



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Registered Nurse, Psychiatry	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-4421	Yellowknife	Mental Health Services / Stanton Territorial Hospital

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Registered Nurse, Psychiatry provides direct care to acute psychiatric patients that experience psychosis or serious mental health issues that result in them being a significant risk of harm to themselves and/or others. This position ensures that the patients' safety, physical, emotional, psychosocial, spiritual and educational needs are met and coordinates the necessary resources and referrals to community and outpatient programs.

SCOPE

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) is the single provider of all health and social services in the Northwest Territories (NWT), with the exception of Hay River and Tłıchʔ regions, covering 1.2 million square kilometers and serving approximately 43,000 people, including First Nations, Inuit, Metis, and non-aboriginals. Health and social services includes the full range of primary, secondary and tertiary health services and social services including family services, protection services, care placements, mental health, addictions, and developmental activities, delivered by more than 1,400 health and social services staff.

While the Tłıchʔ Community Services Agency (TCSA) will operate under a separate board and Hay River Health and Social Services Agency (HRHSSA) will in the interim, the NTHSSA will set clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and monitoring for the entire Northwest Territories. Service Agreements will be established with these boards to identify performance requirements and adherence to clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and policies as established by the NTHSSA.

Stanton Territorial Hospital is an accredited facility, located in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (NWT). Stanton is the referral center for approximately 43,000 NWT residents and

5,900 residents from the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut. Stanton provides health care services to adults and children on an inpatient/outpatient and outreach basis in order to restore health with dignity. Stanton maintains a tobacco free environment within the building and throughout the property, recognizing the health hazards associated with tobacco in the workplace, both to smokers and non-smokers alike.

Located in Yellowknife, the Registered Nurse (RN), Psychiatry reports directly to the Manager, Mental Health Services, and is clinically supervised and supported by the Clinical Coordinator (CC).

The Psychiatry Unit is a 10 bed unit (plus one locked seclusion room) within Stanton that provides care to acute mental health patients on the only locked acute care psychiatric unit in the NWT and Nunavut. RNs on this unit are required to meet the needs of complex patients, which will include liaising between multiple departments and NGOs to ensure a patient centered transition to a new living situation.

Patients on the Psychiatric Unit are adults over the age of 18 who are typically diagnosed with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression and may be considered a danger to themselves or others. These patients are often dealing with multiple complex social issues such as homelessness, trauma, poverty, corrections, addiction, FASD or may be cognitively delayed. These patients may be voluntary and/or involuntary (admitted against their will under the *Mental Health Act*). Patients on the Psychiatry Unit require specialized 24 hour supervision on a locked unit.

Patients within the Psychiatry Unit are often acutely psychiatrically unstable and require extended stays within the Unit in order to receive comprehensive care. Appropriate dissemination of patient education and understanding of their illness has a direct impact on readmission rates related to exacerbation of illness or medication non-adherence.

The environment is dynamic and constantly changing, resulting in continually re-evaluating and shifting priorities. With high acuity and large case-loads, new medications and poly-pharmacy challenges the Psychiatry Unit RNs constantly update their priorities and must be up to date in pharmacological advances.

Considering this high risk group of individuals, safety is especially important and must be considered at all times during the assessment, care and treatment of an acute mental health patient. The RN, Psychiatry must be skilled at de-escalation of potentially violent situations and regularly conduct crisis and risk assessments to ensure a safe environment for all patients, staff and visitors. They provide care to patients, 24/7, 365 days per year, and with significant independence in assessment and ongoing management, due to the fact that psychiatrists are only available during the day and for after-hours call coverage only 25% of the year. The RN, Psychiatry is expected to remain calm, controlled and professional, regardless of the situation and demonstrate compassionate care to the client, family and other members of the health care team.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provides direct nursing care to patients using a problem solving approach to coordinate care for patients dealing with multiple complex needs across multiple Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) departments and Non-Government Organizations (NGO).

- Provides treatment, supports and direct nursing care to high risk patients who are dealing with multiple complex social issues (homelessness, trauma, poverty, mental health, addictions, FASD, cognitive delay, legal issues, etc.).
- Assists patients with mental health problems and/or psychiatric disorders to help them achieve their optimum level of health and wellness.
- Applies crisis intervention skills with patients experiencing acute emotional, physical, behavioural, and mental distress (e.g., loss, grief, victimization, and trauma).
- Recognizes and intervenes to stabilize patients experiencing medical emergencies (e.g., shock, hypoglycemia, management of neuroleptic malignant syndrome, cardiac events).
- Implements a variety of nursing interventions with the patient, according to the plan of care.
- Assesses the ethical and legal implications of the interventions before providing care.
- Performs required nursing interventions to address physical conditions, including, but not limited to, intravenous therapy and drainage tubes, skin and wound care, metabolic screening and management of withdrawal symptoms.
- Performs safe medication administration by a variety of methods (e.g., oral, parenteral).
- Provides complex nursing interventions (e.g., facilitating group process, conflict resolution, crisis interventions, individual, group and family counselling, assertiveness training, somatic therapies, pre- and post-ECT (electroconvulsive therapy) education for patients that are referred to ECT.
- Provides ongoing health education and teaching to promote health and quality of life, minimize the development of complications, and maintain and restore health (e.g., social skills training, anger management, relapse prevention, assertiveness training and communication techniques).
- Coordinates appropriate referrals and liaises to promote access to resources that can optimize health outcomes.
- Provides clarification, education and support regarding diagnosis and treatment recommendations to patients and family members.
- Liaises with other direct service providers to ensure accurate patient focused care.
- Contacts the Physician for physical or medical needs of the patient.
- Determines risk, complexity of care requirements and urgency of needs.
- Implements a plan of care to mitigate risk to the patient.
- Provides information about community resources, interim support, and crisis intervention to patient and referral sources.
- Encourages patients to be compliant with taking their medications.

