

**Job Class Profile:            Genetics Counsellor III****Pay Level:                      CG-44                      Point Band:                      1082-1135**

Factor	Knowledge	Interpersonal Skills	Physical Effort	Concentration	Complexity	Accountability & Decision Making	Impact	Development and Leadership	Environmental Working Conditions	Total Points
Rating	7	8	2	5	8	7	6	3	2	
Points	327	133	13	24	240	152	124	64	21	1098

**JOB SUMMARY**

The Genetics Counsellor III is responsible to provide advanced professional genetics diagnosis, counseling and related clinical services to individuals and families; provide consultation and assessment, education, genetic screening, holds formalized clinical lecturing positions, and conducts formal scientific genetic research; participate in quality assurance by developing and implementing policies, procedures, and clinical practice protocols and guidelines; and may also coordinate a specialized genetics service within the province.

**Key and Periodic Activities:**

- Provides comprehensive client consultation, assessment, and genetic counselling which involves diagnosing, 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 availability including participating in research related to their condition; and explaining or arranging a course of action. Meetings can also involve reviewing results of genetic testing, counseling or discussing implications, and completing documentation.
- Assesses consult requests and prepares for case by coordinating the distribution of family history questionnaire forms, analyzing information such as the family history to determine probable inheritance patterns and types of genetic testing; coordinating distribution of release of information forms to confirm diagnoses of relatives; conducting medical records review including evaluating the client and family members records; completing literature reviews regarding potential genetic conditions for which a client is at risk; identifying laboratories offering genetic testing for particular genetic conditions(s); and assessing the cost and quality of laboratory services.
- Collaborates with Medical Geneticist during consults for physical examinations and explanation of clinical and genetic tests, ordering genetic testing, and documenting medical information, as required.
- Provides follow-up care after consultation with clients which may include providing genetic testing results, ordering and organizing genetic tests, blood work, and other diagnostic tests, and completing consult letters outlining details of referral, clients conditions, testing results or recommendations, referrals to other specialists, and any follow up care.
- Supervises students and other medical professionals in genetics work. Participates in the clinical training of genetic and counseling students and residents. Prepares and delivers genetic

### Key and Periodic Activities:

- lectures/presentations to other departments, students, and community or professional groups as requested.
- Coordinates referrals from family doctors, specialists and other health professionals, determines appropriateness of referral and prioritizes or triages requests.
- Obtains samples, orders tests, completes necessary requisitions, liaises with genetic laboratories in and outside the province regarding tests and samples, and follows up with regard to testing issues.
- Attends and presents at case conferences and seminars.
- Updates and maintains genetics database information. Documents information of consults, tests, etc. Troubleshoots issues with genetics database including liaising with vendors.
- Reviews individual referrals and triages referrals for the genetics program on a rotational basis. These activities may involve reviewing referrals, assessing risks, distributing the referrals to the appropriate counsellor, and responding to inquiries regarding related work. May coordinate clinic waitlist referrals including scheduling of appointments, and chart preparation for Medical Geneticist.
- Participates and attends continuing education, professional meetings, workshops, and conferences.
- Collaborates with other counsellors and healthcare professionals regarding genetic consultation.
- Conducts and/or participates as co-principle investigator in the design and implementation of formalized scientific genetic research including preparing related grant and ethics approval submissions, gathering information/consent forms, writing or contributing to case reports, and supervision of research assistant staff. This may involve presentation of findings in scholarly articles and journals.
- Performs formalized teaching as a clinical lecturer within the Discipline of Genetics, Faculty of Medicine at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (MUN) and includes preparing and presenting lectures and tutorials to a variety of students, healthcare disciplines; participating, attending or presenting at Journal Club and clinical review meetings; and acting as a resource for health professionals, and academic schools.
- Supervises or evaluates students and/or staff in the support of clinic work including coordination of rotations, supervision of cases, and review of documentation.
- Participates or represents the division on various committees (i.e. Provincial Medical Genetic Clinical review meetings, grand rounds, Journal club, lectures for health professionals, and Human Investigation Committees).

