



JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Information

Position Number NAT-2587	Position Title Mental Health Officer	
Position Classification WP-03	Effective Date	
Decision Number NAT-2587	Job Code	National Occupational Classification 3144 - Other Professional Occupations: Therapy & Assess
Department/Agency Correctional Service Canada	Grievance Officer Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Office Code
Organizational Component (Branch/Division) Health Services	Geographic Location	
Language Requirements	Linguistic Profile	
Communication Requirements	Security Requirements	

Supervisor Information

Position Number Various	Position Title various	Position Classification various
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Employee Statement
I have been given the opportunity to read and comment on the content of this job description.

Name of Employee	Signature	Date
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Supervisor Statement
This job description accurately describes the work assigned to this position.

Name of Supervisor	Signature	Date
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Manager Authorization
This job description accurately describes the work assigned to this position.

Name and Title of Manager	Signature	Date
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JOB DESCRIPTION

Client Service Results

Delivery of interventions, activities and counselling services to offenders within an institutional setting or a Regional Treatment Centre (RTC) under the supervision of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), and provision of assistance to mental health professionals in the rehabilitation and reintegration processes of offenders.

All clinical services are carried out under the direct clinical supervision of a registered mental health professional.

Key Activities

As part of an interdisciplinary team and under the direct clinical supervision of registered mental health professionals, participates in the planning, development, coordination, evaluation and delivery of social, cultural, recreational and mental health or health activities, interventions, training, and individual or group counselling for patients in treatment centres or institutions.

Interviews offenders to collect information and assess their treatment and rehabilitation needs; evaluates patients' progress in organized activities and interventions; documents and reports on evaluation results to the supervisor and interdisciplinary team; proposes treatment options, adapts processes to meet offenders' needs, refers to appropriate discipline, and makes recommendations to ensure continued progress in the offenders' rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

Supports a broad range of licensed mental health professionals in the rehabilitation of patients; assists in the completion of psychosocial histories and other reports including treatment plans; administers self-report psychological testing under the supervision of a qualified mental health professional; assists with the management and follow-up care of patients at risk for suicide or self-injury, and takes appropriate action.

Participates in meetings with interdisciplinary team and other employees including correctional staff and Parole Officers; exchanges appropriate information with security and other departments on issues regarding the management of offenders; and participates in the orientation of new staff and students.

Researches and analyzes information, reviews documentation, and interprets reports; enters data, prepares correspondence and reports, and responds to outside parties requesting information or assistance; maintains mental health databases and tracking systems for departmental demands and services; and arranges for facilities, equipment, documentation and materials for meetings and group activities.

The incumbent of this position has the Peace Officer Designation.

Skills and Knowledge

Knowledge of the principles, methods and techniques of crisis intervention and follow-up, group and individual counselling, conflict resolution, and evidence-based interventions, in order to provide effective interventions and mental health services to patients, and contribute to their successful rehabilitation.

Knowledge of physical and mental pathologies, of medications and their effects, and of theories and practices related to the treatment of mentally ill and low functioning offenders in an institutional setting, in order to recognize the symptoms of various diseases, and refer patients to team members for assessment; and understand the side effects of medications and adapt activities accordingly.

Knowledge of effective intervention principles, adult education, skill teaching and group leadership techniques, as well as methods of instructions, in order to facilitate intervention program and treatment delivery; and help patients develop problem-solving, organizational and leadership skills.

Knowledge of the practices, theories and principles related to human behaviour, rehabilitation and reintegration processes, in order to intervene with individuals or groups of offenders, produce changes in their behaviour, and contribute to their mental health and rehabilitation needs.

Knowledge of the accreditation process and patient safety, in order to ensure high-quality patient care.

Knowledge of counselling, negotiating, crisis and suicide prevention techniques, in order to deal with a variety of situations, and reduce potential harm caused by the patient to self, others, or the institution.

Knowledge of the physical layout of the facility or institution, in order to provide immediate emergency care to staff and offenders.

Knowledge of social, cultural and recreational organized activities and interventions, of the techniques, tactics and rules of sports, social and leisure activities, and of the programs and treatments offered by the private sector, in order to oversee and facilitate activities practiced by offenders; provide information to patients, and make recommendations for follow-up programs and interventions in the community.

Knowledge of psychometric testing and basic statistics, in order to participate in the administration and assessment of psychological testing.

