

POSITION DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

PD Tracking 15814
Series, Title and Grade 0301 Patient Representative GS-11
Department Veterans Affairs

Introduction Statement

The position is located at a Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) regional office. The purpose of the position is to serve as the Network Director's liaison, patient advocate, problem solver, communicator, and facilitator across broad organizational lines to preserve the rights of disabled veterans who are being transitioned through the VA system.

Major Duties

As a transition patient advocate, the employee serves as the point of contact, liaison, facilitator and problem solver to assist transitioning Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) veterans and their families. He/She ensures that severely injured patients have a personal advocate as they move through the VA system. Many of the patients suffer from multiple complex health and mental health problems, including traumatic brain injury, amputations, burns, combat stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The incumbent provides coordination of care, advisory and technical assistance to OIF/OEF veterans seeking medical care; provides advice on eligibility in the VA system and assists in the facilitation of all aspects of care required/requested by OIF/OEF veterans in collaboration with social work and nursing case managers. 17%

Handles a wide range of difficult contacts and complex situations including eligibility determinations on all types of patients by contacting the gaining medical facility for the given patient; transferring enrollment and clinical records; utilizing the computerized patient record system to monitor appointment timeliness and ensure that proper care is received; interpreting medical facilities' philosophy, policies, procedures, and services to patients and/or their family members; presenting patient problems, opinions and needs to the appropriate staff and to management for resolution; and acting on behalf of patients and their families on a variety of questions and issues involving problem resolution and patient advocacy. 17%

Assists patients in understanding their rights in addition to their responsibilities, safeguards and ensures statutory and constitutional rights of patients, and protects them from other kinds of system abuses. Provides information and assistance to veterans and family members regarding benefits, entitlement and eligibility to health care and veteran benefits. Identifies the elements of clinical or administrative practices that contribute to or cause an atmosphere for patient dissatisfaction which lead to patient complaints; and recommends to the Network Director changes that will reduce or eliminate justified complaints. Assists patients, their families and the facility staff members in recognizing and removing institutional obstacles to providing optimum quality health care. 17%

Develops rapport and maintains effective relations with medical center personnel at all levels, i.e., management, supervision, professional staff, technicians, administrative and clerical staff. Maintains close liaison with congressional office and responds to their staff directly on matters involving patient dissatisfaction. This relationship creates an atmosphere for resolution at an informal level before potential controversial issues are taken further. 17%

Develops and coordinates internal review systems to ensure that both clinical and administrative activities are in compliance with agency and accrediting and regulatory requirements especially as they pertain to patient rights and responsibilities. Recommends changes to improve organizational effectiveness. 16%

Prepares and monitors evaluation data, analyzes data, identify discrepancies, make corrections, and recommends a course of action to ensure accuracy and timeliness of future data input. Collects, analyzes, and evaluates data generated and produces meaningful reports based on that data regarding quality and customer service standards. Generates reports on the status and effectiveness of the medical center patient advocacy program.

Compiles final reports of evaluation efforts. Notes discrepancies and the planned initiatives for effecting remedial actions. Establishes administrative controls aimed at ensuring remedial actions are completed as proposed. Provides input into the conduct of, and is responsible for the maintenance of files and records pertaining to patient satisfaction surveys or other evaluative information. Documents all findings derived from the information after thorough analysis of data in order to identify trends and patterns and compiles data for inclusion in comprehensive analysis. Participates in network wide quarterly reports, assisting in analyzing the data from a network perspective for process improvement. Monitors action items to promote satisfactory progress towards remedy. 16%

Provides a channel through which patients can seek solutions to problems, concerns, and unmet needs. Works with health care providers and administrative support staff in the medical center to prevent and resolve patient complaints.

Factor Levels

Factor 1 Knowledge Required by the Position Factor Level 1-7 1250 pts.

Thorough knowledge of Federal Laws, VA regulations and directives governing veterans' medical benefits; facility policies, procedures and organizational structure; medical terminology; available services; and the capability of clinics and changes which affect veterans' benefits sufficient to resolve a variety of administrative problems and conflicts associated with

patient care throughout the VA system, and to communicate to veterans their VA rights and benefits.

Thorough knowledge of various public laws as well as the Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, Advance Directives Act and others is required. This knowledge is necessary to answer questions for patients, their families or their representatives regarding medical facility services.

