

POSITION DESCRIPTION

SECTION A: Position Identification POSITION TITLE: Social Worker (MSW)		CLASSIFICATION	
DEPARTMENT		DIVISION	
POSITION #	MANAGEMENT	EXCLUDED	BARGAINING UNIT

SECTION B: Reporting Structure

Your Supervisor's Title:

His/Her Supervisor's Title:

Other positions that report to your immediate supervisor:

SECTION C: Program/Functional Area

SECTION D: Position Summary

The Practice of Social Work: (*Social Workers Act*, 1993 is the assessment, remediation and prevention of social problems and the enhancement of social functioning of individuals, families, groups and communities by providing direct counselling services, development, promotion and delivery of human service programs or the development and promotion of social policies aimed at improving social conditions and promoting social equality.

The Health Care Social Worker is a member of the interdisciplinary health care team providing collaborative, holistic care on the primary to quaternary care continuum. Social Workers are primarily concerned with the relationships between people and their environments which are integral to psychosocial, emotional and spiritual well being. The social determinants of health are embedded in social work theory and practice and are the focus for the dynamic and interactive process of engagement, assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation. Social Workers build upon the strengths of patients/clients by focusing on existing coping strategies and problem solving skills, past successes, and personal resources.

The MSW practices at an advanced level and works with patient populations whose needs are complex - defined as unpredictable, multi-faceted and dynamic with serious risk and social consequences and requiring a high level of inter-professional collaboration. The following knowledge, skills and practice abilities are associated with the MSW practitioner:

- specialized clinical training in therapeutic modalities/ interventions and working and consulting with specific patient/client populations
- independent and/or interdisciplinary research, quality improvement
- clinical supervision of BSW and MSW practitioners
- provisional mental health diagnosis and administering diagnostic tools if required
- teaching Social Work
- developing and evaluating social policy
- work autonomously with high levels of responsibility and accountability
- leadership skills

SECTION E: MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES: (indicate approx % of time spent on each)

1. **Psychosocial Assessment:** as a member of the interdisciplinary care team, the MSW completes an initial and ongoing bio-psychosocial assessment to identify strengths and challenges that will influence optimal health outcomes and determine psycho-social risks for recurrent illness, disability and health distress.

The MSW practitioner:

- is expected to provide complex analysis, clinical reasoning and integration of assessment information
 - with specific clinical training, completes family therapy and comprehensive mental health assessments making provisional diagnosis in collaboration with the health care team
 - with specific training, administers diagnostic tools
2. **Therapeutic Modalities/Interventions:** as a member of the interdisciplinary care team, and based upon information gathered through the psychosocial assessment, the MSW will determine appropriate therapeutic interventions to address the following, but not limited to:
 - trauma
 - suicide and crisis
 - psycho-educational needs
 - addictions
 - grief and loss
 - resource needs

- stress management
- life altering transitions
- mental health issues

The MSW practitioner: is expected to have specialization in one or more therapeutic modalities and utilizes these with patients/clients who have complex issues. Complex is defined as unpredictable, multi-faceted and dynamic with serious risk and social consequences and requiring a high level of inter-professional collaboration.

3. **Case Management and Discharge Planning:** the MSW takes a leadership role within the interdisciplinary team in creating a comprehensive plan for risk reduction and timely transition through assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation with patient/client populations whose needs are complex as previously defined.
4. **Psycho-Education:** the MSW identifies learning needs and goals of patients/clients to develop and facilitate group therapy for behaviour change and psycho-educational activities to increase self care and self management. Also provides train the trainer sessions.
5. **Community Development:** the MSW works collaboratively with stakeholders to develop enhance and support individual and community strengths and capacity.
6. **Education and Training:** The MSW provides orientation to students, develops and delivers presentations on pertinent topics, and provides formal and informal peer mentorship. The MSW practitioner participates in the professional development of colleagues through clinical supervision and provides sessional teaching at their professional school.
7. **Inter-professional Collaboration:** The MSW develops collaborative partnerships with community and government partners to identify and address systemic barriers enabling the patients/ clients, families and stakeholders they work with to enhance their health and wellness.
8. **Quality Improvement:** The MSW takes a leadership role in quality improvement initiatives such as developing practice standards, guidelines and measurable outcomes, evaluating effectiveness of programs, staff allocation and utilization, and chairing organizational and/or discipline committees.
9. **Research:** The MSW designs and conducts discipline specific or collaborative, interdisciplinary research to develop policies and programs to meet the needs of specific populations across the continuum of care.
10. **Care Coordination:** The MSW serves as the coordinator of care within a care team for a specific group of patients/clients. This includes providing leadership, assuming responsibility for assessing, planning, implementing, directing, supervising and evaluating patient care and outcomes, organizing patient and family conferences, facilitate and coordinate referrals, and participating in direct patient care delivery.

