



Job Description

Veterinary Social Worker

Job Title	Veterinary Social Worker	Job Classification	Full-time
Department	Veterinary Management	Position Status	Exempt
Reports to	Owner Doctor(s)	Pay Type	Salary

Objective: The Veterinary Social Worker's (VSW) primary responsibilities are to provide many facets of emotional support to clients, consultation regarding clients to veterinary staff, and support services, short term interventions, and psychoeducational programs for all employees of the hospital. The VSW also serves as field instructor for a social work internship program within the hospital.

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Tasks and Job Duties:

1. Client Care

- Provide support and counseling to clients as per need or by request from doctors or staff
- Provide pet loss counseling to clients, by phone and in person, ongoing follow ups as per need
- Establish and maintain consistent documentation of client intervention via one source for all hospital staff and another source which maintains confidentiality of clients
- Facilitate (organize, implement, maintain, facilitate, and promote) pet loss and cancer support group
- Facilitate end of life decision making with clients and communicate with staff/doctors
- Provide consultation to doctors and staff with regard to VSW assessment of clients for facilitation of treatment and communication with clients
- Attend staff meetings or rounds at least once per week, working as a member of the multi-disciplinary team to enhance care of patients and clients

2. Enhance the hospital's service with regard to euthanasia of animals, memorialization, and follow-up with clients

- Develop brochures and resources for clients with regard to cancer treatment, pet loss and the grief process, euthanasia, memorialization of pets, veterinary social work services, and the human-animal bond
- Enrich and enhance facility environment with regard to euthanasia and memorialization
- Expand pet loss group as needed for accessibility for all clients
- Develop website materials for clients to access with regard to cancer treatment, pet loss and other resources such as the Quality of Life Scale, memorialization information, stories, etc.

3. Staff Care

- Provide informal debriefing individually or in groups
- Provide other short term interventions such as mediation of conflict, assessment and referral for outside/EAP counseling
- Consult with Human Resources/Owners/Administrators regarding wellness of staff to enhance hospital functioning
- Develop and present on topics of expertise such as compassion fatigue, stress management, work/life balance, communication skills, grief and pet loss
- Develop and provide resources for staff with regard to wellness accessible on website, email, or newsletter



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4. Develop a VSW Internship through the University of Pittsburgh for Masters-level Social Work Students and supervise and mentor the students
5. Provide continuing education presentations for referring veterinarians on topics such as compassion fatigue, stress management, work/life balance, communication, grief and pet loss

Skills/Abilities:

1. Excellent communication skills both written and verbal.
2. Excellent organizational skills.
3. The ability to work independently.
4. Able to provide services needed by clients and staff in an emotionally intense, fast-paced setting.
5. Able to patiently mentor social work interns while also being able to delegate tasks and teach skills.

Education:

1. Master’s Degree in Social Work is required.

Experience:

1. Two years of experience required: preferably in a medical, hospice, or mental health setting.
2. Experience with grief/bereavement counseling is preferred.
3. Experience working successfully with multi-disciplinary teams is preferred.
4. Experience supervising a Social Work Intern Program preferred.

Physical Demands/Protective Equipment

Physical Demands	Constantly	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Bending/Stooping			X		
Lifting < 20 lbs.			X		
Lifting 21 – 40 lbs.				X	
Lifting 41-60 lbs. (assisted)					X
Lifting 61+ lbs. (assisted)					X
Carrying			X		
Pushing			X		
Pulling			X		
Walking/Standing			X		
Climbing Stairs				X	
Climbing Ladders					X
Squatting/Crouching				X	
Repetitive Leg/Arm Movement		X			
Foot/Hand Control Movement		X			
Crawling				X	
Kneeling				X	



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Reaching			X		
Finger Movement (fine dexterity)				X	
Finger Movement (coordination)		X			
Finger movement (gross movement)		X			
Hearing (conversation)	X				
Hearing (high acuity)					X
Seeing (near and far)	X				
Speaking clearly	X				
Protective Equipment Used	Constantly	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Respirator-Breathing Equipment					X
Eye Protection					X
Head Covering					X
Hearing Protection					X
Arms/Hands/Finger Protection					X
Legs/Feet/Toes Protection					X
Body Protection					X

Working Conditions: Work is performed in a clinical/hospital setting with exposure to animal dander and occasional changes in environmental temperature.

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The preceding job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and essential duties and responsibilities of work performed by employees within this classification. It may not contain a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications that are required of employees to do this job and is subject to change at any time as deemed necessary.