Contact Tracer

Job Overview	
Purpose of Position:	The Contact Tracer is an entry level public health professional responsible for identifying and contacting individuals who may have come in contact with persons recently diagnosed with an infectious disease associated with an outbreak or pandemic. The incumbent is responsible for gathering details about each contact of an ill individual (case) identified during the course of a public health case investigation. Information collected for each contact includes, but is not limited to: basic demographics, potential exposures to known case(s), current health status (including an assessment for current symptoms consistent with illness), and screening for membership in a high risk group (e.g., healthcare workers, residents of congregate care settings). Contact tracers provide education about the disease, deliver guidance on minimizing the risk of potential transmission from the contact to others in the event the contact become ill, and explain the necessity for the contact to quarantine responsibly in order to reduce the risk of transmission of illness to others. The contact tracer also details specific processes for contacts to conduct health monitoring, and refers contacts for testing according to established protocols. Contact tracers collaborate with Epidemiologists and Health Educators by providing up to date data from contact tracing calls. The employee follows established policies and procedures for all contact tracing functions and activities.
Typical Core Duties:	1. Interviewing & Data Collection • Calls newly diagnosed patients and contacts of newly diagnosed patients to gather information and inform contacts of potential exposure. • Communicates with contacts in a professional, empathetic, and culturally sensitive manner. • Collects and records information on demographics, current symptoms, current health status, and possible high-risk settings into Contact Tracing/Contact Information Management system. 2. Health Education • Provides contacts with approved information about state quarantine procedures, and if appropriate, refers them to testing according to protocol. • Following established procedures and/or script, incumbent will inform contacts about the importance of quarantine and what to do if symptoms develop. • Provides contacts with relevant healthcare resources as appropriate. 3. Data Entry & Maintenance • Utilizes established database(s) to identify newly diagnosed patients and contacts for tracing efforts. • Inputs data collected (i.e. symptoms, contacts, etc.) into database and assures database is kept up to date • Provides data from Contact Tracing efforts and calls to Epidemiologists and/or Health Educators as necessary.

Typical Supervision/Independence of Action:	Performs functions of position independently and within established procedures and guidelines. Seeks supervisory guidance for non-routine or complex matters.
Required Licensure/Education:	N/A
Typical KSAs:	• An understanding of patient confidentiality, including the ability to conduct interviews without violating confidentiality (e.g., to those who might overhear their conversations). • Excellent and sensitive interpersonal, cultural sensitivity, and interviewing skills such that they can build and maintain trust with patients and contacts. • Resourcefulness in locating patients and contacts who may be difficult to reach or reluctant to engage in conversation. • Understanding of when to refer individuals or situations to medical, social, or supervisory resources. • Cultural competency appropriate to the local community.
Typical Preferred Qualifications:	• Understanding of the medical terms and principles of exposure, infection, infectious period, potentially infectious interactions, symptoms of disease, pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic infection. • Basic skills of crisis counseling, and the ability to confidently refer patients and contacts for further care if needed. • Knowledge of or coursework in medical terminology.

Resources:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/principles-contact-tracing.html

https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus/tracing.aspx

https://www.talentboost.cloud/partners-in-health

https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/14/833726999/how-contact-tracing-can-help-fight-coronavirus