
WORK DESCRIPTION

Manage a treatment program for mentally ill and /or substance abusing clients; works alone or as a part of a team of therapist; provides individual and group therapy counseling; documents individual and group therapy counseling, documents individuals attendance, activities, and progress; assist clients to obtain housing and employment and access other community resources; may also provide local transportation to clients as needed or meet with them in their homes.

WORKING CONDITIONS

In private office and group conference rooms. Much one-on-one and small-group interactions with clients. Some local travel to provide transportation to clients or make home visits.

PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT

Drug and alcohol abuse counseling centers; hospitals, correctional institutions, residential drug treatment facilities; mental health centers; social service agencies; group homes.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Interest in helping others; patience; perseverance; persistence; responsibility; integrity; honesty; flexibility; calmness; judgment; organization; ability to deal with a variety of people; objectivity; verbal ability; persuasiveness; open-mindedness; assertiveness; sensitivity; compassion.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Associates Degree; completion of 270 classroom hours with at least 135 being alcohol and drug specific, completion of 300 hour practicum, completion of supervised work experience

JOB OUTLOOK

Growing

SALARY RANGE

Texas average \$24,800 to \$45,000 per year, depending on education, experience, employer, and location.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Crisis Hot Line Coordinator, Licensed Professional Counselor, Psychologist, Social Worker, Rehabilitation Counselor; Psychiatric Technician

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the **Department of Mental Health and Addiction Studies at Alvin Community College at 281-756-3652**. Information on licensure requirements can be obtained at the website for Texas department of State Health Services: www.dshs.state.tx.us.

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

Visit a drug and alcohol abuse counseling center and talk to counselors there about what they do. Get a part-time or volunteer job working with substance abusers. Attend Alateen meetings to learn about alcohol abusers and its effects on family members and consumers. Observe family and community support groups for those dealing with chemical dependency. Practice a chemical-free lifestyle. Become a peer counselor. Take leadership roles in school and community organizations. Take courses in mental health, psychology, speech, social studies, English, health.

LIFESTYLE IMPLICATIONS

Drugs and alcohol abuse counselors may work occasional evenings to accommodate client schedules or evening and weekends if employed at an inpatient rehabilitation facility. Working with persons who are dealing with substance abuse issues can be very rewarding and highly stressful. Relapses among clients are common. These factors may interfere with family and social life.

