

Job Class Profile: Genetics Counsellor II**Pay Level: CG-41 Point Band: 950-993**

Factor	Knowledge	Interpersonal Skills	Physical Effort	Concentration	Complexity	Accountability & Decision Making	Impact	Development and Leadership	Environmental Working Conditions	Total Points
Rating	7	7	2	5	7	5	5	3	2	
Points	327	117	13	24	210	108	103	64	21	987

JOB SUMMARY

The Genetics Counsellor II is responsible to provide professional genetics diagnosis, counselling, and related clinical services to individuals and families and provides education, genetic screening, and consultation. Plans, organizes, implements, evaluates, and coordinates a comprehensive program of genetic screening, assessment, testing and participates in research projects. In addition, participates in quality assurance by developing and implementing policies, procedures, and clinical practice protocols and guidelines and works as a sole position in an outreach clinic.

Key and Periodic Activities:

- Provides comprehensive consultation, diagnosis, and genetic counselling which involves communicating and educating clients and/or their families regarding genetic disorders or conditions, reviewing and discussing genetic tests results, outlining and recommending screening or medical options that are available, and explaining or arranging a course of action.
- Assesses clients' condition(s), researches, and determines the type of testing or referrals required. Makes appropriate referrals or orders clinical tests such as blood work, diagnostic procedures, and orders genetic and diagnostic screening and testing (i.e. chromosome studies, DNA, tumor studies, etc.). Communicates with laboratories regarding the types of tests and arranges for samples to be taken and if applicable, shipped outside the province to other laboratories.
- Reviews referrals from family doctors, specialists and other health professionals, determines appropriateness of referral and prioritizes or triages requests. Requests appropriate information (i.e. family history) from the client prior to appointment.
- Performs case management which involves meeting client and/or family, analyzing family history, obtaining consent for release of information for medical records, autopsy reports, etc., reviewing and assessing the information and may involve arranging specialist appointments or further testing, meeting with the client and/or the family to provide counselling, and completing consultation letter to family or referring physician.
- Reviews and enters case information into the computer system.
- Consults and/or provides advice to physicians and other health care professionals regarding genetic conditions and testing.
- Reviews the scientific literature for new developments in genetics.
- Organizes and prepares for medical genetics traveling clinics and completes follow up reports and or referrals on clients seen in the clinics.

Key and Periodic Activities:

- Collects and documents departmental statistics.
- Performs educational presentations or lectures for various professional groups (i.e. community groups, health professionals, and nursing students) and contributes or participates in various committees.
- May perform research of clients' conditions for counselling purposes and participate in research activities such as obtaining consent for participation and for receipt of appropriate records, completing detailed family histories, and collaborating with research counsellors and laboratory staff in the collection of samples and/or information.
- Collaborates with other counsellors regarding policy and procedure development, and quality improvements.
- May supervise students and administrative staff in the support of clinic work and provide overall administrative management of office.

SKILL**Knowledge****General and Specific Knowledge:**

- Knowledge of:
 - Science of Genetics
 - Genetics testing in various areas (molecular, cytogenetics, etc)
 - Clinical screening and genetic risk assessment
 - Questionnaires
 - Community agencies and resources
- Current knowledge of trends, research and developments within the genetics field

Formal Education and/or Certification(s):

- Minimum: Graduate degree in Science (Genetics Counselling)
- Certification by the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors (CAGC), and/or the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC)

Years of Experience:

- Minimum: 1 – 2 Years of experience

Competencies:

- Computer, Counselling, and Communication skills (oral and written).
- Research and analytical skills.
- Ability to apply interviewing techniques.
- Ability to utilize assessment tools.

Interpersonal Skills

- A range of interpersonal skills are used to listen to information, ask questions, provide expert advice or counselling, resolve disputes, and deal with upset clients. In addition, skills are used to conduct formal interviews, provide care and comfort, to explain complex information and provide advice to clients, their families, physicians and other healthcare professionals, work

cooperatively with other members of the healthcare team (i.e. laboratory personnel, and nurses) to complete the work, instruct, teach or mentor students, medical personnel, the community, and to facilitate meetings or make formal presentations to other healthcare workers or the community.

- Communications occur with employees within and outside the department, clients and their families, physicians, laboratory and diagnostic technologists, people in and outside the organization (i.e. laboratories to discuss or provide information regarding testing or to consult on particular cases), and with internal and external executives, professional advisors (Medical Geneticist) and associations.
- The most significant contacts are with clients and their families; Medical Geneticist and laboratory and diagnostic technologists.

EFFORT

Physical Effort

- The demands of the job occasionally result in considerable fatigue, requiring periods of rest, and a need for strength and endurance.
- Regularly lifts objects such as books and files less than 10 lbs and occasionally, when working in clinics may be required to lift children up to 50 lbs for examination or certain procedures.
- Occasionally works in awkward cramped positions when doing clinics, researching and performing work on the computer; standing and walking is required when conducting clinics; and sitting when performing work on the computer.
- During counselling sessions this class is constantly sitting.
- Uses fine finger precision work to operate the computer mouse.