- Coordinates care between all members of the multidisciplinary team (e.g. physicians, physician specialists, Occupational and Recreational Therapy, Outpatient Case Managers, NGO's, etc).
- Develops, assesses and modifies individualized care plans for all inpatients, including those with complex needs and the service providers who support them.
- Promotes autonomy of patients, advocating for the patients right to respect and dignity
- Acts in a manner consistent with their professional code of ethics, responsibilities and standards of practice.
- Advocates for the patient to ensure that their human rights are being considered at all times.
- Advocates for the patient to ensure that they are appropriately discharged, in a timely manner, and appropriately connected to supports in their family and/or in the community.
- Collaborates with the Psychiatrist, Practitioners, and other stakeholders in the hospital and in the community to ensure appropriate care and support, case management, and discharge planning for the patient.
- Reports to the Manager administratively, and reports clinically to the Clinical Coordinator.

2. Conducts mental health and risk assessments on all assigned patients on the Psychiatry Unit ongoing, monitoring for changes in presentation and/or treatment effectiveness and reports these assessment findings to the Psychiatrist.

- Assesses, plans, implements, documents and evaluates care to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the patient.
- Conducts comprehensive assessments and risk assessments including but not limited to: comprehensive suicide risk assessments, aggression risk assessments, elopement (AWOL) risk assessments, substance and drug abuse screenings and comprehensive mental health assessments.
- Formulates a clinical judgment based on the assessment data (e.g., nursing diagnosis, psychiatric nursing diagnosis).
- Identifies psychiatric signs and symptoms that are commonly associated with psychiatric disorders, using current nomenclature (e.g., The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders V).
- Identifies medical/clinical indicators that may negatively impact the patient's well-being (e.g., pain, hyperglycemia, and hypertension).
- Incorporates data from other sources (e.g., laboratory tests, diagnostic imaging results, collateral information).
- Uses critical thinking and clinical judgment to determine the level of risk and to coordinate effective interventions for psychiatric and non-psychiatric emergencies.
- Intervenes to minimize agitation, de-escalate agitated behaviour and manage aggressive behaviour in the least restrictive manner.
- Intervenes to prevent self-harm or minimize injury related to self-harm.
- Conducts an ongoing suicide risk assessment and selects an intervention from a range of evidence-informed suicide prevention strategies (e.g., safety planning, crisis intervention, referral to alternative level of care).

3. Plans for, implements and modifies patient and family education/teaching based on the needs of the patient.

- Collaborates with the patient to develop a treatment plan to address identified problems, minimize the development of complications, and promote functions and quality of life.
- Discusses interventions with the patient to achieve patient-directed goals and outcomes (e.g., promote health, prevent disorder and injury, foster rehabilitation and provide palliation).
- Plans care using treatment modalities such as psychotherapy and psychopharmacology.
- Proposes a plan for self-care that promotes patient responsibility and independence to the maximum degree possible (e.g., relaxation techniques, stress management, coping skills, community resources, complementary and alternative therapies).
- Uses a holistic approach to facilitate individual learning for patients and their families during the entire length of stay on the Psychiatry Unit beginning on admission or transfer until discharge in relation to illness (i.e. diagnosis, medication, self-care, health promotion, etc.).
- Assesses the individual for physical and psychological needs, their knowledge of their health, disease process and learning needs.
- Works with patients to identify cultural, language and community supports.
- Understands and integrates knowledge of various departments and NGO's, including cultural and Aboriginal resources.
- Coordinates and facilitates therapeutic and psychoeducational groups for patients and their families.
- Researches, develops, revises and evaluates on an ongoing basis, best practice educational resources necessary to support patients and families.

4. Advocates practice environments that have the organizational and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent and ethical nursing care.

