

**Position Description**  
**Surrogate Family Members**

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Partners with another Surrogate Family Member in representing the family approach on behalf of consumers in the Mental Health System.

A. Duties may include but are not limited to:

- a. Organize team meetings including the consumer, the consumer's family, and all members of the mental health system involved in the consumer's care.
- b. When necessary substitute as the consumer's family in team meetings.
- c. Encourage consumer to set goals and take leadership role in team meetings.
- d. Encourage exchanges between consumer's family, or primary care giver, and members of involved mental health system for mutual education about consumer's status and needs.
- e. In team meetings assist in developing plan for consumer's recovery.
- f. Assure at team meetings all participants are on same wave length headed toward goals set by the consumer.

B. Factors:

a. Knowledge required by the position.

- Knowledge about the mental health system gained from long-term experience in dealing with a mentally ill family member.
- Knowledge about the mental illnesses gained by personal study, professional experience and study, attendance at conferences and workshops and through participating in a Family to Family Education course.
- Skill in inter-personal communication particularly with individuals who are recovering from illnesses and their families and with professionals in the system and political officials that influence the system.
- General knowledge of federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding treatment of the mentally ill including housing and employment.

b. Supervisory Controls

- Incumbent(s) negotiate with supervisor to establish consumer driven goals and objectives. Supervisor and Incumbents agree on consumers to be approached about participating in team meetings including incumbents as surrogate family members.
- The incumbents are responsible for planning and executing assignments, selecting appropriate techniques and methodology, and

determining the approach to be taken. Interprets and applies mental health program policy in terms of established objectives, keeps supervisor informed of progress, potential problems, concerns, issues, or other matters having implications for the future.

- Work is reviewed for general adequacy in meeting program objectives, expected results and compatibility with other areas of work

c. Guideline

- Guidelines are in the form of overall policy and program objectives of the mental health program of the Clearfield-Jefferson Counties Joinder.
- Additional guidance is provided by the mental health procedures act and Pennsylvania state and county regulations concerned with the mental health system.
- Deviations from, or the extension of, traditional methods and approaches, or the development of essentially new or mostly modified techniques or methods for obtaining objective results is essential to the positions.

d. Complexity

- The work involves a broad range of duties relating to a cooperative approach with the consumer in achieving the best possible and effective treatment. Typically, the work requires that the incumbents relate new situations to precedent situations, extend or modify existing techniques, or develop comparisons which require substantial effort to overcome resistance to change.

e. Scope and Effect

- The purpose of this position is to coordinate activities in such a way as to expand and empower consumers and their families influence in development of treatment plans. The work may involve unusual problems, development of new approaches and techniques.

f. Personal Contacts

- Personal contacts include consumers, consumer's families, coworkers, contractors, the general public, public interest groups, and local and state representatives.

g. Purpose of Contacts

- The purpose of the contacts is to empower consumers and their families and influence the actions of people in the Pennsylvania mental health system to develop new, innovative more effective ways of treatment for the mentally ill.
- The incumbents must be able to influence the actions and opinions of

individuals and representatives of other agencies and interest groups which hold different opinions and objectives.