

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE I

JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The Public Health Nurse I works in a population-based practice setting with the support and guidance of experienced public health staff. The position emphasizes health promotion and prevention of health problems. Activities may be focused on the individual, the community, or the systems level, depending on how the issue may best be addressed. Public Health Nurses often work with people of diverse cultures, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Under the guidance of Public Health Professionals:

- Family planning and STD counseling and services
- Outbreak assessment and response
- Community education
- Provide vaccine information to community organizations including private medical offices
- Refugee screening services
- Communicable disease investigation

Independently:

- TB screening, TB medication refills including Directly Observed Therapy (DOT).
- HIV testing and counseling
- Assure availability of safe effective vaccine in the community.
- Provide immunizations and other clinical services

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience: Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Knowledge of

- Principles and application of epidemiology
- Core functions and essential services of public health
- Learning theory
- Risk, causation, and behavior change models

Clark County, Washington

- Washington State Nurse Practice Act
- Current prevention theory and practice
- Interviewing and counseling technique
- Principles of disease transmission
- Local services and referral process

Ability to

- Work with multicultural, multi-language and disenfranchised populations
- Communicate effectively through interpreters
- Accept feedback and make behavioral change
- Accurately document interventions and outcomes in the record
- Develop a plan of care, organized delivery of services, and complete a public health intervention for individuals and families
- Coordinate services with multiple providers and service organizations
- Organize and prioritize multiple program functions
- Use independent judgment
- Work courteously and tactfully with difficult, angry or upset clients and work collaboratively and cooperatively with co-workers and the public
- Seek consultation or collaboration when appropriate
- Engage coping strategies to manage client load effectively
- Practice within the scope of nursing licensure

WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Mechanical Hazards:

- Long hours with clients in closed areas
- Carry 30 pounds of paper, equipment, vaccines, etc.
- Drive a car, fly as a passenger in a plane, or other misc. travel
- Threats from the public (i.e. bioterrorism)
- Bend, lift, walk, and use lab equipment in the performance of duties
- May be exposed to clients or public individuals or groups with potential for violent behavior

Toxic Hazards:

- Potential exposure to vaccines, sprays, hazardous materials, contaminants (as determined by MSDS sheets), and bioterrorist-related materials. Potential exposure to drug-house contaminants
- Exposure to chemically treated paper, printing products, inks
- Potential exposure to cleaning fluids and antiviral sprays

Blood and Body Fluids – Airborne Exposure:

- Exposure to blood, needles, reagent, biologics, and chemicals
- Possible airborne exposure to TB, measles, and other communicable diseases
- May be called upon to be on site at a public health event, outbreak, emergency, or intervention
- Regular potential for exposure to clients with infectious disease and sexually transmitted disease, including HIV

July, 2000

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