

**Position**  
**Nurse**

Behavioral Health Specialist / Care Manager

I. Principal Duties and Responsibilities:

This fulltime position nursing position will work within the Behavioral Health Laboratory (BHL) to assist in the delivery of evidence based care for primary care patients identified with a variety of emotional and psychiatric problems. The identified role is a Behavioral Health Specialists (BHS) or care manager. S/he will be responsible for monitoring patients, providing education and support, influencing adherence to guidelines by providing "on-time, on-target" information to primary care physicians, and collaboratively making appropriate care decisions. The BHS should be an RN at the bachelor's or master's degree level with at least 2 years of experience in research or clinical settings. Moreover, s/he must be a U.S. Citizenship, meet physical standards, and be proficient in English. The BHS is an integral part of the health care team at the site(s) to which he/she is assigned.

Since the BHS will be responsible for interacting clinically with primary care clinicians, the patients, and their families, the BH specialists will be selected in part for their experience with, and sensitivity to, the kinds of patients and providers participating in the BHL.

*Education:* Degree or diploma from a professional nursing program approved by the legally designated State accrediting agency at the time the program was completed by the applicant. Successfully graduated from a baccalaureate or higher degree nursing program.

*Registration:* Applicants must have active, current registration as a professional nurse in a State, District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a territory of the United States.

Duties

- A. Completes structured diagnostic and clinical assessments for participants. This requires knowledge of medical terminology, diagnostic categories, and chart review.
- B. Reviews assessments completed by others, and obtains missing information from providers, patients, and medical records.
- C. Learns the use of a Behavioral Health Laboratory software program for interviewing participants. This includes determining the appropriate level of care need for patients not in treatment and the ability to understand the variety of clinical options available through the medical center and local community.
- D. Must have a thorough working knowledge of DHCP/CPRS. Must keep abreast of the various changes made within these programs and is responsible for maintaining the integrity of access to these clinical records.
- E. Contacts patients through written correspondence and telephone calls, and conducts follow up interviews. This requires substantial communication skills and the ability to remain organized.

- F. Creates and maintains forms, surveys, instruments, and materials for proper coordination of the different treatment modules available through the BHL.
- G. Provides psychoeducation and direct advice regarding symptoms of depression, anxiety and alcohol misuse to patients. This includes the development of an appropriate treatment plan for patients and the ability to communicate that plan to the patient's provider.
- H. Presents reports to Director and Medical Director weekly or as required.

## II. Knowledge Required for the Position

The position requires extensive familiarity with clinical settings; skill with computers; skill in organizing and maintaining records and record summaries; and excellent English language skills. The position requires the ability to provide psychoeducation and counseling to patients and the ability to function independently in assessment and diagnosis of mental health disorders. The position also requires familiarity with a variety of treatments for depression, alcohol misuse and anxiety. The position requires the ability to work with and communicate with a variety of clinicians including primary care providers and mental health providers.

## III. Supervisory Controls over the Position:

The incumbent serves under the general supervision of the Medical Director of the Behavioral Health Laboratory to carry out duties and responsibilities on his or her own initiative using good judgment to make independent decisions.

The primary guideline for performance is the manual of operations for the BHL. The incumbent may also be asked to perform duties which fall under standard hospital policy and procedural manuals. Many situations arise which are not covered by guidelines and procedures; and the incumbent will be required to use judgment to adapt existing guidelines and policies to resolve such problems and issues independently.

## IV. Complexity:

Due to the variety in the workload, the duties performed are complex and involve widely varying procedures including the monitoring and delivery of clinical care.

## V. Scope and Effect

The position has broad scope, requiring interaction with many clinical services. The purpose of the position is to maintain fidelity of the Behavioral Health Laboratory. The incumbent places a significant role in making the BHL successful in achieving goals and therefore in improving the health care of all veterans.

## VI. Contacts:

The incumbent will maintain contact with the Medical Director for the BHL at all times and Primary care clinical providers when appropriate. The purpose of the contacts is to ensure the proper coordination, quality control, and implementation of the BHL program.

## VI. Physical Demands:

The position will require significant walking and use of hands.

**VII. Work Environment:**

The incumbent will generally work in or near the MIRECC research offices and Primary care offices at the Philadelphia VA Medical Center.