



Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency  
Dǫ Nǎke Lani Nǎts'etso • Strong Like Two People

## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency	Regional Public Health Nurse	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
27-11697	Behchokǫ	Health & Social Services / Tłıchǫ

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Regional Public Health Nurse (Regional PHN) is responsible for providing comprehensive public health nursing services to residents of Behchokǫ, Whati, Gameti and Wekweètì in accordance with established standard of nursing practice, the philosophy, objectives and policies of the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA), the principles of Primary Health Care and the *NWT Public Health Act*. Using the principles of primary health care, the aim of this position is to prevent or reduce the incidence of communicable diseases; protect, restore and/or maintain the health status of clients experiencing various events during the lifespan; and promote community wellness through health promotion, screening and intervention activities.

## SCOPE

The scope of the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA) is to manage the delivery of a range of integrated public GNWT and First Nations health, wellness and education programs and services for the NWT Tłıchǫ communities of Behchokǫ, Gamètì, Wekweètì and Whati. Established in 2005 as part of the Tłıchǫ Agreement, the Agency is designed to be an *interim Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) organization* through which the Tłıchǫ Government will eventually exercise their treaty rights for self-government. The Agency serves approximately 3,000 people, employs 230 staff and has an annual budget in excess of \$30M. Programs and services include early childhood education, K-12 education, health and wellness, child and family services, mental health and addictions, and continuing care and independent living.

The Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency vision “Strong like Two People” is a metaphor for the desire by community leadership to build an organization and create programs and services that recognize the strength and importance of two cultures. Local Tłıchǫ and non-Tłıchǫ

knowledge have complementary strengths which together can achieve solutions to contemporary problems which neither could alone.

The TCSA administers all regional health and social services (HSS) delivered to a population of approximately 3,000 residents of the Tłıchǫ region through 3 Community Health Centers and 1 Community Health Station, and for the residents of the Jimmy Erasmus Seniors Home (JESH). The TCSA provides and supports the delivery of health care services to adults and children on an outpatient and outreach basis to enhance healthy communities' well-being through excellence, accountability and respect for regional diversity.

The Public Health Nurse (PHN) is located in Behchokǫ and reports directly to the Public Health Nurse in Charge (PHNIC). The PHN provides culturally sensitive care to people in the remote communities of Behchokǫ, Whati, Gameti and Wekweètì on a rotational basis. The PHN has in-depth knowledge of the *Public Health Act* and the *Reportable Disease Control and Disease Surveillance Regulations*. The position works directly with the NWT Department of Health and Social Service's (DHSSs) Communicable Disease Specialists in the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO). The PHN has an essential role in the timely identification of communicable diseases and the delivery of prevention and outbreak management and control interventions, especially in the areas of vaccine delivery, communicable disease surveillance and treatment.

The PHN is a registered nurse with advanced education and training beyond the scope of a graduate nurse. The PHN must practice not only according to the territorial and national registered nursing practice guidelines (RNANTNU and CNA) but also according to national practice guidelines specifically for public health nurses (CHNC). This is an expanded scope of practice, a position that demands independent thinking, judgment, and critical decision-making skills.

The PHN has the ability to follow clinical practice guidelines to provide assessment and select treatment (within scope), offer community based programming and services as per the NWT Community Health Standards and Protocols from the DHSS (Well child programs, vaccinations, assessment through the lifespan, communicable disease management, STI screening and treatment), develop, deliver, and evaluate a wide range of health promotion and disease prevention strategies, and generate referrals to appropriate services and resources as required.

The PHN promotes the health of individuals, families, communities, and various populations within their environments. The incumbent is required to always honor and promote a culturally safe environment. The PHN practices in diverse settings, such as, clinics, homes, schools, primary care clinics, shelters, and non-governmental organizations and in public areas. This position requires the ability to handle several complex issues concurrently. The PHN must be constantly aware of patients' physical and emotional needs (mood, hygiene, etc.) when making an assessment and recommending an appropriate course of action that will recognize the clients' abilities, support systems and potential. This position requires the incumbent to remain calm, controlled, and professional in all situations and demonstrate compassionate care that is free of racism and discrimination to patients, families, community members and members of the healthcare team.

