

A. Primary Purpose of Organizational Unit:

The purpose of the Home Health Program is to provide a range of individualized and personalized medical, skilled nursing and rehabilitative care to the residents of Northampton County regardless of race, creed and economic status. The services include skilled nursing, infusion nursing, home health aide, physical therapy, speech/language pathology, occupational therapy and medical social work. A nurse is on-call twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

B. Primary Purpose of Position:

The Public Health Nurse II/RN demonstrates the knowledge and skills as necessary to provide primary preventive and rehabilitative nursing care to patients throughout the county admitted to home health with multi-systemic and/or critical care conditions. The RN uses the nursing process (assessment, plans, implementation, evaluation) and supervises individual patient care according to policies, procedures and nursing standards care. Maintains effective communications as liaison person between patient/family, doctor and public health team. Performs appropriate duties as assigned.

C. Work Schedule

Regular working hours are from 8:30am to 5:00pm Monday thru Friday. 24 hours on-call rotation to cover off hours and weekends as scheduled.

Public Health is a first responder agency for natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, winter storms), naturally occurring infectious disease outbreaks, (e.g., influenza, SARS,) technological hazards (hazardous materials releases, critical infrastructure disruptions, and terrorist incidents. This position, like all other positions within the department may be required to participate in any emergency response activities as deemed necessary by the Health Director or her designee. Availability during emergencies and exercises is required.

D. Change in Responsibilities or Organizational Relationship:

Responsibilities may change with updating and revision of plan of care or changes in doctor's orders. Change of responsibilities also increases with implementation of the accreditation. The PHN II provides supervision to CHTs providing personal care to patients in their homes.

E. Description of Responsibilities and Duties:

Direct Patient Care (70%)

The quality of the assessment of the patient condition will include the following: participates in the comprehensive nursing assessment phase immediately after patient enters the home health program. Responsible for admitting patients and adheres to confidentiality clause. Ongoing physical assessment are performed as warranted by the dynamic status of the patient's response and/or standards of care and reassessment. Monitor the care provided to the patients and intervene appropriately. Assumes responsibility for assigned patient case load and makes home visits daily or as scheduled by plan of care. Observes and assesses patients requiring special precautions according to assessed needs and policies.

Responsible for the utilization of patient assessments and diagnostic findings to implement appropriate nursing interventions which include basic and specialized nursing skills according to standards of care as evidenced by: instruction on or administration of all medications accurately (PO, IM, SC, IV) and utilizes knowledge or medications, actions and side effects for prevention and early detection of complications. Performs medical treatments according to approved standards and procedures. Performs duties in accordance with documented procedures established to maintain the safety and health of patients, employees and family and demonstrates compliance in the proper wearing and use of protective clothing and equipment to conform to the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard and also reports any exposure to the appropriate supervisor immediately and follow guidelines for reporting exposure.

Performs competently and skillfully in emergency situations. Transcribes and/or verifies proper transcription of physician's orders. Implements physician orders accurately according to policy and procedure. Recognizes own limitations and seeks resources appropriately. Uses appropriate reporting mechanisms as required by state law.

Responsible for evaluating and documenting patient response to nursing interventions which includes the following: significant changes and/or abnormal findings are reported immediately to the supervisor and/or appropriate physician. Intervenes appropriately based on evaluation.

Provides ongoing teaching relevant to patient diagnosis (including medication, diet) and level of understanding, included family/significant others as appropriate. Utilizes available teaching resources as appropriate. Documents patient teaching as response on the appropriate record. Provides patient with written instructions where appropriate.

Responsible for providing quality patient care and demonstrating positive interpersonal relations as evidenced by: interacting with patients, family and guests, creating an environment centered on quality patient care. Interacts with co-workers, physicians and other members of the home health team. Tactfully and effectively handles difficult situations. Assists and directs families in a courteous, professional manner. Strives to develop and maintain a good rapport and cooperative working relationship with all co-workers. Willingly accepts changes in workload, assignments or re-assignment to other units if necessary and if available. Irrigate wounds, change/repack wound dressing and observe and assess healing of wound. Insert/change naso-gastric tubes, teach family techniques for tube feedings. Set up suction equipment, teach family techniques or oral-pharyngeal suctioning. Insert/change gastrostomy tubes. Assess client/family aseptic management of arterial access devices and other IV lines. Insert/change foley catheters using aseptic techniques. Teach in and out catheterizations. Performs and teaches bladder irrigation and care. Instruct family in proper skin care to prevent skin breakdown. Assess patient for bowel impaction, disimpact, gives enemas, teach bowel and bladder management. Insert/change suprapubic catheters. Assess and instruct family/client on colostomy and ileostomy care. Monitor clients with trachs and change and clean inner cannula, evaluate client and home oxygen.

