

Job Class Profile: Transition House Counsellor**Pay Level: CG-33 Point Band: 718-741**

Factor	Knowledge	Interpersonal Skills	Physical Effort	Concentration	Complexity	Accountability & Decision Making	Impact	Development and Leadership	Environmental Working Conditions	Total Points
Rating	5	5	3	6	4	4	4	1	4	
Points	233	83	19	29	120	87	83	21	43	718

JOB SUMMARY

The Transition House Counsellor provides crisis intervention, shelter, and counselling to women and children who are victims of domestic violence; or co-ordinates transitional housing programs focused on skills development and community integration for persons with mental illness.

Key and Periodic Activities

- Operates a 24 hours crisis line dealing with incoming calls including crisis calls, ex-resident calls, information requests, other agencies, and other related calls. Responds to all calls, drop-ins, and emails as soon as possible.
- Addresses the needs of clients in-house or on the crisis line, for suicide intervention. Uses appropriate skills and strategies to address each situation and solution.
- Performs a thorough assessment of the situation to determine suitability for the shelter or to determine suitability of programs to meet the needs of the individuals.
- Interviews and counsels residents/clients. Completes paperwork for information gathering and needs assessment, and provides immediate counseling upon arrival at the shelter.
- Supervises the safety and well being of residents and maintains a pleasant atmosphere while adhering to policy/house rules. Mediates and resolves conflicts between residents.
- Plans, organizes, and implements programs for residents and children. Creates and monitors individualized life skills programs for persons with mental illness after the initial assessment.
- Provides one-on-one and group intervention services to residents and ex-residents.
- Attends, facilitates, and or participates in meetings with staff and residents, in house family meetings, chore meetings, and group discussions.
- Advocates for residents and clients with clinical teams, families, setting up appointments and referrals to other community based agencies (i.e. Child Youth and Family Services, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, Human Resources Labour and Employment). Acts as a liaison with agencies that provide support for residents and ex-residents.
- Makes phone calls to follow up and advocate for services, helps with furniture and household items, writes letters for women as needed, and assists with preparing documentation for various agencies.
- Compiles and maintains records including individual files for residents and updates them with activities and contacts, records all calls in the daily phone log, writes reports of all crisis calls/special incidents.
- Performs general maintenance and housekeeping of shelter including sanitizing and making beds after resident departure, picking up groceries and household items, sorting donations,

Key and Periodic Activities

- cleaning staff bathroom and offices, and household laundry.
- Supervises children for mothers who are attending appointments, completes informal programs with children, registers children in school and liaises with the school, informs and registers children for recreational activities.
- Performs shelter security such as operating alarm system, assists with fire drills, weekly resident room checks for hazards, monitors security cameras, and keeps all exits free of snow and debris.
- Promotes public awareness through talks, displays, fundraisers, and circulation of pamphlets.
- Presents information sessions on transition housing program to hospital staff, students, community referral organizations, and prospective clients with mental illnesses and their families.
- Participate on committees relevant to program interests.
- Administers first aid in emergency situations.
- Accompanies clients to court appearances in certain circumstances.
- Compiles monthly statistics regarding admissions, departures, crisis calls, agencies contacted, etc.

SKILL

Knowledge

General and Specific Knowledge:

- Issues related to family violence, crisis and suicide intervention, counseling techniques, legislative policies of community agencies for the purpose of advocating for clients/residents, addictions, mental health issues, First Aid, and CPR.

Formal Education and/or Certification(s):

- Minimum: Undergraduate Degree in Social Science, Social Work, Psychology or related field.

Years of Experience:

- Minimum: 1 to 2 years experience.

Competencies:

- Conflict resolution, counseling, computer, oral and written communication skills.

Interpersonal Skills

- Interpersonal skills include listening to information from others, asking questions, and providing routine and complex information, providing care and nurturing to others, conducting formal interviews, gaining the co-operation of others to complete work and solve problems, dealing with angry or upset people face to face, providing counseling to others, and resolving disputes.
- Skills are utilized in motivating clients to set goals and participate in activities, negotiating compromises between individuals with different views, dealing with crisis calls when the client is extremely upset and information must be gathered, dealing with women face to face as they arrive at the shelter who are extremely upset, giving them reassurance and encouragement, dealing with calls from spouses or others who are upset and threatening to staff and residents, dealing with conflicts between residents in the shelter and negotiating/mediating solutions, facilitating one on one and group counseling, the provision of suicide intervention services to

callers and residents/clients, presentations and public speaking, and advocating for clients.

- The most significant contacts are clients/residents to aid in their participation in the program or to address their needs; agencies such as Child Youth and Family Services or the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation to advocate for housing, drug cards, respite or day care, etc., for clients and residents; and coworkers and staff to ensure the services offered to residents and clients meets their needs.

