

Alberta's Health Regions and Voluntary Organizations and the Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)

This classification specification identifies representative responsibilities and duties, and is intended to assist in the determination of the appropriate classification level within each discipline. The classification specification is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of all duties performed.

Classification Title: **Mental Health Therapist (Local Condition)**

Date Updated: **May 20, 2008**

Job Summary:

The Mental Health Therapist works as a member of a multi-disciplinary team and is responsible for:

- a. assessment, provisional diagnosis, treatment, case management, crisis intervention, clinical consultation, education, and referral services for clients, and their families as appropriate, with mental health issues; and
- b. participation in mental health promotion activities and contribution to the establishment and maintenance of mental health resources in the community and the reduction of stigma.

Key Responsibilities and Typical Duties:

Clinical

- Assessment: Develops a sufficient information base on clients to determine the nature of mental health concerns and provides appropriate treatment or referral.
- Provisional Diagnosis: Analyses assessment data to arrive at a provisional diagnostic formulation in consultation with other disciplines.
- Treatment and Case Management: Develops, implements, monitors, and evaluates treatment plans for various cases in consultation with the client, the family as appropriate, and the treatment team.
- Crisis Intervention: Provides crisis intervention and outreach stabilization services when clients experience mental health crisis and/or when they require more intensive short-term monitoring on client's mental health status and medication. Provides intervention as required.
- Consultation: Provides clinical consultations as appropriate to community agencies and a range of professional care providers to address specific needs related to emotional and/or behavioral issues, and consults with psychiatrists as needed to arrange admission of clients to inpatient services.
- Education: Develops training programs or workshops for staff, service providers, and community agencies regarding mental health issues, and establish a rapport between the client, community and the service provider.

Clinical (cont)

- **Referrals:** Makes referrals to appropriate agencies and/or resources, and acts as a client advocate.
- **Maintains Clinical Files:** Documents assessment, progress, and termination reports in a clear and concise manner.

Other Related Duties

- Participates in community mental health promotion activities to enhance mental wellness and health lifestyles, and reduce the stigma of mental illness.
- Assists clients in making connections with community agencies, physicians and social services and facilitating appropriate involvement in post crisis treatment services.
- Participates in gathering data, monitoring utilization and performance outcomes as established by the program.
- Maintains professional discipline-specific competency through ongoing professional development, participation in education programs, research and continuous quality activities.

Leadership

- Participates as a member of the multidisciplinary team by providing clinical leadership, consultation, support and direction in the provision of quality care and service for clients and families.
- Provides information through workshops or educational materials to internal and external service providers about mental health, mental illness and the continuum of mental health services.
- May supervise unregulated providers, program assistants and students.

Decision-Making

- Makes clinical decisions regarding intervention and management of clients either independently or in collaboration with the treatment team, Primary Care Physician, Psychiatrists, and other involved health professionals.
- Possesses the ability to work independently and make decisions while at the same time keeping the supervisor apprised of sensitive situations.
- Exercises judgment and makes decisions within the Mental Health Service program parameters, policies and procedures to ensure safety of clients and others, particularly during evenings and weekends when decisions are made independently.
- Decisions made are governed by the applicable legislation and regulations.

Knowledge:

Education

- Masters Degree in Social Work or Psychology, BSc Nursing or Psychiatric Nursing, with advanced practice in the assessment and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders, conditions and addictions. The combination of education and clinical experience satisfactory to the employer will also be considered.

Additional Qualifications/Designations/Certification

The employer may require some base course certifications such as:

- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) or equivalent such as Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), and/or Suicide Risk Assessment Training.

Registration Requirements

- Current registration with the applicable professional college.
- Authorization from the applicable professional college in order to perform psychosocial interventions.

Working Conditions:

Physical Demands

- Required to stand or sit for extended periods of time during performance of duties.

Work Environment

- Travel in all weather/road conditions.
- Works with clients who have cognitive and/or behavioral issues or high medical needs.
- May involve working with clients who present criminal or suicidal tendencies; potential exposure to violence and aggression.