Teach family function of apnea monitor, observe and assess functions of apnea monitor.

Perform venipuncture/fingerstick to obtain specimen for FBS or other blood values. Administer injections as ordered. Communicate changes in client body systems to physician to ascertain order for care.

Planning 20%

Responsible for the development of an individualized written plan of a nursing care to include the following: identifies problems, limitation and addresses these when developing the plan of care. The plan will affect the spiritual, educational, physical and psychosocial needs and goals for the patient and family as obtained from the patient/family assessment. The plan will include discharge planning to be initiated upon admission and completed before patient discharge. Responsible for plan update as indicated by the patients condition and reviewed on recert at least every 60 days to include progress toward discharge planning or stated goals.

Organizing and Directing Work 10%

Maintains record of daily activity and mileage. Records daily visits and makes a narrative of each and periodic updating of clients records. Serves as a home health record review member and attends quarterly meetings to review records. Works closely with all home nurse nurses, therapist, aides and clerks. Participates in home health aide supervisory visits every two (2) weeks and documents in the clients record. Insures that all clients are receiving quality care for all groups associated with the client.

Participates in continuing education and inservice training.

Maintain certification in CPR and license to practice nursing.

Maintains inventory of client care supplies and helps to ensure availability.

Receive referrals for client home care from area hospitals and health care resources in and out of the county and state. Arrange for appropriate intervention by disciplines; skilled nursing, physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, home health aide, medical social worker and service agencies in consultation with physician, client and family.

Attends monthly team meetings and care conferences.

Other Position Characteristics:

1. Accuracy Required in Work:

Most referrals are received by telephone and accuracy in taking and recording the information is essential. Make accurate professional judgment about client health status, needs and documenting same in client's record. Adherence to rules and regulations in application of program guidelines. Performing direct client care in a skilled manner adhering to accepted standards of client care. Driving automobile defensively and safely. Memos must be clear, concise and contain all necessary information. Know and be able to explain federal, state and county guidelines and standards.

2. Consequence of Error:

The greatest potential losses are as follows: 1. Employee...Severe reprimand with possible termination of employment. 2. Organization/Agency...Suffers severe damage to reputation and credibility. Place under investigation and in jeopardy of losing licensure/certification to operate as a home health agency. 3. Client health...Suffer damage to health or general well being.

3. Instructions Provided to Employee:

Written and verbal instructions are received from the health director and nursing director and home health supervisor. Instructions are received frequently from intermediaries, inservice programs and manuals, at times the county attorney, county manager, the advisory committee, Board of Health and County Commissioners. Instructions also come from discharge planners, hospitals and physicians.

4. Guides, Regulations, Policies and References Used by Employee:

Health Insurance Manual (Medicare guidelines), Medical Manual, Home Health Policy and Procedure Manual, Blue Cross Training Manual, Physicians Desk Reference, Medical Dictionary, Public Health Nursing Manual, Administrator's Extra, Medicare Advisories, Northampton County Personnel Manual, ICD-9 CM Code Book, Nurse Practice Act, Northampton County Health Department Safety Manual which includes infection control and Mosby's Nursing Drug Reference Book.

5. Supervision Received by Employee:

Work is supervised by the home health supervisor through frequent conferences concerning the program, statistics, issues and concerns. Work is performed with some independence. Major changes in plans and work standards are discussed with the home health supervisor.

