

SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELOR I

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is paraprofessional counseling work which involves the intake and interview of alcoholic or chemically dependent clients as well as group counseling for same as part of a treatment team effort. The work is performed under the guidance and direct supervision of a higher-level professional, and work guidance (e.g., lead work) may be provided to support staff. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

Performs initial intake and interviews clients, inmates and/or families;
Participates in staff conferences for diagnosis and the development of treatment and/or discharge plans;
Participates in patient-staff meetings to discuss problems, organize work assignment and plan activities;
Oversees, observes and reports on actions and conditions of clients, including progress and problems;
Provides assistance in treatment by meeting with clients and providing support and/or recommendations related to concrete services and problems identified by the therapeutic team;
Provides paraprofessional counseling to outpatients, halfway house patients and patients discharged from Inpatient on their problems of living;
Provides individual and/or group paraprofessional counseling under professional supervision;
Provides written and verbal information to clients and/or inmates regarding community resources available;
Schedules intake appointments for clients and/or inmates needing alternative or additional treatment;
Acts as liaison with attorneys, courts, and other criminal justice professionals to exchange and provide information and facilitate treatment referrals for inmates upon release from incarceration and for individuals involved with alternative to incarceration programs.
Advises police, local community agencies and individuals on available resources to introduce people into treatment;
Refers clients and family members to community support groups (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, and Al-Anon), when appropriate;
Conducts and participates in a variety of activities used as learning and therapeutic experiences;
Acts as liaison to collateral agencies in order to discuss client progress, coordinate services, etc., when appropriate;
Maintains cases and other written records;
May, if properly licensed, transport clients on an occasional basis to health care and other service providers, clinics, other mental health facilities, etc.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Good knowledge of structured paraprofessional treatment modalities; good knowledge of drug and alcohol abuse problems; good knowledge of techniques used in drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs; good knowledge of common professional terms and concepts relative to substance abuse; good knowledge of Federal confidentiality standards regarding an alcohol/substance abuse treatment population; ability to establish and maintain cooperative relations with others, including patients and staff members, and treatment agencies; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

(over)

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from high school or possession of an equivalency diploma and completion of two (2) years of college (minimum of sixty (60) credits), which included at least eighteen (18) credit hours in Psychology, Counseling, Sociology, or comparable curriculum, and one (1) year of paid work experience in a health-related facility which involved participation as a treatment team member in an alcohol and/or drug abuse treatment service. Experience as a Mental Health Aide or equivalent title, or in primarily personal care work shall not be qualifying.

NOTES:

1. Additional years of experience may be substituted for college on a year-for-year basis.
2. Credentialing as an Alcoholism/Substance Abuse Counselor by the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services shall be deemed fully qualifying.
3. A minimum of 150 training hours in Alcohol/Substance Abuse-specific counseling from an accredited institute of learning may be substituted for the required higher education.