BEFORE THE PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS Appellant vs. NANCY WEBB, Respondent.	CASE NO. R-ALLO-17-002 ORDER OF THE BOARD FOLLOWING HEARING ON EXCEPTIONS TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

Hearing on Exceptions. This appeal came before the Personnel Resources Board, NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair; SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair; and VICKY BOWDISH, Member, for a hearing on Appellant's exceptions to the director's determination dated December 21, 2016. The hearing was held on June 14, 2017, in Room 110 of Capitol Court, Olympia WA.

Appearances. Appellant Department of Corrections (DOC) was present and represented by Mindy Portschy, Senior Human Resource Consultant. Respondent Nancy Webb was present by telephone and represented herself.

Background. On February 25, 2016, Respondent submitted a Position Review Request (PRR) to DOC's Human Resources (HR) Office requesting reallocation from a Secretary Senior to Patient Services Supervisor.

By letter dated May 9, 2016, Appellant notified Respondent that her position should be reallocated to the Patient Services (PS) Representative job class.

On June 7, 2016, Respondent submitted a request to OFM State HR requesting a written Director's review of DOC's allocation determination, contending her position should be reallocated to PS Coordinator.

By letter dated December 21, 2016, the Director's Review Specialist notified Respondent that her position should be reallocated to PS Coordinator.

On January 20, 2017, the PRB received Appellant DOC's Appeal Request. In their request, Appellant took exception to the Director's Review Determination.

Respondent serves in the Health Services Department at Airway Heights Correctional Center (AHCC). She facilitates orders written by AHCC physicians, practitioners and dentists for offenders' specialized care within the external medical community.

The review period for this allocation request was twelve (12) months prior to February 25, 2016.

Summary of Appellant's Arguments.

Appellant contends the PS Representative job class best encompasses the majority of work performed by Respondent and maintains that Respondent does not solely coordinate the daily flow in a patient care area. Rather, Appellant asserts these duties are included in the work of the Health Services Manager.

Appellant argues that Respondent's duties do not coordinate with the distinguishing characteristics (DCs) for PS Coordinator. For example, Respondent does not coordinate all operational support functions, including environmental conditions, in the Health Services Department as the distinguishing characteristics DCs for PS Coordinator indicate. Appellant contends that Respondent does not coordinate non-medical equipment repairs, conduct inventory and ordering of supplies, assist in the orientation of new residents and staff to clerical procedures, nor participate in the preparation and maintenance of policies and procedures.

Summary of Respondent's Arguments.

Respondent believes the Director's Review Specialist was accurate in reallocating her position to a PS Coordinator. Respondent asserts DOC is minimizing the work done in overseeing the scheduling of offenders with specialists. Further, states Respondent, overseeing medical specialist

scheduling and associated records management work is its own patient service area of which she is the sole coordinator, befitting the definition of PS Coordinator.

Respondent argues her responsibilities do entail overseeing environmental conditions in the area of safety. Respondent asserts her role in safety is a critical one, as she in part minimizes threats by preventing offenders who should not be together, e.g., pose a threat to others or themselves, from being together at the same time.

Primary Issue. Whether the director's determination should be affirmed and whether Appellant should remain allocated to the Patient Services Coordinator classification.

Relevant Classifications. Patient Services Representative; Patient Services Coordinator.

Decision of the Board. The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. See *Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University*, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

Class Series Concept

Coordinates and provides patient support services such as scheduling appointments, answering telephones, receiving patients, registering patients, and processing patient charge documents in a patient care area.

Patient Services Representative

Definition

Provides support services in a patient care area such as scheduling patient appointments, triaging patient telephone calls to medical staff, registering patients, providing point-of-service admission, maintaining patient records and assembling patient charts, initiating and processing patient charge documents, and transcribing physicians' orders.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Under general supervision, performs specialized clerical and technical duties in a patient care area to facilitate the delivery of services provided.

Patient Services Coordinator

Definition

Solely coordinates the daily patient flow in patient care areas and provides support services such as triaging patient telephone calls to medical staff, scheduling appointments, registering patients, maintaining patient records and assembling patient charts, and initiating and processing patient charge documents.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Under general direction, independently coordinates all operational support functions in a patient care area such as overseeing the environmental conditions of the office and patient waiting areas, coordinating non-medical equipment repairs, inventorying and ordering supplies, assisting in the orientation of new residents and staff to clerical procedures, and participating in the preparation and maintenance of policies and procedures.

In *Norton-Nader v. Western Washington University*, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-08-020 (2008), the Personnel Resources Board (Board) stated that the following standards are the hierarchy of primary considerations in allocating positions:

a) Category concept (if one exists).

b) Definition or basic function of the class.

c) Distinguishing characteristics of a class.

d) Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of other classes in the series in question.

The duties of Respondent's position are consistent with the Class Series Concept for the Patient Services series. Respondent does coordinate and provide patient support services such as scheduling appointments, answering telephones, receiving patients, registering patients, and processing patient charge documents in a patient care area.

Next, the Board looked at which job class best fit the duties of Respondent's position. Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the **majority of the position's duties and responsibilities.** (emphasis added) See *Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries*, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

In determining whether the majority of Respondent's duties fit the PS Representative or PS Coordinator classification, the Board looked first at the definitions. The two definitions were virtually identical with the exception of the phrase, "Solely coordinates the daily patient flow in patient care areas…" Appellant argued that each individual unit, e.g., Mental Health and Medical Specialists, were its own patient care areas, whereas Respondent argued that Health Services as a whole was the patient care area.

To further differentiate the two job classes, the Board looked to the DCs for the PS Coordinator and PS Representative. DCs were designed in part to determine one level in a series from another.

The DCs for the PS Representative speak to performing clerical and technical duties to facilitate the delivery of services provided. This would include Respondent's duty to schedule appointments from kite requests; run OMNI reports for information such as who is in need of mental health appointments; manage referrals; and answer verbal requests from kites and phone messages concerning routine, urgent and non-urgent care.

The DCs for the PS Coordinator are different from the PS Representative in that the PS Coordinator positions handle the day-to-day patient area operational support functions. Respondent does not oversee the environmental conditions of the office and patient waiting areas; coordinate equipment repairs; conduct inventory and ordering; orient new residents and staff; and participate in preparing and maintaining policies and procedures. As such, the majority of Respondent's work does not reflect the DCs in the PS Coordinator job class.

A PS Coordinator solely coordinates the daily patient flow in patient care areas. While the duties of a PS Coordinator include some of those in the PS Representative job class, the purpose and intent of the PS Coordinator, as emphasized in the DCs, is to independently coordinate all operational support functions. The majority of Respondent's tasks do not entail solely coordinating a patient care area and coordinating all operational support functions, precluding allocation to Patient Services Coordinator.

In a hearing on exceptions, the appellant has the burden of proof. WAC 357-52-110. Appellant has met their burden of proof.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS is granted and the director's determination dated December 21, 2016, is overturned. Respondent remains allocated to Patient Services Representative.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2017.

WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

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NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

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SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

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VICKY BOWDISH, Member