## SKILL

### Knowledge

#### General and Specific Knowledge:

- Knowledge of:
  - Science of Genetics
  - Genetics testing in various areas (molecular, biochemical, and cytogenetics)

- Clinical screening and genetic risk assessment
- Questionnaires
- Community agencies and resources
- Evidence based research
- Lecturing techniques
- Adult Learning Principles
- 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, 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)
- Interviewing skills
- Assessment tools

**Interpersonal Skills**

- A range of interpersonal skills are used to listen to information, ask questions, provide expert advice/counselling to clients, direction, resolution of disputes, show empathy with upset clients, conduct formal interviews, provide care and comfort, give complex information and advice to clients, their families, physicians, other healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical companies, and national/international scholarly experts, scientists, and specialists. In addition, works cooperatively with other members of the healthcare team (i.e. laboratory personnel, nurses, research counsellors), to get the work done. Also uses a variety of interpersonal skills to instruct, teach or mentor students, residents, other medical personnel, the community in formal academic teaching, and to facilitate meetings or make formal presentations to other healthcare workers or the community; advocate or lobby for resources for clients or the clinic, to make changes to policies, and to develop practice and research protocols; and prepare, contribute, or write research findings and information in scholarly medical articles and journals.
- Communications occur with employees within and outside the department, clients and their families, physicians, laboratory and diagnostic technologists, other counsellors in and outside the province, with people outside the organization to discuss or provide information regarding testing or on particular cases, with the manager, with internal and external executives, professional advisors (i.e. Medical Geneticist), associations, pharmaceutical companies, research scientists, national and international genetic experts, scholars, and specialists.
- Most significant contacts are with employees within and outside the department, clients and their families, physicians, laboratory and diagnostic technologists and other counsellors in and outside the province.

**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 less than 10 lbs (i.e. client files and samples), and occasionally when working in clinics, may be required to lift children up to 50 lbs for examination.
- Occasionally works in awkward cramped positions when doing clinics. When researching, performing work on the computer, and counselling clients sitting is constant. Occasionally, standing and walking is required when performing activities (i.e. seeing clients in clinics, and walking to and from various laboratories). When sitting and working on the computer, regularly using fine finger precision work to operate the computer mouse.
- Occasionally, required to take samples from clients using controlled accurate movements.

### Concentration

- Requires **visual** concentration in order to maintain eye contact with the client in counselling sessions; when performing research, when reading and interpreting clients' reports, and documenting clients' information.
- **Auditory** concentration is required to listen to clients during sessions, to listen and respond to questions from clients and their family members, physicians, technologists, and nurses.
- **Other sensory demands** such as touch are required to provide care and comfort to clients when in clinic sessions.
- A **high level of alertness and concentration** is required when in session with a client in order to document information such as their family history, to interpret results of tests and provide a diagnosis; and activities performed in scientific research and review of the medical literature.
- Tasks which are **repetitive** and require alertness involve completing various diagnostic forms for blood work, diagnostic tests, or for other types of testing, triaging clients, writing referral letters for clients, counselling clients for similar types of conditions, and entering clients information into the computer.
- There are **time pressures and deadlines** specifically due to the demand for the service, coordination of appointments between specialists, and to see emergency clients. There are **interruptions** such as unexpected phone calls or visits from clients and there is often lack of **control over the work place** due to emergencies, extra responsibilities or workload increases, and from having to respond to unusual or nonexpected client test results.
- Examples of **eye/hand coordination** are used to complete pedigree drawings, perform physician assessments, and to operate a computer.
- **Exact results and precision** are required when documenting clients' information, when performing tests/calculations, interpreting clients' results, assessing family histories and/or medical records, when writing screening recommendations, and when reviewing referrals to identify high risk cases.

### 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, clinical services to individuals and families, consultation and assessment, education, genetic screening, holds formalized clinical lecturing positions, conducts formal scientific genetic research, quality assurance by developing and implementing policies/procedures/protocols and guidelines, and coordinates a specialized genetics services within the province.