The PHN is assigned to the following program areas: Communicable Disease; Maternal Child; and/or Child and Adolescent Health and Well Adult. However, the incumbent is required to be knowledgeable and proficient in all areas and programs delivered by the Public Health program as they can be transitioned into the different areas to answer various public health needs. The PHN is required to be motivated and innovative in continuing education and practice to maintain up-to-date Public Health knowledge and skills to encourage the professional growth of self and others. The PHN becomes a program leader within their program area, and is expected to direct and organize their peers, administrative staff and healthcare team members when delivering programming, care, and education in their area of expertise or when facilitating and advocating for clients or programs.

The PHN communicates with and educates, using appropriate strategies, all clients, community members, groups, and health care providers. The PHN is an expert on public health practice and information, and the incumbent is a mentor for nursing and advanced practice nursing students during their practicum experiences at TCSA. The PHN provides seasoned advice and guidance to other health and non-health related professionals within the TCSA on a wide range of specialized public health issues. The PHN will be asked to represent TCSA on relevant local, departmental, and territorial health committees and research projects and at workshops/conferences.

The PHN may be required to be on call, on a rotational basis, during weekends and after hours to respond to communicable diseases, urgent public health matters and outbreak situations. As required, the PHN will be called upon to work additional hours to actively contain communicable diseases and initiate contact tracing efforts in accordance with the *Public Health Act* and Communicable disease guidelines set out by the DHSS. The PHN will be required to travel to the outlying communities to conduct Public Health Programming when needed.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Develop, implements and evaluates comprehensive, core-funded public health programs and services to prevent and/or minimize the impact of communicable diseases on at-risk clients, families, and communities according to established national and territorial legislation and standards.**

- Implements a comprehensive tuberculosis (TB) program which includes screening and surveillance, contact tracing, comprehensive health assessments, the dispensing of medications under direct observation therapy (DOT), education, counselling, and the delivery of transferred medical functions, such as, ordering lab tests and chest x- rays.
- Works in consultation with OCPHO.
- Implements a comprehensive sexually transmitted infections (STI) program that includes screening, surveillance, contact tracing, comprehensive health assessments, the dispensing of medications, education, counselling, and the delivery of transferred medical functions, such as, performing venipuncture, making diagnoses, ordering lab tests, and treating uncomplicated STIs.
- Apply epidemiological principles in the screening, diagnosis, treatment, control, and management, reporting and surveillance of communicable diseases.
- Performs surveillance and screening for other reportable communicable diseases according to NWT legislation.

- Dispenses medications for the treatment of communicable diseases according to NWT clinical practice guidelines.
- Carries out contact tracing for clients with laboratory-confirmed communicable diseases, through appropriate follow-up in home of clients to mitigate risk to larger population.
- Collects communicable disease samples and transports them in accordance with the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act*.
- Mobilizes and support multidisciplinary teams in the event of outbreaks to support regional needs to mitigate risk to the population of the NWT.
- Coordinates interdisciplinary client care for high risk or complex clients.
- Provides coaching and leadership to peers, students, and other members of the healthcare team to develop skills level necessary to achieve the standards of care.

**2. Develops and carries out activities to eliminate the risk of vaccine-preventable and communicable diseases and improve the health status of clients by providing assessment, education, and immunization, according to the NWT Community Health Core Service Standards and Protocols.**

- Delivers programs and services in a culturally safe manner that respects everyone's culture, beliefs, values, religion, and language.
- Delivers Well Child clinics from birth to 5 years of age:
  - Health assessments
  - Growth and development screening
  - NWT Rourke Well Child Record
  - Education: health, nutrition, developmental milestones, play, immunization
  - Childhood immunizations according to the NWT schedule
  - Risk assessment and preventative interventions
  - Collaboration with the client/family/caregiver
  - Plan of care elaboration and referral to appropriate healthcare providers as needed
  - Referral to required interdisciplinary services, such as OT, SLP, dietitian, mental health services
- Delivers General Adult Immunization clinics to all ages that require vaccination updates based on age and in accordance with the NWT Immunization Schedule and Canadian Immunization Guide:
  - Health and immunization education
  - Immunizations according to the NWT schedule
  - Screening for communicable diseases risks
  - Needle exchange program
  - Immigrant screening and immunization
- Participates in program development for immunization and client's education.
- Coordinates and delivers outreach immunization clinics to meet the needs of at-risk populations and target groups.
- Coordinates and delivers mass flu vaccination clinics, usually within region, in or off- site locations, to provide access to vaccine to all age groups.
- Delivers school-based immunization and education programs to required age groups based on NWT Immunization Schedule and review of all age groups vaccination status.
- Implements travel health program, according to PHAC guidelines, that includes country-