Knowledge of the duties, priorities, commitments and program goals of both administrative and clinical services in order to respond to concerns expressed by patients and their families relative to health care services, discuss and negotiate with the family, and to help determine what course of actions are in the best interest of patients.

Oral and written communication as well as interpersonal relations sufficient to conduct interviews, provide counseling, prepare written reports.

Analytical skill sufficient to visualize needed changes and improvements in the management process; originate new and different solutions to problems; comprehend, interrelate, and evaluate facts; distinguish between causes and effects, analyze fundamental problems, and develop solutions logically and systematically; review policies and identify existing problems and potential problem areas; and suggest solutions or alternatives to existing procedures which may contribute to those problems.

Knowledge of medical terminology and VA nomenclature used with a variety of administrative

diagnostic and treatment procedures provided to all categories of patients in order to review and interpret information contained in medical and administrative records.

Factor 2 Supervisory Controls Factor Level 2-4 450 pts.

The supervisor establishes overall objectives of the Patient Advocacy Program. The incumbent performs duties and responsibilities independently to ensure optimum support to the medical centers and to promote efficient dissemination of services to veterans; and informs the supervisor of potentially controversial findings, issues, or problems with widespread impact. Completed work is reviewed for compatibility with organizational goals, guidelines, and effectiveness in achieving intended objectives. Completed work is also reviewed critically outside the employee's immediate office by staff and line management officials whose programs and employees would be affected by implementation of the recommendations.

Factor 3 Guidelines Factor Level 3-3 275 pts.

Guidelines consist of legislative and regulatory requirements that establish benefits and entitlements for veterans, agency policies and procedures, medical terminology, established medical center organizational functions and

processes, and accepted analytical methods. Guidelines are not always directly applicable to specific work assignments. However, precedents are available for reference. The employee uses judgment in choosing, interpreting, or adapting available guidelines to specific issues or subjects; analyzes the subject and the current guidelines and makes recommendations for changes; and researches regulations in determining the relationship between guidelines and organizational efficiency, program effectiveness, or employee productivity.

Factor 4 Complexity Factor Level 4-4 225 pts.

The work involves many aspects of patient treatment that are unique to the patient because of serious and disabling injury caused by combat. The advocate must be responsive to new and different requests associated with each unique veteran condition and situation to facilitate prompt treatment. The position is also complicated by severe medical conditions that may require the patient to receive treatment at multiple facilities. The patient advocate is responsible for ensuring a smooth and seamless flow from one treatment facility to another; and follows patients from the time they enter the VA system until they are discharged. This includes working closely with family members to ensure they are kept informed and are available to explain unique issues of the patient. The work includes identifying and recommending changes in medical center processes to facilitate service to veterans. This requires establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with veterans and their families and medical center staff, analyzing operating and administrative processes, and working to resolve problems and improve operations.

Factor 5 Scope and Effect Factor Level 5-3 150 pts.

The purpose of the work is to function as a liaison between veterans and their families and medical center staffs to ensure that veterans receive prompt and appropriate medical care, and have access to their full entitlement of benefits; and to resolve problems that arise. The work impacts the care that veterans receive and the ability to provide seamless care across agencies and facilities within VA.

Factor 6/7 Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts Factor Level 3c 180 pts.

Personal Contacts

Contacts are with veterans and their families, the staff of medical centers, and veteran and community organizations.

Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are to gather and disseminate information, share findings, resolve problems, and recommend changes to improve processes. Contacts require establishing and maintaining good working relationships with veterans and their families, medical center staff, and members of veteran and community groups. Contacts involve working with veterans and their families who may be dissatisfied, conducting mediation to resolve problem, and convincing management to accept recommendations.

Factor 8 Physical Demands

Factor Level 8-1

5 pts.

The work is essentially sedentary. However, a high level of physical energy is required to meet with many people in many different locations in the course of a workday.

Factor 9 Work Environment

Factor Level 9-1

5 pts.

The work is performed in an office setting. However, a major portion of the services provided are conducted away from the office, or in the office of other agencies. The nature of the job requires travel throughout an assigned geographical area away from the work setting.

Factor Points 2540

Position Classification Standard Used

Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series, 301, TS-34 January 1979