

COUNTY OF SOLANO

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE (ENTRY)

DEFINITION

Under direction, promotes community health maintenance through health assessment, education and counseling in the detection, prevention and/or control of disease; performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class is characterized by the responsibility to work with individuals and/or families in an assigned geographic area within the County and/or in clinics operated by the department. Incumbents of this class learn public health practices and departmental procedures while gaining needed experience to demonstrate competency at the fully qualified professional level. Clients typically have limited knowledge of health principles, nutrition, disease process, appropriate care or available resources. This class is distinguished from Public Health Nurse in that the latter works at the fully qualified professional or journey level.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

Depending on assignment, duties may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Educates and counsels the client and their family in health maintenance, promotion and disease prevention, to enhance the individuals abilities to recognize need for and to seek treatment to meet their health care and general social needs.
2. Assesses the physical, psycho-social and health care status and needs of families and/or individual clients; interviews client and/or family, collects health history and data regarding current health status and life situations; observes client and client-family interaction in the home; develops plan of care; detects cases of physical and/or emotional illness; participates in epidemiological studies by conducting community investigations.
3. Confers with other health professionals to coordinate client care and assist in improving health; refers clients and/or families to appropriate community or public agencies to obtain services or assistance to improve or maintain social functioning and health, or to physicians if medical intervention is indicated.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (Continued)

4. Manages a caseload of clients requiring prioritization of patient care; records data on patients and completes state forms, nursing daily reports and provides written referrals to other agencies; plans and organizes caseload to ensure that work is completed within professional practice and renews caseload is covered during short periods of absence; acts as client advocate within health care providers.
5. Participates in public health clinics by conducting health screening and assessment; interviewing and counseling patients; may participate in clinic management.
6. May be assigned to work within an area of specialization (e.g., geriatric or maternal health) or target population; may be assigned additional responsibilities for growth, development and to demonstrate competency as required for promotion.

QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE

Some clinical nursing experience coupled with education and training which demonstrates possession of and competency in requisite knowledge and abilities.

KNOWLEDGE/ABILITIES

Considerable knowledge of the principles and practices of general clinical and public health nursing, including community aspects of nursing programs and provisions for continuity in patient care; health prevention techniques; laws and regulations governing public health; cases, means of transmission and methods of control for communicable diseases, including tuberculosis and venereal disease; pediatrics including child growth and development; procedures involved in promoting maternal and child health; environmental, sociological and psychological problems encountered in public health disease processes and contemporary health management principles; sociological and emotional problems involved in care of those with special needs and medical conditions; principles of mental health; child abuse and neglect detection practices; principles of nutrition; personal hygiene practices; cultural differences affecting health care service delivery and public health; effective counseling and coaching techniques; current literature and trends in public health

QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES (Continued)

nursing; work of other social and health agencies and functions of other professions as related to public health nursing; use and effects of medicines; principles of clinical health screening including charting histories and system reviews.

Ability to exercise independent judgment; develop and effectively implement a health care plan with individuals and families to assist them in satisfactory solution of health problems; perform an assessment of health status, identify problems and develop a plan for follow-up; communicate effectively both verbally and in writing; maintain accurate records and document actions taken; prepare clear and concise reports; deal firmly and fairly with clients of various socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments; demonstrate tact, diplomacy and compassion; determine the appropriate course of action in emergency or stressful situations; detect child abuse and neglect; learn to refer clients to social service agencies and health care providers; learn to act as patient advocate; collect and analyze data to draw logical conclusions and make appropriate recommendations; interview and counsel clients on health related matters; recognize and respect limit of authority and responsibility; maintain confidentiality of information; make home visits in assigned geographic areas; provide transportation services as needed.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Possession of a valid Registered Nurse license issued by the California State Board of Registered Nursing and possession of or ability to obtain certification in Public Health Nursing.

Possession of or ability to obtain a valid Class III California driver's license may be required.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Independent travel is required.

Positions allocated to this class may require specialization in target populations or programs.

Positions allocated to this class may require bilingual skills.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION (Continued)

Incumbents of this class should demonstrate necessary knowledge and abilities to be promoted to Public Health Nurse within two (2) years of appointment.

Selectees for employment must as a condition of employment sign a statement agreeing to comply with Section 11166 of the California Penal Code relating to child abuse reporting.

Incumbents must be able to work in an environment which may include exposure to communicable disease.

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