A. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SETTING

The Care Management Department of Community Medical Center was established in 1976 to provide direct social work services to patients and their families. Clients served by the department are located in all areas of the hospital: acute medical and surgical units, ICU, Maternal and Infant Care. Cases come to the department by referral from hospital personnel and physicians or are identified through high risk case finding and automatic referral procedures. Social Workers provide discharge planning coordination, information and referral to community services, crisis intervention, and family support.

B. DESCRIPTION OF CLIENT GROUP

The client group covers the entire spectrum of residents of the Missoula community with special emphasis on high risk groups such as the elderly, the handicapped, economically disadvantaged and critically ill patients.

C. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The students placed at CMC have the opportunity to work with a large number of clients on a short-term basis. Because of the extensive use of formal and informal resources in the course of arranging discharge plans, the student gains knowledge of a broad range of local, state and federal programs. The student interacts with all age groups from both rural and urban settings. Emphasis is placed on working with the family as well as the patient. Basic knowledge of anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, aging and psychological adjustment to illness and disability is helpful to interpret the social implications of medical conditions.

D. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Because of the rapid turnover of patients, it is necessary for the student to be present at the hospital in the mornings. In addition, because of the time needed to become familiar with the complex hospital organization of which Care Management is a part, a two semester placement is required. Students are expected to dress in a manner suitable for a professional in a hospital setting (no jeans). A student wishing to apply for a practicum placement at Community Medical Center is encouraged to prepare a resume and phone for an application appointment with Sue Englert.