

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NURSE II

Definition:

Under general supervision, provides mental health nursing, educational and consultative services, and professional nursing care within the Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and other collaborative agencies.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Behavioral Health Nurse II is the journey-level position in the Behavioral Health Nurse classification series. Incumbents have proficient knowledge of mental health nursing practices upon employment.

Promotion to Mental Health Nurse III is considered on a merit basis upon completion of the minimum qualifications, is subject to the recommendation of the Director of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, and the approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Essential Functions:

- Provides mental health nursing support for medical personnel as required within scope of practice.
- Completes nursing assessments per department protocol, authorizes services, evaluates the assessments of others for a determination, makes recommendations and plans, and implements those plans accordingly within scope of practice.
- Responds to crisis situations, makes assessments, provides nursing triage and follows through with appropriate treatment, which may include voluntary or involuntary hospitalization.
- Consults with and advises public and private agencies who are involved with issues related to mental illness and/or substance use disorders; demonstrates appropriate communication for interacting with mentally ill individuals and/or individuals with substance use disorders.
- Investigates and resolves mental health and substance use disorder related issues in a wide variety of locations and settings and provides supervision and instruction in the care of mentally ill individuals and individuals with substance use disorders.
- Provides resource information to the community and other agencies regarding behavioral health and recovery services and makes referrals to appropriate medical and public health resources.
- Monitors, orders, and safely handles and stores medications and related medical supplies in compliance with department policies and procedures as mandated by law.

- Administers medication under the direction of a physician or psychiatrist, responds to and manages problems with medication within the scope of practice and provides medication support to individuals.
- Completes progress notes and all required documentation and reports.
- Prepares written requests for the authorization of mental health and medication services and provides assistance to pharmacies and physicians when a Treatment Authorization Request for prescribed medication or treatment is required.
- Acts as liaison between Kern County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, primary care physicians, other agencies, community resources, and/or pharmacies during a transition of care for the purpose of medication management and individual stability.
- Attends and presents in-service training programs for department staff related to infection control and other topics as assigned; educates the community and nursing students in a proctor program specific to the involved specialty in mental health services.
- Provides individual, group, and family therapy within the scope of practice.
- Participates in meetings, conferences, and forums.
- Utilizes a personal computer and various software programs.
- Provides intensive case management services for individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders.
- Attends daily meetings for individuals hospitalized in a psychiatric inpatient facility.
- Performs audits, case reviews, and prepares subsequent summaries and/or reports.
- Performs other job-related duties as required.

Employment Standards:

Possession of a valid license as a Registered Nurse (RN) by the State of California AND two years full-time nursing experience in a psychiatric setting or a mental health program.

OR

Possession of a valid license as a Registered Nurse (RN) by the State of California AND Possession of a valid American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) certification in psychiatric or mental health nursing.

Failure to maintain a current and valid license may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Possession of a valid California Class C driver's license

Dependent upon assignment, applicants may be required to pass an extensive background investigation and be fingerprinted. Disqualification for felony, misdemeanor, and traffic offenses will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Knowledge of: Basic principles and practices of public health and psychiatric nursing; characteristics of various types of mental illness; psychiatric terminology; psychotropic medications, implications and interactions; requirements and protocol for involuntary hospitalization; mandated reporting for child, adult, and elder abuse; principles of emotional growth and development; community resources for treatment of mental illness; crisis intervention techniques; basic computer operation and record keeping.

Ability to: Evaluate and respond to psychiatric emergencies; utilize crisis intervention techniques; make appropriate referrals for behavioral health and recovery services; communicate effectively both orally and in writing; to develop and maintain effective working relationships with medical and professional staff, co-workers, and representatives from community agencies; travel to various locations to provide services; and to utilize a personal computer and associated software to prepare and maintain concise and complete electronic records and files.

All Kern County employees are designated “Disaster Service Workers” through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec. 3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2-Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services). As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report to work as soon as practicable. Following a significant emergency or disaster.