specific disease prevention education; counselling; yellow fever vaccination program; medically transferred functions (for example, issuing travel-related prescriptions under the guidance of the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO); and post travel follow-up.)

- Coordinates management of tetanus related injury.
- Implements pre- and post-exposure rabies program and animal bite post exposure in collaboration with the OCPHO.
- Supports various healthcare providers and communities as an immunization expert.

**3. Designs, implements, modify, and evaluates appropriate health promotion activities and provides interventions according to national and territorial program standards**

- Collaborates with individuals, communities, and other stakeholders in identifying their needs, assets, and available resources.
- Identifies root causes of illness and disease and works with individuals and communities to raise awareness of health issues; shift social norms; change behaviors; and facilitate the initiation of adequate support to sustain these changes.
- Provides appropriate health information and a supportive environment to enable clients to take responsibility for their health care and become empowered.
- Identifies client's needs and appropriate services, healthcare, and other sectors, to facilitate clients' access.
- Identify and evaluate mental health needs, assist with crisis management.
- Facilitates referrals to other healthcare providers to ensure early diagnosis and prompt appropriate interventions.
- Participates in program development, research, develop, revise, and evaluate on an ongoing basis educational resource necessary to support clients.
- Uses of a holistic approach to facilitate individual learning by clients and their families. Build relationships based upon the principles of connecting and caring.
- Assists individuals, families, and communities in making informed choices about preventive health practices, such as immunization, breastfeeding, nutrition, hand washing, infection control measures and contraception.
- Implement preventive screening programs, such as kindergarten screening, vision, hearing and language screening in schools, and growth and development screening from birth to adolescence.
- Apply harm reduction principles to identify, reduce and/or eliminate risk factors in different settings, such as, the home (smoking), neighborhood (safe playgrounds), workplace (regular safety checks), school (immunization clinics) and street (outreach activities).
- Delivers programming and implements school health education principles based on Joint Consortium for School Health in the following activities:
  - Language, vision, hearing and health screening at the clinic and school
  - Support to teachers, upon request, in providing health education to students
  - School mass immunization programs
  - Travel health education to students, families, and teachers for school trips
  - Sexual health education, screening, intervention and counselling at schools and clinics
  - Pregnancy testing, counseling, and education
  - Communicable disease screening and surveillance

- Partner with community stakeholders to deliver health education and implement healthy school initiatives
- Organizes and partners to support healthy school policy and atmosphere promoting health and well-being
- Infection control prevention and hand hygiene, cough etiquette education, staff education on epi-pen, glucagon administration and disease specific management
- Delivers and implements Infant and Maternal Health programming:
  - Delivers Prenatal and postnatal groups education
  - Assures home visitation to newborns to provide assessment and management in the home post discharge from hospital.
  - Collects neonatal bilirubin in the home setting, transportation of blood samples in accordance with *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act*
  - Growth and assessment of newborn and throughout infancy to ensure appropriate growth and development
  - Provides breastfeeding support and assistance immediately post hospital discharge and throughout duration of breastfeeding experience
  - Provides Breastfeeding Clinic: education, diagnosis, treatment and support to mothers and babies with breastfeeding concerns according to the International Lactation Consultant Association and Canadian Breastfeeding Committee standards of practice for Baby Friendly Initiative.
  - Monitors and keeps statistics on breastfeeding rates and trends within client population
  - Provides postpartum depression screening, support, and referrals to physician and mental health services as needed
  - Partners with local community and NGO groups to provide education and support to community groups
  - Delivers community group sessions for mothers and infants throughout first year of life, coordination of topics and interdisciplinary presenters
  - Provides home visitation to high risks clients to initiate relationships and support health needs, including referrals to Healthy Family Program
  - Liaises and collaborates with social services for high-risk clients and families
  - Collaborate with Northern Health Services Network to coordinate discharge from NICU care and arrange ongoing follow up as needed