Knowledge of research techniques, data collection practices, and computer software programs, in order to enter data, access and retrieve information, and prepare reports.

Knowledge of the CSC's mission, mandate, objectives and programs, the Commissioner's Directives, the roles and responsibilities of the RTCs or mainstream institution as outlined in the CSC policies, procedures and community health standards, in order to understand institutional treatment service programs and policies, ensure compliance, and deliver quality clinical treatment to patients within a correctional setting.

Knowledge of applicable acts and regulations, such as the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA), and the Privacy and Access to Information Act, in order to respect timeframes for intervention delivery; handle sensitive information, ensure confidentiality, and share relevant information based on the "need to know" principle with security and other departments on issues related to patient management.

Knowledge of various organizations and legislation, including the Parole Board of Canada (PBC) and other agencies within the criminal justice system, provincial mental health acts, the Health Care Consent Act, Standards of Professionals conduct and Code of Discipline, in order to carry out duties effectively; understand aspects related to mental health care; and explain the rights and entitlements of patients.

Knowledge of effective therapeutic communication, as well as interviewing and assessment techniques, in order to obtain information from offenders for the evaluation of their individual treatment needs, even when they are uncomfortable with the subject or hostile towards the correctional system; and encourage open and positive information sharing and cooperation.

Interpersonal, observation and mediation skills, in order to watch group dynamics, intervene and resolve conflicts; interpret non-verbal communication; interact with patients in crisis who present various cognition levels, cultural differences, and who may be mentally ill or on medications; and provide feedback to offenders on their progress in the services offered.

Consultative and problem-solving skills, in order to exercise good judgement, and make appropriate analysis and decisions to solve day-to-day situations as they arise; and assist patients to achieve the objectives of their clinical treatment plans.

Reading skills, in order to assimilate and understand changes in acts, regulations and directives, and determine their impacts on the offenders' rights; understand the mandate, policies and guidelines of other government agencies and community organizations who may assist patients; and remain abreast of emerging issues.

Verbal and listening skills, in order to deliver services and clarify departmental policies and guidelines to patients; interpret, present and explain information to the supervisor, colleagues, the interdisciplinary team, outside agencies, offenders' family members and community organizations; and persuade and seek agreement from such groups concerning the treatment and rehabilitation services offered to offenders.

Written skills, in order to edit, create and maintain records of observations and services provided; and develop and prepare reports on offender progress.

The work requires a knowledge of Section 10 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act and Regulations and Section 2 of the Criminal Code of Canada in order to comply with the requirements of Peace Officer Designation. Written skills are required to prepare security incident reports and observation reports with respect to negative attitudes of offenders or the unacceptable behaviour of offenders in accordance with the requirements of Peace Officer Designation.

Effort

Physical effort is required to:

Sit and maintain eye focus for extended periods at a computer station, during meetings, or when reviewing material; stand, walk and carry files when delivering information; and move around when visiting work sites.

Intellectual effort is required to:

Contribute to the offender's rehabilitation by supporting a range of registered mental health professionals and by participating in the delivery of effective activities and other interventions, such as assisted daily living including personal hygiene, the monitoring of medication compliance, and crisis intervention and follow-up services for offenders in RTCs or mainstream institutions.

Provide assistance and support to patients on a daily basis; intervene therapeutically with the treatment team, and contribute to interdisciplinary treatment options and solutions that meet the needs, expectations and objectives of both the CSC and the offenders' treatment plan.

Assist registered mental health professionals in the provision of counselling to individuals or groups of offenders in a treatment environment, while taking into account the diversity of offender populations, the health issues of the participants, the behavioural patterns, and the need to understand the history of individual offenders.

Read, research and analyze file information; investigate, retrieve documentation, and consult other departments, colleagues and offenders; and integrate information collected from a variety of sources in preparation for documenting reports or entering data.

Ensure completed documentation is compliant with professional practice standards; share information with supervisors, colleagues and members of the interdisciplinary team, following each intervention and significant interaction with offenders, to assist in the management, planning and decision making regarding a patient's mental status, rehabilitation potential, response to treatment and conditional release prospects.

Provide information to CSC staff regarding selection criteria and treatment content for patient interventions, through workshops and individual sessions; and make referrals to appropriate discipline to support the offenders' mental health and rehabilitation needs.