- The tasks are regularly repetitive, well defined, and some tasks are unrelated. Constantly, the tasks have a wide variety of responsibilities where the problems can be addressed by following guidelines. Constantly, there are problems with limited opportunity for standardized solutions and for which can be resolved in a team setting. Occasionally, there are creative problem definition and analysis required to solve unique client problems and some problems have policy significance.
- Typical complexities involve assessing the unique needs of clients and very often their family members for possible genetic disorders that are often complicated as well as life threatening and involves researching and identifying possible causes, discussing, educating, and counselling clients and their families on their options, and sometimes require reporting in the medical literature.
- Complexities are typically solved by consultation with colleagues, professional advisors, and following practices of the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors (CAGC) scope of practice, National Society of Genetic Counsellors (NSGC) code of ethics, the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG) practice guidelines and protocols, and organizational policies and procedures. Other resources that can be used are internet resources including medical databases such as Geneclinics, Pubmed, and OMIM, journals, and the scientific literature.

## RESPONSIBILITY

### Accountability and Decision-Making

- Work tasks and activities are somewhat prescribed or controlled.
- Independent decisions are made with regards to case load management such as genetic testing decisions, recommendations or referrals to other specialists, where to send samples for genetic testing, triaging referrals, screening recommendations, and counselling of clients. Decisions are also made independently regarding the development of education material for clients.
- Makes independent decisions related to clients' diagnosis and counselling even though they can seek consultation and have to request formal approval for the discharge of clients from the Medical Geneticist. Approval is also required for the establishment of departmental protocols and for expensive client testing.
- Interprets directions and applies guidelines when determining a client's risk, counselling clients, and assessing the criteria for ordering tests. Has some discretion in determining their style of practice, coordination of clinics, and to perform testing on some clients, even if the criteria for testing are not met.
- May exercise a high degree of discretion and judgment when prioritizing and managing wait lists; assessing and counselling clients to ensure they receive the information to make informed decisions; taking and reviewing case histories; triaging clients based on their level of risk; making decisions regarding the level of treatment; discharging of low risk clients and their families; and determining the types of tests that should be performed.

### Impact

- Can either negatively or positively impact the quality of care provided to the clients. For example, if clients are seen, diagnosed and given proper counselling, it can improve their well-being, or if they are not seen or misdiagnosed, it may have significant consequences.

- Tasks and activities have an impact on the immediate work area, department, in and outside the organization and on clients, and their families. There are impacts on equipment (i.e. computers, monitors, and laboratory equipment), information as it helps clients understand their condition, finances such as the related costs of testing, human resources (i.e. tests and services involve various personnel in and outside the organization), facilities such as various laboratories, material resources such as equipment and supplies, corporate image, health and safety of clients, and research centers (i.e. 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.
- In the event of a mistake or error, i.e. misdiagnosis, mistakes in diagnostic tests, laboratory requisitions, and interpretation of results, or incorrect diagnosis could have an impact on the client, the department, and in and outside the organization.
- Work tasks and activities are somewhat prescribed or controlled and therefore errors are often difficult to identify and can have various time frames for identification.

#### **Development and Leadership of Others**

- There is no direct supervision of staff.
- Provides direction and feedback to administrative support and students, organizes work and schedules for students and volunteers, may delegate work to nurses and research assistants, and provide feedback to manager regarding new staff performance. In addition, provides on-the-job advice/ guidance to nurses, physicians, and other counsellors, orientation to new staff and/or students, and formal classroom training to community groups, physicians, residents, nurses, and others.
- Takes on a team leader role such as develops and implements client educational material, coordinates and organizes travelling genetics clinics, participates in developing guidelines, protocols, and evaluation of genetic services, participates on committees, and acts in the role of the genetics expert in the province within their specialized field to provincial, national, and international stakeholders. Leads scientific research projects related to their specialized genetic field.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Environmental Working Conditions**

- There is a requirement to take universal precautions when interviewing clients or taking samples, conducting research such as the wearing of gloves, masks, gowns, etc., washing of hands, using sharp containers, and following isolation procedures.
- There is limited likelihood of receiving minor injuries or illness from this work such as infectious diseases or stress related illnesses; however, there is no likelihood of receiving partial or total disability.
- Occasionally exposed to infectious diseases, odours, sharp objects, upset clients, wet or slippery floors, and glare from the computer.