

CLASS TITLE: PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGIST

Class Code: 02781800
Pay Grade: 30A
EO: B

CLASS DEFINITION:

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: To be responsible for the supervision and operation of a research laboratory at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) engaged in making qualitative and quantitative clinical, diagnostic and research studies in the field in neurochemical influences on human and experimental animal behavior including pharmacological studies related thereto; to develop and perform the most difficult and complex tests and analyses in the laboratory; and to do related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED: Works under the administrative supervision of a superior with wide latitude for the exercise of initiative and independent judgement in the application of approved and experimental laboratory methods, practices and techniques; work is subject to review for conformance to departmental and divisional policies and objectives.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED: Plans, supervises and reviews the work of a laboratory staff as well as provides consultant services and supervision to medical and/or other professional staff in their use of the laboratory and/or implementation of laboratory procedures involving patient care.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED:

To be responsible for the supervision and operation of a research laboratory at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) engaged in making qualitative and quantitative clinical, diagnostic and research studies in the field of neurochemical influences on human and experimental animal behavior including pharmacological studies related thereto.

To be responsible for the supervision and operation of a program of psychopharmacology at the IMH that improves the quality of patient care including the making of qualitative and quantitative neurochemical and pharmacological tests and analyses on biological samples and tissues for use by the medical staff in patient diagnosis, planning of treatment, prediction of patient response to treatment, and the monitoring of the effects of medications administered to patients.

To evaluate the effect on behavior of the presence or absence of different quantities of substances affecting brain biochemistry as part of a clinical treatment, research, diagnostic or evaluative study into the bases of human and experimental animal behavior.

To develop and perform the most difficult and complex tests and analyses including the effective utilization and adjustment of complex instruments and equipment such as: the spectrophotometer; gas chromatography; scintillation counters; and any other comparable equipment, as required, needed for developing new testing procedures and techniques.

To develop methods for testing substances affecting brain biochemistry or for overcoming problems or difficulties that may arise in the laboratory or conduct of experiments related thereto; to conduct original experimental work or engage in discussions with authorities in the field of laboratory research; and to supervise and conduct various experimental laboratory work in the field involving such substances.

To supervise, instruct and evaluate the work of university level trainees and degree candidates that may be assigned to the laboratory.

To provide training, as required, to laboratory personnel and to evaluate the performance of such personnel.

To keep records and maintain files for all investigations, tests and procedures conducted by the laboratory.

To develop methods of determination for the presence and/or level of compounds affecting brain biochemistry and thereby enhance the effectiveness of patient therapy at the IMH.

To do related work as required.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT:

KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS AND CAPACITIES: A thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of neurochemistry, and related biochemistry, and psychopharmacology and the ability to apply such knowledge in the supervision and operation of a research laboratory; a thorough knowledge of laboratory methods, practices and techniques, laboratory equipment, and laboratory materials and research techniques; a working knowledge of the hazards and safety requirements in handling radioactive materials in a laboratory; the ability to develop and perform the most difficult and complex qualitative and quantitative tests and analyses; the ability to design and conduct such experimental and clinical studies as may be needed; the ability to develop new as well as improve existing laboratory procedures and techniques and to evaluate laboratory results therefrom as they relate to the improvement of quality of patient care; the ability to instruct medical and pharmacy staff members at the IMH in the principles and practices of neurochemistry and psychopharmacology to increase their knowledge of drug action and interaction, effectiveness, metabolism, the role of neurochemistry in the pathogenesis of mental illness, the importance of enzyme systems in the development of mental illness, and the relations of these areas to human behavior; the ability to provide in-service training and instruction to laboratory personnel and other professionals using the laboratory facilities; the ability to prepare research reports and papers; the ability to keep records and maintain laboratory files; and related capacities and abilities.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

Education: Such as may have been gained through: possession of a doctorate degree (Ph.D.) in neurochemistry, biochemistry, pharmacology or any other comparable discipline; and

Experience: Such as may have been gained through: employment in a responsible position at a supervisory level in a private or governmental medical research center, a university medical research laboratory, or a public or private clinical and/or experimental laboratory, involving the application of the principles and practices of neurochemistry, biochemistry or psychopharmacology, or any other comparable level discipline, and including a variety of tests and analyses and experimental research, practices and techniques.

Or, any combination of education and experience that shall be substantially equivalent to the above education and experience.

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