

RECREATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This is para-professional work involving extensive direct patient contact in the daily operation of a therapeutic day-treatment program in a unit in the Department of Mental Hygiene. Incumbents in this position will perform both recreational and occupational duties within a program, however, incumbents specialize in assisting in the modification and development of therapeutic recreational activities. This position differs from Occupational Therapy Assistant since incumbents are not involved in evaluating a patient's disability and developing a remedial treatment plan in accordance with a physician's diagnosis. This position differs from Activities Therapy Aide because incumbents perform their duties with less direct supervision and may even be responsible for administering an aspect of a therapeutic program at a center. Work is performed under the general supervision of higher level activity staff and the Clinical Unit Administrator. Supervision may be exercised over Activity Therapy Aides in the area of program execution.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

1. Develops and participates in a variety of functions involving the use of activities as learning experiences;
2. Encourages patients in conversation and encourages patient participation in games and activities to increase their socialization skills;
3. Instructs patients in skills and techniques necessary for their active participation in sports, hobbies and other recreational activities;
4. Assists in evaluating patient needs in the development of recreational therapy programs;
5. May assist Recreational and/or Occupational Therapist in the development of weekly program schedules;
6. May inventory and requisition supplies and expendables under the approval of a higher level employee;
7. Assists patients in the development of skills and interest in social activities;
8. Attends unit and activity staff meetings to provide input on needs and progress of patients;
9. May orient new activity/therapy staff in the functioning of the program;
10. Functions as a patient advocate for a small group of patients which involves monitoring of patient attendance, appointments, problems and progress, making referrals as necessary;
11. Prepares all necessary paperwork such as documenting patient contact in charts, progress reports and activity therapy group outlines;
12. Does related work as required.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Good knowledge of the methods, procedures and objectives of recreational therapy; working knowledge of occupational and recreational activities; working knowledge of community resources and services available in the field of recreational therapy; ability to stimulate and maintain patients' interest in activities; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to relate sympathetically to a potentially difficult patient population; patience; enthusiasm; tact and courtesy; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

RECREATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT (Cont'd)

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- EITHER: (A) Completion of sixty (60) semester credit hours at a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with at least twelve (12) credit hours in the therapeutic or behavioral sciences;
- OR: (B) Two (2) years of full-time experience in the provision of recreational or occupational therapy services or closely related experience;
- OR: (C) An equivalent combination of training and experience as indicated in (A) and (B) above.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT FOR APPOINTMENT:

Possession of a valid driver's license.

MH0304

REVISED: 01/82
 08/82
 02/03/89
 07/01/91