Clinical Nurse Specialist Job Description

Position Description

Position Summary/ Essential Characteristics

The clinical nurse specialist (CNS) is the clinical leader for a program or area of nursing practice within UMHS. The advanced knowledge and skills required for this role include clinical expertise in a focus area, evidence-based practice, collaboration, consultation, education, mentoring, and change leadership. These are essential to advance the practice of nursing and the professional development of nurses. The specialized knowledge and skills are used within three major areas of focus: patient/family, nurses and nursing practice, and the organization/system. The CNS and the Nurse Manager are partners in leading the nursing clinical practice area. The CNS coordinates and guides clinical activities/projects of nurses within a practice area. The CNS is accountable for collaborating with members of the health care team to design, implement, and measure safe, cost-effective, evidence-based care strategies. The CNS is responsible for maintaining current professional knowledge and competencies and contributing to the advancement of the practice of nursing at the unit/system, local, state and/or national and international level.

Responsibilities:

Direct Patient Care
1. Serves as a reliable source of information on the latest evidence supporting cost-effective, safe nursing practices.
2. Collaborates with the multidisciplinary team using the nursing process to integrate the nursing perspective into a comprehensive plan of care for the patient/family.
3. Identifies and prioritizes nursing care needs for a select population of patients/families.
4. Conducts comprehensive, holistic wellness and illness assessments using established or innovative evidence-based techniques, tools, and methods.
5. Initiates and plans care conferences or programs for individual patients or populations of patients.
6. Designs and evaluates innovative educational programs for patients, families, and groups.
7. Identifies, collects, and analyzes data that serve as a basis for program design and outcome measurement.
8. Establishes methods to evaluate and document nursing interventions.
9. Evaluates the impact of nursing interventions on fiscal and human resources.

Nursing/Nursing Practice
1. Collaborates with others to resolve issues related to patient care, communication, policies, and resources.
2. Creates and revises nursing policies, protocols and procedures using evidence-based information to achieve outcomes for indicators that are nurse-sensitive.
3. Identifies facilitators and addresses barriers that affect patient outcomes.
4. Leads clinical practice and quality improvement initiatives for a unit or a program.
5. Collaborates with nurses to develop practice environments that support shared decision-making.
6. Assists the staff in developing critical thinking and clinical judgment.
7. Creates a nursing care environment that stimulates continuous self-learning, reflective practice, feeling of ownership and demonstration of responsibility and accountability.
8. Collaborates with Educational Nurse Specialists, Educational Nurse Coordinators and others on content and operational design of orientation, clinical competency, and other clinical educational program development.
9. Mentors nurses to acquire new skills, develop their careers and effectively incorporate evidence into practice.
10. Provides input for staff evaluation.
11. Provides formal and informal education for nurses and other health professionals and health professional students.
12. Leads in the conduct and utilization of nursing research.

**Organization/System Leadership**
1. Consults with other units and health care professionals to improve care.
2. Leads/assists institutional groups to enhance the clinical practice of nurses and improve patient outcomes.
3. Develops, pilots, evaluates, and incorporates innovative models of practice across the continuum of care.
4. Designs and evaluates programs and initiatives that are congruent with the organization's strategic plans, regulatory agency requirements, and nursing standards.
5. Participates in need identification, selection and evaluation of products and equipment.
6. Advances nursing practice through participation in professional organizations, publications, and presentations.

**Required Qualifications**

**Education**
Masters Degree in Nursing with a clinical focus. Graduate preparation must have included clinical application of the CNS role component*. If clinical application of the CNS role was not included in the candidate’s master’s preparation, a post-masters CNS certificate must be obtained within 3 years of date of hire to maintain employment in this classification.

**Experience**
Minimum 3 years clinical nursing experience required.

Clinical knowledge in specialty area. If hired in area with a substantially different clinical knowledge set, the candidate will be expected to demonstrate clinical expertise in the practice area within 6 months to a 1-year time frame.

**Skills**
Demonstrated skills at the level of an advanced practice nurse in leadership, communication, collaboration, mentoring, and change as evidenced by portfolio, recommendation letters, references, interview, and demonstration.

Demonstrated ability at the level of an advanced practice nurse to utilize evidence to develop, teach, guide, and implement practice standards and policies.

**Desired Qualifications**
CNS Advanced Practice Certification
Certification in area of clinical specialty
Clinical nursing experience within the last 5 years
Computer skills using various applications: Internet, email, word processing, presentation, and database.