

COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNSELOR (SPANISH SPEAKING)

30342
(Competitive)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

The work involves responsibility for providing education and counseling pertinent to a variety of community health problems including, but not limited to, HIV/AIDS, infant mortality, sexually transmitted diseases and domestic violence. The service is provided to a population consisting largely of African-American and Latino clients as well as Spanish speaking clients at sites authorized by the Onondaga County Department of Health. An employee in this class presents factual information to the populations or peoples at risk for HIV or infant mortality in order to educate them about the relationship between the HIV virus and sexually transmitted diseases, sexual and drug use practices or other behaviors that increase the risk of health problems. Counseling is performed in a confidential setting, either at an office site, a clinic site or at the client's home. Small group presentations may also be conducted by the incumbent based on requests for information or needs of community groups. Supervision is received from an administrative superior depending on the unit or the location to which assigned. The incumbent will receive training in areas of HIV/AIDS infection, risk factors, prophylactic techniques and in performing venipuncture to draw blood for HIV testing. Depending on assignment, an employee in this class may oversee the work of paraprofessional employees involved in program activities. Certain assignments made to employees in this class will require reasonable access to meet field work requirements made in the ordinary course of business in a timely and efficient manner. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES

Elicits information through discussion with the client related to health problems

such as HIV infection and infant mortality; this includes information pertaining to sexual contacts, sexual orientation, sexual practices, injectable drug use, alcohol and drug history, reproductive history, participation in health care provision, social and family history (including family violence, foster care placement, and the identification of supportive services) and other personal risk factors.

Provides education in one-to-one settings or to groups of persons at risk of health problems.

Counsels and educates the client based on information gathered about their personal risk behaviors; instructs on safe sex practices, sexual risk factors, use of prophylactic techniques, cleaning of drug use paraphernalia, importance of prenatal and pediatric care, and proper nutrition, and otherwise provides all other necessary information to assist the client in avoiding HIV exposure and infection and infant mortality.

Educates and counsels clients in regard to cultural-specific attitudes and beliefs which may influence sexual behavior.

May conduct home visits to clients, primarily in the inner city of Syracuse, who are referred by Community Health Nursing staff or other governmental or community staff, as being at high risk of HIV, infant mortality or adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Utilizes cultural-specific knowledges to assess risks from substance abuse, coping ability, domestic violence, economic hardships, and other psycho-social factors.

With participation of the client, provides assessment and evaluation leading to the development of a care plan that strengthens the client's natural supports, provides access to resources and services, and leads to empowerment and self sufficiency.

Makes referrals as appropriate to social support agencies and to medical treatment facilities for ongoing case management for HIV positive persons.

Assists clients to acquire all needed social, financial, and medical support

services based on the specific situation of the case.

Begins casework services or refers the client to other professional services as appropriate to intervene and reduce risk of adverse outcomes; provides education, counseling, risk reduction strategies, and support services as needed.

Provides post HIV counseling to clients to inform them of their HIV status and relationship of that status to their pregnancy, if applicable.

Utilizes stress management techniques, crisis intervention and other counseling skills to assist the HIV positive person in coping with the diagnosis or to assist a woman experiencing a crisis pregnancy.

Using cultural specific clues, assesses the client's suicidal, homicidal and other harmful or violent tendencies in response to the HIV positive determination.

Takes appropriate actions to minimize the risk to the client or their associates.

Assists the client with informing their sexual partners or intravenous drug use associates about the HIV positive determination and helps to assist and support these persons in pursuing HIV testing, counseling or referral.

Interviews clients who have emergency medical needs and determines their eligibility for financial aid from emergency funds.

Utilizes a knowledge of cultural beliefs, attitudes and language to develop educational materials for specific target audiences.

Performs venipuncture, after training on this procedure, to draw blood for HIV testing.

Performs outreach services to the inner-city community, including community centers, churches, recreation facilities and other locations to educate people about preventing HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases and other health problems endemic to the inner-city of Syracuse.

Identifies persons at risk of adverse health outcomes and encourages them to seek

social and/or medical services and assistance.

Attends meetings, workshops and training courses to keep abreast of new information and developments, to exchange information on programs and cultural-specific approaches to successful risk-reduction efforts.

Prepares written reports and case records as necessary.

Models and teaches self-advocacy.

Assists other staff in interpreting street language and other cultural-specific information as needed.

Works cooperatively with community agencies to identify at risk populations and provide needed services.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Good knowledge of the techniques and practices of HIV/AIDS counseling and support services.

Good knowledge of cultural norms and argot of racial and ethnic minorities common in Onondaga County.

Good knowledge of the techniques and practices of risk reduction education related to infant mortality, or other health problems relating to a specific program area.

Good knowledge of interviewing techniques.

Good knowledge of health issues and the ability to make presentations to groups to discuss these health issues.

Good knowledge of health and social issues relating to sexual orientation, substance abuse, family violence, poverty, or other social or psychological problems.

Working knowledge of the information and issues related to infant mortality.

Working knowledge of the social, medical, public health and human services agencies and resources available in the community.

Working knowledge of risk factors for low birth weight births, infant mortality and other adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Working knowledge of the Spanish language.

Working knowledge of the techniques and practices for educating persons with a wide variety of formal educational attainment levels.

Working knowledge of behaviors that put people at risk of HIV infection.

Working knowledge of techniques and practices of substance abuse identification and preliminary intervention.

Working knowledge of crisis intervention techniques.

Ability to speak, read and write fluently in both English and Spanish.

Ability to interview persons of diverse ethnic backgrounds and to establish friendly and cooperative relationships.

Ability to prepare written material, such as case reports and correspondence.

Ability to understand and interpret written material.

Ability to provide effective advocacy.

Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

A. Four (4) years of paraprofessional or professional human services* work experience, or its part time equivalent, in a public or private human service agency providing services to clients from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

SPECIAL NECESSARY REQUIREMENT

Candidates must be able to read, write and converse fluently in Spanish and English.

NOTE #1: * Human Services comprise those career fields in which practitioners help others to solve their physical or emotional problems or to meet their physical, emotional or mental needs, or to enhance their cultural, social, spiritual or physical conditions. Practitioners in this class are typically characterized by working with people on an individual or group basis. Responsibility for the custody or detention of individuals or for determining program eligibility is not considered qualifying

experience.

NOTE #2: EDUCATIONAL SUBSTITUTION: Successful completion of post-secondary education from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a concentration in sociology, social work, psychology, health education, nursing, counseling, human services or a closely related field may be substituted on a year for year basis for up to three (3) years of the required work experience. Thirty (30) semester credit hours is equivalent to one (1) year of work experience, etc. In all cases, candidates must have at least a minimum of one (1) year of work experience as defined in (A).

04/92 Date of Original Composition