EFFORT

Physical Effort

- Regularly required to lift objects up to 25 lbs., and occasionally items up to 50 lbs. such as groceries and luggage, furniture donated to the shelter, crates of milk for storage, water cooler containers, children, or assembling items for the shelter.
- Sitting is regularly required for answering phone calls and talking to clients. Standing and walking is involved for grocery shopping and cleaning up around the shelter.
- Fine finger/precision work and sitting for purposes of using a computer is required on a regular basis.

Concentration

- **Visual** alertness is required for non-verbal cues to determine how women are coping/feeling, observing resident/client behaviors, alertness to signs of drugs or alcohol, monitoring the safety of the house and the exterior in case an angry partner shows up, identifying dangers in the house that might injure the children such as sharp objects/medications.
- **Auditory** concentration or strain is experienced when listening for strange sounds inside and outside the shelter to protect residents from angry partners, listening to information being provided on the crisis intervention phone line when callers are upset, and listening to residents/clients.
- Other sensory demands such as **smell** is used to detect alcohol, drug use or tobacco smoke by residents/clients **Touch** is used to provide comfort to residents/children through hugs.
- **Higher than normal levels of attentiveness, and alertness to the health and safety of others** is required for individuals in the program who have mental illness. Staff must be alert to signs of relapse, alertness to angry partners who may show up at the shelter, performing security checks, suicidal and crisis intervention.
- **Time pressures and deadlines** are experiences when on crisis calls are received as there is a small window of opportunity to get a woman out safely and a tight timeline to get it accomplished, a period of 6 weeks is the normal stay at the shelter so there are pressures and timelines to secure housing, income support, furniture, etc for the women within the shelter.
- **Interruptions** are experienced as planned events can be interrupted by unexpected events that must be immediately addressed such as suicidal clients or clients in conflict.

Complexity

- Tasks and activities are different but related, involving a wide variety of responsibilities, for which a limited number of guidelines and procedures exist.
- Problems may be simple with obvious solutions but may also require that practical solutions be found. Challenges and problems may be resolved in a group or team setting.
- The most typical challenges required to resolve are residents/clients using drugs and/or alcohol in the house. Women are asked to leave the house as it is not equipped to deal with addictions

however, there are no real resources to assist these women in the community. Another typical problem is a client who, due to mental illness, has difficulty focusing on his/her goals and maintaining involvement in activities. Solving this problem requires examining barriers like motivation level and the impact of symptoms and developing a strategy to address the issue.

- When addressing challenges/problems/issues can reference the Mental Health Act, established guidelines and protocols, provincial transition house operational standards, and legislation and policies associated with other organizations such as Human Resources Labour and Employment, Child Youth and Family Services.

RESPONSIBILITY

Accountability and Decision-Making

- Work tasks are moderately prescribed and controlled.
- Has authority for decisions such as house admissions, asking someone to leave the shelter, day to day procedures, program activities, picking up groceries and small items.
- Supervisory approval is required to admit an ex-resident that had a previous incident, to purchase large items like furniture or appliances, to call in staff for overtime, to extend a resident/client's stay, hire new staff, or the admission of residents with special needs (i.e. requiring personal care).
- A high level of discretion must be exercised when providing suicide intervention to clients/residents or crisis intervention to individuals who have psychoses. Discretion is exercised in all day to day interactions with clients or residents such as addressing parenting skills, and co-operative living. Once a person comes in for assessment, staff must judge their suitability for shelter living, assess any risk factors such as the client being suicidal, and make appropriate arrangements.

Impact

- Generally has a significant impact (both positive and negative) on the immediate work area, the department, outside the organization, and on clients/public as well as on information, finances, and health and safety of staff/clients/residents.
- Failure to follow proper security procedures may result in significant health and safety risks to residents and staff. Failure to contact or provide information to Child Youth and Family Services within the appropriate time frame could have negative effects on the residents and children at the shelter. If the shelter does not admit a woman in danger it may result in her death or injury, and failure to report child abuse or neglect may result in injury to children.
- The time frame associated with the identification and resolution of errors is normally within hours of problem identification.

Development and Leadership of Others

- There is no responsibility for the supervision of staff.
- Provides on the job advice, guidance, feedback, training, and orientation to new employees.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Environmental Working Conditions

- Required to wear gloves when cleaning or in contact with bodily fluids, cuts or sores, or when sorting through donated clothing. Also required to follow safety/security procedures and contact the RNC for back-up support if necessary.

- There is a limited likelihood of minor cuts, bruises, or injuries.
- Occasional exposure to unusual/distracting noise (i.e. often a loud work environment due to the high volume of people in the shelter, children crying); dirt/dust/garbage (i.e. daily cleaning of the house); bodily fluids/diseases (i.e. may need to clean bodily fluids from surfaces or assist residents and/or children. May come into contact with infectious disease through the residents/clients.); physical dangers/threats (i.e. threats from partners of clients or clients who are agitated because of mental health issues or drug use.); lack of privacy (i.e. work environment is open to the residents at all times).