POSITION SPECIFICATIONS

SECTION F: MINIMUM FORMAL EDUCATION:

Master of Social Work

SECTION G: CERTIFICATION/REGISTRATION/DESIGNATION

Registration with the Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers

Certification in relevant therapeutic modalities as required

SECTION H: SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS: The MSW is expected to have advanced knowledge and skills in:

- theoretical frameworks and perspectives and specialization in one or more therapeutic modalities e.g., solution focused therapy
- the social determinants of health and the risk factors and social consequences associated with diverse populations
- theories of human behaviour, family systems and dynamics
- conflict resolution skills
- problem solving skills
- medical terminology
- knowledge of required diagnostic tools including the DSM
- community resources and navigating systems
- formal and informal leadership roles, e.g., team leaders, professional practice, coordinator
- relevant legislation e.g. Protection of Persons in Care Act, Personal Directives Act
- cultural awareness and sensitivity
- specific populations with uniquely defined needs and challenges, e.g., elderly, transplant,

SECTION I: NATURE AND AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE:

- 2 years related clinical experience
- clinical training and experience to provide mental health assessments and provisional diagnosis, if required by position

SECTION J: JUDGEMENT & INITIATIVE:

Human rights, social justice and critical reflection are the philosophical foundations of Social Work.

The MSW requires a critical understanding of the impact of physical, mental, emotional and psychological illness on patients/clients.

The MSW is expected to have a solid grasp of emerging and established theories that inform their practice and in turn inform the development of theories through scholarly endeavours related to their practice. The MSW requires ability to:

- interpret assessment findings to the healthcare team so that the patients/clients' psychosocial context and experiences are understood
- determine appropriate clinical intervention

- develop partnerships and collaborate with key stakeholders in the delivery of care
- identify patient/client behaviours that may impact on ability to benefit from services
- continuous monitoring, adjustment and evaluation of the care plan, in collaboration with the healthcare team, to ensure it meets patients/clients' goals and needs
- critical analysis of social, economic, political and cultural factors that influence health and wellness and deconstructing fundamental assumptions, including values and beliefs that influence professional judgement
- negotiate and advocate for resources to implement plans
- document all relevant social work interventions on the health record in accordance with social work standards and employer requirements
- navigate health and community services delivery systems
- understand and maintain ethical boundaries
- engage in ethical decision making
- evaluate effectiveness of organization and discipline services/programs
- lead and collaborate in research related to social work in healthcare
- design and implement educational health promotion to meet specific population needs

SECTION K: TYPE AND LEVEL OF SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

- orientation, supervision and evaluation of Social Work students, and other health care students in clinical settings
- provides feedback on other healthcare students in clinical setting
- formal and informal peer mentorship to discipline or healthcare colleagues
- orientation of discipline and inter-professional colleagues to the healthcare team
- clinical supervision of BSW & MSW practitioners

SECTION L: KEY RELATIONSHIPS:

Consultation is provided at patient/client, team/program, organizational and community levels to promote holistic, patient-centred care, ensure the plan meets patients/clients' needs, facilitate information exchange and ethical decision making. Key partners include:

- patients/clients, family, community supports
- members of the interdisciplinary healthcare team
- ethno-cultural and religious organizations
- government and community service organizations
- schools and recreation organizations
- primary care

SECTION M: DEGREE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS ON FINANCIAL, HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES: assess and recommend/approve patients/clients for in-house resources e.g. special funds with specific criteria

SECTION N: PHYSICAL DEMAND:

- sitting for extended periods with patients/families, at team and family meetings and using the phone or computer

- keyboarding;
- moving between sites for patient care and meetings
- off site visits

SECTION O: MENTAL & VISUAL DEMAND:

- frequent observation, interviewing, active listening and provision of therapeutic interventions with patients/clients & families
- consultation with interdisciplinary team members, government and community agencies
- frequent and lengthy telephone use for consultation and locating & arranging resources
- computer use to review health record, locate information & resources, report writing and complete statistics
- regular documentation, letter and report writing
- formal and informal mentoring of social work colleagues and interdisciplinary colleagues
- supervision of students
- maintaining work-life balance

SECTION P: WORKING ENVIRONMENT and UNAVOIDABLE HAZARDS:

- fast paced working environment frequently needing to quickly transition patients when there is a code census
- multiple and competing demands and deadlines
- travel between and off sites
- noisy environment
- exposure to viruses and communicable diseases necessitating the wearing of protective clothing
- interruptions to work, urgent requests

SECTION Q: SAFETY (patient, worker & workplace)

The successful applicant will demonstrate good stewardship in the identification, reporting & mitigation of unsafe Acts or conditions

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Signature

Name (Please Print)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Signature

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VP Approval: _____ Date: _____

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