- Provides coaching and leadership to peers, students and other members of the health care team to develop skill levels necessary to achieve the standard of care.
- Identifies alternative approaches or actions to a problem and evaluate potential consequences within and outside the Psychiatry Unit.
- Collaborates with nursing colleagues and other members of the health team to advocate for a health care environment that is conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of patients and families.
- Orientates new employees to specific specialty programs and mandate.
- Participates in committees, task forces, and research projects as directed by the Clinical Coordinator or Manager.
- Advocates for the dignity and self-respect of patients. Promotes the autonomy of patients and helps them to express their health needs and values to obtain appropriate information and services.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

Between 25% and 50% of the incumbents day will be spent bending over low patient beds without cranks, lifting, moving and/or supporting patients who require care (i.e. orientation to their room, toileting, general mobility, etc.). Lifting of and physical support of patients may be done on an individual basis or as a group. In addition, the incumbent will be required to bend and stand in awkward position while performing patient assessment or care.

Environmental Conditions

During their shift (100% of time) an incumbent will be exposed to communicable diseases, blood and body fluid, and hazardous materials (sharps, toxic cleaning and sterilizing solutions).

Sensory Demands

Patients within the Psychiatry Unit are acutely unwell and require extended stays within the unit. This means that the incumbent must be constantly alert (100% of the shift) of the patients' physical and emotional need in order to provide comprehensive care. Side effects of psychopharmacology can be extreme requiring the incumbent to be aware of each patient at all times. The incumbent is required to physically search each patient and their belongings upon arrival and returning to the unit from outside the Hospital exposing them to potentially dangerous sharp objects, illicit drugs or other dangerous items.

Mental Demands

The RN, Psychiatry will provide care to patients with multiple complex needs and may be exposed to violence, traumatic histories and other emotionally disturbing experiences. The incumbent may be required to manage multiple agitated or distressed patients at one time requiring them to multitask multiple complex events. It is common that patients on the Psychiatry Unit suffer from multiple complex issues (e.g. substance abuse disorders, FASD and cognitive delays) therefore the risk for unpredictable behaviors, violence and aggression on a regular basis is high. As a result of the large number of potentially violent patients and individuals with unhealthy coping skills are treated within the Psychiatry Unit, there is uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, as well as a real concern for safety and well-being.

In addition, within the health care setting there can be significant lack of control over the work pace, with frequent interruptions.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of the health sciences, including anatomy, physiology, microbiology, nutrition, pathophysiology, psychopharmacology, pharmacology, epidemiology, genetics, and prenatal and genetic influences on development.

- Knowledge of social sciences and humanities, including psychology, sociology, human growth and development, communication, statistics, research methodology, philosophy, ethics, spiritual care, determinants of health and primary health care.
- Knowledge of nursing science: conceptual nursing models, nursing skills, procedures and interventions.
- Knowledge of current and emerging health issues (e.g., end-of-life care, substance use, vulnerable or marginalized populations).
- Knowledge of community, global and population health issues (e.g., immunization, disaster planning, pandemics).
- Knowledge of applicable informatics and emerging technologies.
- Evidence-informed knowledge of psychopathology across the lifespan.
- Knowledge of disorders of developmental health and mental health.
- Knowledge of resources and diagnostic tools (e.g., standardized assessment scales, The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders V).
- Knowledge of the disorders of addiction, as well as relevant resources and diagnostic tools (e.g., standardized screening tools, detoxification and withdrawal guidelines).
- Knowledge of therapeutic modalities (e.g., individual, family and group therapy and counselling, psychopharmacology, visualization, consumer-led initiatives).
- Knowledge of how complementary therapies can impact treatment (e.g., naturopathy, acupuncture).
- Knowledge of conceptual models of psychiatric care (e.g., Trauma-Informed Care, Recovery Model, Psychosocial Rehabilitation).
- Evidence-informed knowledge of the impact of social, cultural and family systems on health outcomes.
- Knowledge of interpersonal communication, therapeutic use of self and therapeutic relationships.
- Knowledge of the dynamic of interpersonal abuse (e.g., child, spousal or elder abuse).
- Ability to acquire knowledge of mental health legislation and other relevant legislation (e.g., privacy laws).
- Ability to perform an in-depth psychiatric evaluation (e.g., suicide, history of violence, trauma, stress, mental status, self-perception, adaptation and coping, substance use and abuse).
- Ability to collaborate with the client to identify health strengths and goals.
- Knowledge and ability to network resources within and outside NTHSSA-Stanton; Department of Justice, Community Health Centres, NGO's, Community Mental Health (and practitioners), RCMP, Air Ambulance Teams, Out of Province Specialized clinics.
- Ability to educate patients and their families on diagnosis, treatment, appropriate self-care methods and techniques.
- Ability to organize, meet deadlines, and prioritize work load.
- Ability to communicate orally and in writing to document in the patient medical record.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A Nursing Degree. Recent experience in a Mental Health setting would be considered an asset.

Equivalencies will be considered on a case by case basis.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Registration under RNANT/NU prior to commencement of employment.

Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices is required.

Applicable Canadian Nursing Association certifications are desired.

Stanton Territorial Hospital has a number of certifications that are required upon hire, depending on the area where the employee works, including but not limited to: Aboriginal Cultural Awareness, Biohazardous Waste, Biosafety & Biosecurity, Infection Control, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and others directly related to the incumbent's scope of practice.

Position Security

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred