HOSPITAL QUALITY ASSURANCE NURSE

DEFINITION
Under general direction, designs, conducts and coordinates quality assurance and improvement activities, works collaboratively with the Natividad Medical Center (NMC) medical staff, departments and clinics to establish and manage an effective quality assurance program for the measurement and evaluation of clinical, functional status and satisfaction outcomes, and improvement of services/outcomes throughout NMC. Projects and activities are designed to improve compliance with all of The Joint Commission’s standards as well as those of other accrediting agencies and regulatory bodies. Performs related duties as required. Supports the philosophy and mission of NMC by facilitating performance improvement activities linked to the strategic plan.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS
The NMC Quality Assurance Nurse class is differentiated from other nursing classes in the nature, diversity, and scope of responsibilities requiring knowledge of methods of investigation and review, statistical analysis and reporting, performance measures, performance improvement techniques, and the frequent use of discretion, initiative and independent judgment. It is further differentiated from other classes in that incumbents provide direct support and assistance to the Quality Administrator and/or the Chief Medical Officer.

The NMC Quality Assurance Nurse differs from the Quality Director in that the former is assigned projects of limited scope, which contribute to major projects and policy recommendations being developed by the higher classification of Quality Administrator.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES
Nothing in this specification restricts management’s right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time.

1. Develops and assists with the implementation of policies and procedures for the quality assurance and improvement function of NMC, to assure improved compliance with all Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Organizations (The Joint Commission) and other accrediting agencies and regulatory bodies.

2. Reviews and evaluates patients’ medical records, applying quality assurance criteria. Screens patient care cases and makes recommendations for physician peer review.

3. Conducts incident investigations, including root cause, “near miss” and sentinel event analysis.

4. Collaborates with medical staff and/or mental health professionals, and others to review and interpret patient records and documentation; writes narrative and statistical reports; and prepares correspondence using word processing software.

5. Reviews state regulations, reviews policies and procedures, and makes recommendations to management on methods to conform to regulations; educates staff on regulation changes, and conducts training sessions for clinical and support staff on changes to practices and procedures.

6. Analyzes and validates data taken from documented patient interviews.

7. Identifies common recurrent patient problems, symptoms and behavioral changes in relation to standards of care and patient needs, and makes recommendations for administrative change.

8. Performs Core Measure abstraction and data analysis, prepares reports for The Joint Commission and others.

9. Applies knowledge of a variety of conceptual models and previous clinical experience to patient care issues in order to consider alternatives that explain or predict present or potential patient problems; recommends strategies to improve performance.
Hospital Quality Assurance Nurse

10. Uses evaluation data in collaboration with other health disciplines to influence the revision of the total patient care plan or program/processes.
11. Works closely with other health care providers and ancillary services to facilitate patient care.
12. Develops and maintains good relations with staff, hospital and private physicians.
13. Identifies educational needs of nursing staff related to specialty area; develops educational materials about the specialty area for staff.
14. Evaluates and revises program goals, policies, procedures, standards and objectives as necessary.
15. Utilizes the results of audit/quality improvement and/or research activities to improve patient care and as learning experiences for staff.
16. Reviews quality assurance standards, studies existing hospital policies and procedures, and interviews hospital personnel and patients to evaluate effectiveness of quality assurance program.
17. Designs, develops and consults on forms used for the medical record, ensuring compliance with all regulatory agencies, including The Joint Commission, State and Federal.
18. Selects specific topics for review, such as problem procedures, drugs, high volume cases, high-risk cases, or other factors.
19. Acts as staff and/or participating member of various committees, such as the Assessment, Care & Education of Patients (ACE) committee.
20. Participates in Nursing and Physician staff meetings, for information gathering and consultation.
21. May oversee personnel engaged in quality assurance review of medical records or other assigned tasks.

