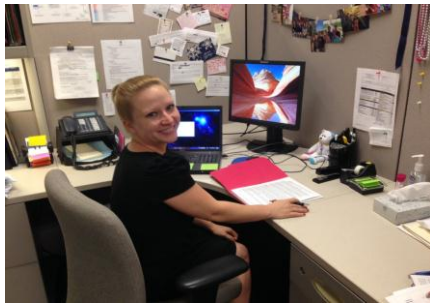


The Genetic Counseling Assistant (GCA)

Is our profession ready for multiple career levels?

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Why a GCA?



Need to Maximize the skill set of the Genetic Counselor

- Bureau of Labor Statistics projects **above average** growth for genetic counselors next 10 years
- PSS 2014 65% of counselors reported increased patient volume, only 24% reported staff increase

One SOLUTION-Increase patient load with GCA

Creating the GCA Position

- Job Analysis Form in Human Resources
Who, What , Why
- Developed position and job title within our university
- Hiring- Short Term or long term

What is a GCA? Job duties of the CGC

- Contact patients with normal genetic results and complete all normal follow up letters to patients and physicians. .
- Write routine correspondence
LMN, insurance authorization,
- Assistant in research studies, End Note libraries
- Data Entry (Pedigree Software)
- Coordinate and research all insurance coverage for genetic testing for patients. Prepare letters of Medical necessity with guidance from genetic counselor
- Contact laboratories to determine status of all genetic tests that are ordered on a regular basis
- Assist with clinic flow
- Contact laboratories to determine all necessary steps of gene testing for specific genes, Complete test requisition forms.
- Prepare blood samples for transportation
- Assist in Data Collection for research studies.

Genetic Counseling Assistant (GCA) UT Southwestern and UCSF

- UTSW 5 genetic assistants- prior GCA in grad school at UT Houston, Emory, University of Michigan
1 GCA to 3 gc- increase 75 patients/gc
- UCSF 8 genetic assistants-

How to find a GCA

- Talk to local program directors , especially after Match day.
- College professors in Human Genetics at Local schools.
- Local Genetic meetings
- Area genetic counselors

How does the GCA differ from your "Assistant"

GCA

- Bachelors Degree in Biology or Genetics
- Desire for continuing education in Cancer Genetics
- Motivated

Assistant

- Experience in the Genetics clinic
- No formal education in Genetics

Administration View of GCA

- Need to document Cost Saving
- Liability Issues
- Concern about employee for only one year
- Development of future employees
- Improved Job satisfaction of genetic counselors

Responses of Genetic Counselors that Work with GCA

Positive

- Less busy work
- Increase in the number of patients seen
- More focus on patient care and less paperwork
- Increase in research

Negative

- Takes time to trust them
- Turnover issue
- Constant Training
- Loss of Control, gc wants to follow up

Tiered professions: Need to Learn from Others

Physical Therapist

Diagnose and treat patients.. Need post baccalaureate degree (Masters or Doctoral)
Median Salary \$79, 860

Physical Therapist Assistants (PTA)

Median Salary is \$56, 160

Physical Therapy Aides

Median Salary \$23,880

Nursing Profession

Registered Nurse RN

- Need an associated or bachelor's degree
- Treats patients according to doctor's orders, Average Salary \$67,720

Licensed Vocation Nurse LVN

- 1 year training Average Salary \$41, 360

Nurse Practitioner NP

- Master's degree
- Conducts routine medical examination, diagnose illnesses and prescribes medication.
- Average salary \$90,000

Sickle Cell Counselors: California Training & Certificate Program

California example:

Sickle Cell Counselor Training and Certification
program

2 day introductory course, then five day advanced
course

and then an internship with continuing education

Audrey Heimler Special Project Award 2014: Genetic Counseling Assistants: An Integral Piece of the Evolving Genetic Counseling Service Delivery Model

Sarah Pass, Parker Read, Sara Pirzadeh Miller MS, CGC,
Linda Robinson MS, CGC and Beth Crawford MS, CGC

Goals of Grant

- Evaluate the efficacy of the GCA position
- To optimize the implementation of the GCA need to learn from those individuals that had these position and worked with a GCA.
- Survey former GCA, genetic counselors that have worked with GCA, program directors that have accepted GCAs and program directors that have not had contact with a GCA.
- Toolkit for GC to facilitate GCA integration into the practice.

Future of the GCA

- Should ABGC regulate GCA
- Should there be an examination for a GCA
- Do States need to license GCAs
- Should GCA be a permanent position or just a year “internship”
- Should GCA be a separate career path?
