

Recreational Therapy Assistant – Job Description

General Responsibilities:

This is skilled work, performed independently, but under the clinical supervision of a licensed recreational therapist, to assist recreational therapists to provide treatment to patients in a state institution or local agency. Recreational therapy assistants assist with patient/client assessment, the development of treatment goals and with the implementation of individual recreational treatment and/or intervention plans, including the use of activity adaptations and assistive devices and technology. Recreational therapy assistants may plan, develop, implement and supervise activities/recreation opportunities for patients/clients to use to maintain health and well-being. Work assignments and the clinical supervision of recreational therapy assistants are provided by a licensed recreational therapist.

Examples of Duties Performed:

Informs patients/clients of his/her responsibilities in the assessment process and seeks collaboration from the patient/client, family member or significant other in the gathering of assessment information.

Under the clinical supervision and direction of the recreational therapist and commensurate with assessed competency, uses systematic procedures for collecting assessment information including structured interview, direct observation, information from team members and record review and provides a summary to the recreational therapist of assessment information related to patient/client strengths and weaknesses.

Collaborates and assists the recreational therapist in the development of patient/client treatment goals and treatment interventions.

Assists the recreational therapist to identify activity modifications, adaptations and assistive devices that may be necessary to implement the treatment plan.

Observes patient/client response to treatment interventions/activities and reports behavioral observations to the recreational therapist so the treatment plan can be continued, modified or discontinued as necessary.

Documents the effects of the treatment intervention to provide the recreational therapist with the information needed for evaluation of the intervention.

Collaborates with the recreational therapist and members of the treatment team, patient/client, family or significant others during the implementation of the treatment intervention and reports all adverse reactions and observations of patient response and behaviors to the recreational therapist and treatment team.

Assists the recreational therapist to evaluate the treatment plan.

Documents evaluation results and reports patient/client data to the recreational therapist and the treatment team.

Provides the recreational therapist with patient/client information and collaborates with the recreational therapist and the treatment team to contribute to the planning process for effective decisions to be made about continuation, discontinuation of treatment and planning for aftercare. The RT assistant assists the recreational therapist to plan and to make referrals for aftercare.

Plans, provides, and/or supervises activities, recreation or play opportunities for patients/clients to improve the general health and wellbeing of patients/clients and their adjustment to the healthcare environment or treatment procedures.

Complies with all agency, professional and regulatory standards of conduct and professional ethics and reports any suspected instances of ethical misconduct.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Basic knowledge of human structures, physiology of human structures, mechanics of movement, lifecycle growth and development, psychological functioning, pathology in psychological functioning, cognitive learning and motor learning that contribute to health and human functioning and independence in life activities.

Knowledge of recreational therapy theory, principles and techniques, and methods to improve patient/client functioning and independence is required.

Knowledge of medical, psychiatric, developmental disabilities, substance abuse, sensory impairments, co-occurring disorders or other disabling conditions and patient/client needs for recreational therapy treatment is required.

Knowledge of activity analysis, activity modifications, and adaptive and assistive devices/techniques/technology is required.

Skill in effective communication techniques and ability to establish rapport and effective and supportive relationships with patients/clients, family and staff is required.

Ability to develop effective patient/client helping/therapeutic/counseling relationships to support and achieve treatment goals is required.

Ability to plan and develop activity and recreation programs and to assist recreational therapists to develop treatment interventions is required.

Considerable knowledge of activity leadership and facilitation techniques and behavior management techniques is necessary.

Ability to observe behavior and to report and document patient/client response and reaction is required.

Skill and ability to clinically supervise recreational therapy aides recreational therapy assistant student interns/field work students and other positions commensurate with assessed competencies.

Minimum Qualifications:

Must be a Licensed Recreational Therapy Assistant (LRTA) and meet the education, supervised clinical experience, and other requirements, including practice in accordance with professional standards of practice and codes of ethics, of the North Carolina Board of Recreational Therapy Licensure (NC BRTL).