QUALIFICATIONS

A combination of experience, education, and/or training which substantially demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

Knowledge and Skills:

Thorough knowledge of:
1. Current theory, principles, techniques and procedures used in professional nursing, including those applicable to an acute-care hospital.
2. Current theory, concepts, principles, techniques and practices of medical quality assurance.
3. Principles, techniques and practices of data analysis and modeling.
4. Safety policies and practices, specifically as applied to acute-care hospitals.
5. Change management and conflict resolution.
6. The uses and effects of medicines and narcotics.
7. Medical terminology, medical instruments and equipment.
8. All Federal, State and local laws and regulations which govern the practice of nursing and the operations of an acute-care hospital, such as The Joint Commission requirements, Title 22 regulations and other applicable administrative policies, bylaws, and regulations.
9. Techniques of effective report writing and office correspondence, including English grammar and usage.

Working knowledge of:
1. Principles and practices of business administration, including work planning and organization.
2. Capabilities and applications of electronic management information systems including word processing and spreadsheet applications.
3. Current theory, principles, techniques and practices of adult education and training.
4. Principles and practices of modern research methods and processes.
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5. Group and meeting facilitation.

Some knowledge of:
1. Internet research techniques
2. Spreadsheet and data base programs (i.e. Microsoft Excel, Access)

Skill and Ability to:
1. Perform a full range of registered nursing duties.
2. Conduct investigations into patient care cases, analyze and report findings.
3. Analyze information, problems, conditions, situation, policies, and procedures; recommend and implement effective improvements.
4. Design, prepare and maintain records and reports.
5. Establish and maintain tactful, effective working relationships with all levels of NMC staff as well as patients, families, providers and other outside agencies/parties.
6. Manage conflict, motivate staff to effect change where necessary.
7. Serve as a point of authority and/or source of knowledge for area of expertise.
8. Organize and prioritize the work of self and others; remain calm and effective under pressure and changing priorities.
9. Conduct research using modern techniques such as the Internet.
10. Exercise independent judgment and initiative. Work independently with minimal supervision.
11. Research, understand, interpret and apply rules and regulations as appropriate to NMC.
12. Read and understand patient records.
13. Prepare clear and concise reports using correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
15. Gather and analyze data, draw conclusions, and make recommendations.
16. Communicate effectively, both one on one and in groups.
17. Use word processing, spreadsheet, and database applications on personal computer.

REQUIRED CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

As a condition of employment, the incumbent will be required to:
1. Possess and maintain active Registered Nurse certification issued by the California Board of Registered Nursing.
2. Possess a valid California Drivers’ License.
3. Work flexible hours, including weekends, nights and holidays.

EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION/TRAINING

The knowledge, skills and abilities listed above may be acquired through various types of experience, education or training, typically:

Experience:

Five year’s nursing experience as a registered nurse, at least one of which has been in the specific area of patient care relevant to this assignment and 3-5 years experience in process improvement in a clinical setting.

AND
Hospital Quality Assurance Nurse

**Education:**
Completion of all coursework leading to a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing; Master’s Degree preferred.

**Certification:**
A CPHQ Certificate (Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality) from the National Association for Healthcare Quality is also preferred.

**PHYSICAL AND SENSORY REQUIREMENTS**
The physical and sensory abilities required for this classification include:
1. Mobility, flexibility, gross body coordination, and dexterity sufficient to move patients and equipment, and to respond to emergency/critical situations.
2. Ability to sit and/or stand for long periods of time (meeting/event attendance, or at a computer).
3. Acute vision, visual color discrimination, hearing, voice, smell, and sense of touch typical for a hospital/office environment.
4. Ability to speak clearly and with the volume required to carry on clear conversations in person, over the phone and at public events.
5. Mobility and flexibility to transport materials using a cart or other wheeled device.

**CLASS HISTORY**

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Prepared by: Gerta McClay, SPHR, IPMA-CP
Management Specialist

Approved by:
/s/ Janine Bouyea
NMC Human Resources Administrator

12/12/2008
Date