6. Variety and Purpose of Personal Contacts:

Daily conferences available with the home health staff to discuss instructions and assignments. Discuss problems and concerns, receive reports on clients. Frequent conferences with the home health supervisor regarding the status of home health operations, needs or concerns. Work closely with the clerk to assure proper billing. Contact is made with clients and their families, physicians, salesperson from medical equipment and supply companies, pharmacists, Dept of Social Services, Meals on Wheels and mental health. Conferencing with staff who are having personal conflicts, difficulty working or communicating with other staff members, clients or their families or those with a grievance. Try to find

a solution which resolves the problems and enables them to work together effectively. Conference with home health supervisor regarding problems if not able to solve.

7. Physical Effort:

Able to speak clearly and communicate in writing. Work includes lifting or positioning patients, loading and unloading heavy supplies from vehicles to patient's home, walking short distances. Occasionally climbing short flights of stairs. This is done daily as required to meet the needs of the patients.

8. Work Environment and Conditions:

Work includes periodic exposure to hazards in the field (driving, rural or intertown setting, combative or infectious patients, vicious animals, insects or rodents.) Work conditions may be mildly disagreeable if working in poor home environment or with difficult patients and/or family members.

9. Machines, Tools, Instruments, Equipment and Materials Used:

Work involves the ability to use effectively the following equipment: stethoscope, BP cuff, various IV pumps, feeding pumps, hoist lifts, foley and suprapubic catheter set-ups, insertion trays and drainage bags, nasogastric tubes and irrigation trays, colostomy equipment, scales, whirlpool, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, bedside commode, suction machines, wound vacuum. Gastrostomy tubes insertion and maintenance and tubing change, needles and syringes, dressing supplies and specimen collection trays, venous sample equipment, tracheostomy tubes and care sets, computer, centrifuge, telephone, fax machine, copier, and automobile.

10. Visual Attention, Mental Concentration and Manipulative Skills:

Visual attention, mental concentration and fine motor skills (use of fingers, hands, feet and sensory perception) are required on a daily basis as these skills are involved in physical assessment such as blood pressure, temperature, taking pulse and administering and recording medication and detecting improvement as well as deterioration of patient's condition (i.e., wound assessment for healing, measurement and amount of drainage.) Visual attention issued to assess the surrounding environment for patient safety, utilizing aseptic techniques as well as employees safety. Must be able to assess patients mental status in relation to illness and physical limitations as well as stress placed on family members. Also ability to drive long distances.

11. Safety for Others:

Any hazards or work procedures that could be potentially harmful to others shall be reported immediately to the home health supervisor. All Sharps and soiled dressing supplies are properly handled and disposed of in the homes or designated containers with patient teaching to do the same. Insure client safety through use of properly functioning equipment following manufacturer's guidelines. Follow infection control guidelines using universal precautions. Use appropriate personal protective equipment as indicated per safety manual.

12. Dynamics of Work:

On a day to day basis, there are frequent changes in body mechanics due to turning patients, positioning for dressing changes, performing procedures, assessing patient homes, driving in the same position for extended length of time, sitting at desks charting, retrieving charts from chart holder and obtaining needed supplies out of storage. Things that also affect the dynamics of PHN II work are: changes in patient's condition and making decisions related to changes, inclement weather, changes in policies, changes in patient payor source and insurance, changes in fluctuating case load and severity of cases. The accreditation guidelines also create strict adherence to policies/procedures regarding quality patient care.

F. Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Thorough knowledge and skill in the admission criteria and organization of the home health agency; thorough knowledge of public health nursing. Knowledge of state, federal and local guidelines pertaining to the home health program; as well as accreditation standards, resources and organizations in North Carolina concerned with the home health program and public health work; current social and economic problems.

Ability to plan, coordinate and supervise patient case loads; ability to deal tactfully with others and to exercise good judgment in appraising situations and making decisions; ability to secure the cooperation of clients, to elicit needed information and to maintain effective working relationships; ability to record accurately services rendered and to interpret and explain records, reports and medical instructions.

G. Required Minimum Training:

Graduation from a four-year college or university with a BS Degree in Nursing which includes a public health nursing rotation and two years of public health nursing experience; or graduation from an accredited school or professional nursing and three years of professional nursing experience two of which must have been in public health; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

H. Additional Training/Experience:

CPR Certification
OSHA training annually

I. License or Certification Required by Statute or Regulation:

Valid RN License to practice as a registered nurse in North Carolina by the North Carolina Board of Nursing.

Valid North Carolina driver's license.