Concentration

- **Visual** concentration is required regularly to read and review complex medical records, family histories, and results of tests.
- **Auditory** concentration is required to listen and document clients' information in clinic sessions, to listen and respond to questions from clients, and their family members; and to collaborate with laboratory staff, physicians, and researchers.
- A **high level of alertness and concentration** is required in counselling sessions and when documenting information such as family histories. Some tasks are **repetitive** and require alertness when completing various forms for testing or referrals to physicians and accuracy with the details requires alertness to ensure samples give accurate results.
- There are **time pressures and deadlines** specifically to see emergency and pregnant clients due to the nature of their condition. Works alone and therefore can be **interruptions** from telephone calls.
- **Eye/hand coordination** are used to perform work on the computer.
- **Exact results and precision** are required when interpreting clients' results.

Complexity

- Performs a series of tasks and activities that are different which require a broad range of skills and a diversity of knowledge. Provides genetics diagnosis, counselling, and clinical services to individuals and families and provides education, genetic screening and consultation.

- Constantly the tasks have a wide variety of responsibilities and have policy significance which can be addressed by following guidelines. Regularly, there are problems with limited opportunity for standardized solutions and that can be resolved in a team setting. Occasionally, there are creative problem definition and analysis required to solve unique client problems.
- Typical problems involve assessing the unique needs of clients and very often their family members for possible genetic disorders that can be complicated as well as life threatening. This involves researching and identifying possible causes and then discussing, educating, and counselling clients and their families on their options.
- Complexities are typically solved by consultation with the Medical Geneticist, colleagues, advisors, and by following the guidelines, practices, and protocols of the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors (CAGCO), and the Canadian Council of Medical Geneticists (CCMG). Other resources that are used are internet resources, journals, scientific literature, and in complicated ethical situations, consultation can be made with an ethicist.

RESPONSIBILITY

Accountability and Decision-Making

- Work tasks and activities are generally not monitored or controlled.
- Independent decisions are made with regards to caseload management such as genetic and clinical testing decisions, recommendations or referrals to other specialists, where to send samples for genetic testing, triaging referrals, and counselling of clients. Also works in an outreach clinic where day-to-day decisions around office management and client appointments are made independently.
- While makes independent decisions related to client care, consultation with the Medical Geneticist is available. Formal discharging of clients is made in consultation with the Medical Geneticist.
- Interprets directions and applies guidelines regarding confidentiality of cases and when assessing criteria for ordering tests. There is some discretion to perform testing on some clients, even though the criteria for testing was not met, i.e. adult onset conditions, and to counsel clients and their families regarding possible hereditary conditions.
- May exercise a high degree of discretion and judgment when counselling clients to ensure they receive the information to make informed decisions, and discretion and judgment is exercised regarding the level of treatment, and the types of tests that should be performed.

Impact

- Could either negatively or positively impact the quality of care provided to the clients. For example, if clients are seen, diagnosed and are properly counselled, it can improve their well-being, or if they are not seen or misdiagnosed it could lead to significant consequences.
- Tasks and activities have an impact on the immediate work area, department, in and outside the organization and on clients. There are impacts on equipment (computers, lab equipment), information (if it is not accurate), processes and systems (breakdown in protocols), finances (budgets due to the related costs of testing), human resources (tests and services involve various personnel in and outside the organization), corporate image, and research centers (information collected helps identify and manage various conditions/diseases, and in some cases prevention). The most significant impact is on clients and information provided to them.

- Types of errors would be mistakes in diagnosis and incorrect labelling of forms. These errors are sometimes mitigated as laboratory personnel detect them, or the counsellor may detect this when reviewing the information. Work tasks and activities are generally not monitored or controlled and depending on the error, there are various time frames for identification.

Development and Leadership of Others

- There is no direct supervision of staff.
- Provides on-the-job advice, guidance to students, gives lead direction, delegates, coordinates, checks and provides feedback to administrative support and students, orientation to new staff and/or students, and formal classroom training to community groups, physicians, and others.
- Team leader responsibilities include developing and implementing client educational material and administering educational/professional development sessions for nurses, physicians, and other health care professionals. In addition, coordinates, organizes, and participates in travelling genetics clinics; develops guidelines, protocols, and evaluates genetic services; participates on committees; and provides education sessions for community groups and schools.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Environmental Working Conditions

- There is a requirement to use universal safety precautions when interviewing clients or when taking samples such as the wearing of gloves, masks, gowns, etc., washing of hands, using sharps containers, and following isolation procedures.
- There is limited likelihood of receiving minor injuries or illness from this work; however, there is no likelihood of receiving partial or total disability.
- Occasionally, when counselling clients is exposed to bodily fluids and waste, infectious diseases, odours, and sharp objects (i.e. needles) when taking samples. May also work as a sole position in an outreach clinic and is isolated from other genetic counsellors.