and the program director. Employees provide direct client services; typically receive new case assignments from their program supervisor; and may seek technical advice for clients with complex developmental needs.

Nature of Review - Direct client care is planned in concert with an interdisciplinary team and may be reviewed by other professionals. General administrative review is provided by program monitoring or by the program coordinator/director.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions regarding comprehensive habilitation services will affect the progress of the clients and/or may affect the direction and priorities of the program.

Consequence of Decisions - Professional decisions may have an effect on the clients' well being. Decisions concerning program administration may affect program purpose and impact upon clients participating in the program.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - Work requires contact with clients and their families, a variety of professional disciplines, and community resources.

Nature and Purpose - Employees work with clients, families, and other professionals in the delivery of comprehensive habilitation services. Work also involves providing counseling to parents and siblings regarding grief and acceptance of the situation and requires the employees to serve as a technical resource to related programs and special interest groups and to provide training to parents, care providers, and staff.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Employees work in settings which range from modern mental health facilities to community residential settings or home environments in which odors and noise may be present due to the functioning level of the client.

Hazards - Behavioral problems such as aggression of clients can cause bodily injury for employees in some settings.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Thorough knowledge of the concepts, practices, and techniques of the field of developmental disabilities and infant and child mental health and the population served to include assessments, development of comprehensive programs and/or treatment plans. Skill in writing habilitation treatment and individualized family service plans and programs. Ability to evaluate and document progress and present to the interdisciplinary team. Ability to coordinate and instruct staff, family members, and care providers in carrying out methods and techniques utilized in developmental disabilities and infant and child mental health and family studies field. Ability to establish rapport and relate to clients, families, community agencies and groups, and a variety of service disciplines.

Minimum Training and Experience - Graduation from a four-year college or university with a Bachelor's degree in special education, elementary education or early childhood education, psychology, nursing, child development, counseling, infant mental health, social work, child and family studies and two years of professional experience working with the population served (see note); or graduation from a four-year college or university with a Bachelor's degree in another human service field and three years of professional experience working with the population served (see note); or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

Note: The population served includes infants, toddlers, or preschoolers with or at risk for developmental delays, disabilities or atypical development in the case of center or home-based early intervention programs. For such service settings, experience may also be with families of such children, other care providers, or non-handicapped children of this age or with child mental health related programs. In other service settings such as CAP-DD, components or itinerant teams, experience may be with adults with developmental disabilities or mental illness.