Assist in determining the best approach to meet the patient treatment needs, while considering the different approaches taken by various professions, as well as the competing interests that may interfere with the treatment outcomes, such as the patients' desires as opposed to their actual needs, or the treatment needs in comparison to the treatment modalities.

Make recommendations on individual or group interventions in relation to mental health, rehabilitation and reintegration in order to support the decision-making process, the restructuring of existing activities, and the planning and development of future intervention strategies.

Propose feasible options and solutions that reflect the uniqueness of the presenting problem or environment, and assess their potential implications; present and promote the acceptance of these options and solutions from resistant or difficult-to-manage offenders to foster positive outcomes; and create interesting ideas and new concepts for activities to meet varying ranges of social and intellectual skills among patients.

Establish a trusting relationship to motivate patients to become involved in activities and projects that help them manage their mental illness, develop and use new skills, and improve their prosocial behaviours.

Provide information to offenders to help them understand and apply the concepts of positive attitudes and behavioural changes; deliver interventions, respond to the questions of offenders, and intervene with individuals or groups of offenders to produce behavioural changes, therefore making a significant contribution to the mental health and rehabilitation needs of these patients.

Evaluate patient progress and adequacy of interventions; recommend termination or continuance of activities depending on their effectiveness in ensuring continued patient progress; and document all evaluations regarding the effectiveness of interventions.

Monitor group activities to ensure compliance of offenders with policies and procedures relating to conduct, ethics, security, as well as health and safety regulations; and ensure adherence to the Occupational and Institutional Safety standards to avoid risk of physical injury or psychological trauma, and to maintain personal and departmental security.

Identify and deal with situations such as emergencies, crises, and other delicate situations, including hostage taking, suicide or self-injury, and violent crimes; and act as a safety officer in the area and overall institution, when applicable.

Maintain current professional knowledge through ongoing professional development and continuing study of texts, journals and periodicals, as well as attendance at seminars, workshops and conferences.

Psychological effort is required to:

Maintain composure, impartiality and a professional attitude regardless of the offenders' behaviour, attitude and criminal record; when intervening with unstable, intoxicated, angry, violent, resistant, manipulative, and low functioning individuals; or when facilitating sessions that may involve sharing of highly personal and sensitive matters.

Demonstrate a high tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, and remain focused and committed to the long-term objectives when short-term activities, work schedules and work environment are constantly being changed, adjusted and fine-tuned to meet the needs of patients and service requirements.

Responsibility

Human Resources:

Participates in the orientation and training of new staff and students.

In accordance with the requirements of Peace Officer Designation, prepares oral and written reports for correctional staff regarding observations made with respect to the behaviour of offenders to assist them in making decisions regarding offender discipline, offender movement, offender transfer and the overall safety and good order of the Institution. The incumbent ensures offenders comply with Departmental rules and regulations. The incumbent may recommend disciplinary action, ranging from an oral reprimand to a recommendation that charges be laid; this action is in keeping with Section 10 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act. The incumbent may arrest and charge a suspected offender, in accordance with Section 2 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

Technical Resources:

Has custody and is responsible for the use and maintenance of a personal computer and computer peripherals, standard office and audio-visual equipment, hard copy and electronic files, as well as other physical assets including fire extinguishers and personal alarm; and has shared custody of the keys to offices, filing cabinets, storage areas, and activity areas.

Working Conditions

Physical:

The work involves continuous exposure to office noise, interruptions, and exposure to glare from a computer monitor or security monitors.

The work is performed in a correctional facility involving close interactions with offenders, which often generate risks of exposure to bodily fluids and communicable diseases, as well as encounters with offenders suffering from mental illness and who are potentially violent, thus increasing the risk of illness, threats to physical safety, intimidation, and violence that could lead up to death.

Travelling to visit other work sites may be required, which involves being away from home, causes stress and interferes with personal life.

Psychological:

The work involves potential stress and fatigue resulting from dealing with challenging and unpredictable workloads, tight deadlines, changing and conflicting priorities, emergencies, lack of control over the pace of work, complaints and criticism, as well as having contacts with known offender patients in the community, which may intrude with personal life and may cause concern for personal or family safety.

The work may involve post-traumatic stress or indirect trauma caused by the exposure to explicit or violent information contained in file information, and by the involvement in critical incidents, verbal or physical abuse, threats, dangers and a potentially high-risk environment.