**4. Demonstrates autonomy, professional responsibility, and accountability in practice, and ensures delivery of culturally safe care.**

- Acknowledges the right of every person to respect, dignity, fairness, and autonomy.
- Practices public health nursing according to the NWT *Nursing Profession Act* and the standards of practice of the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), RNANTNU and CHNC.
- Performs competencies according to RNANTNU and CHNC in all areas of practice.
- Maintains the privacy and confidentiality of all clients, including their information, and acts according to TCSA administrative directives, standing operating procedures and the NWT *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act* in the sharing of any client information.
- Apply advanced nursing processes (assessment, planning implementation and evaluation) in delivering culturally sensitive nursing care to all clients.
- Continuous evaluation of all public health programs and implement relevant changes.

- Make independent decisions based upon ethical standards of practice and principles.
- Apply nursing information and communication technology to develop, collect and manage relevant data to support nursing practice.
- Documents in EMR public health nursing activities in a comprehensive, timely and appropriate manner.
- Uses problem solving competencies to determine the most appropriate course of action.
- Provides constructive feedback (for example, chart audits) to peers, as necessary, to improve public health nursing practice.
- Participates in professional development and continuous education activities consistent with current practice, new and emerging issues, demographic trends, determinants of health and new research to keep Public Health knowledge current.

**5. Provides leadership and expertise in the field of public health to other health care providers, community agencies and other professionals.**

- Acts as a resource for public health knowledge and practice (for example, immunizations, travel health, tuberculosis, STI and other communicable diseases) for health care providers locally and in other communities in the Tłıchq region.
- Participates in the advancement of public health nursing practice by acting as a mentor and preceptor for students and new practitioners from local, as well as national nursing and advanced practice nursing programs.
- Actively participates on relevant committees including, but not limited to:
  - NWT Immunization Advisory Committee
  - TCSA Occupational Health and Safety Committee
  - NWT Infection Control/Antimicrobial Awareness Committee
  - Joint Maternal Child/Breastfeeding Baby Friendly Advisory Committee
  - Professional association committees
  - NWT Child and Youth Fatality Review Committee.
- Participates in special projects and research on best practices and current public health issues.

**6. Coordinates and delivers programs to vulnerable and high-risk populations in outreach settings, to meet the dynamic needs of the population.**

- Initiates communication with community partners and local organizations to build connections.
- Implements community health assessment on current program delivery and services
- Coordinates with interdisciplinary team to mobilize required professionals and resources.
- Liaisons with DHSS on strategic goals and current action plans.
- Implements programming and service offerings to high-risk clients reluctant to access care in mainstream system.
- Develops and partners to offer mass community events to meet target population needs.
- Required to operate clinics and provide home visitation as a lone worker.
- Recognizes high-risk situations and coordinates services to mitigate impacts.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical Demands**

Off-site visits represent 40% to 70% of the PHN's time. The incumbent, when practicing out of the clinic, will be required to carry supplies, vaccine coolers and equipment, including vision and hearing screening machines, up and down stairs, as well as, into and out of a vehicle. This often includes multiple trips carrying supplies and equipment of various sizes and weights.

These supplies often must be carried great distances from parking lots. Because Behchoko is located in the North, the PHN must carry these supplies and equipment over uneven, slippery roads and walkways and travel in extreme cold weather. The PHN will also be required to bend and stand in awkward positions while performing patient assessment or care and depending on the home of the client, may be required to sit or kneel on the floor. Required to travel on a rotational basis to the outlying communities of Whati, Gameti and Wekweètì.

### **Environmental Conditions**

The PHN may be exposed to communicable diseases, such as chicken pox, tuberculosis, whooping cough, measles, blood-borne infections, needle stick injuries and hazardous materials. While performing home visits, the PHN encounters unsanitary conditions, animals (pets) and clients and/or family members who are smoking, drinking alcohol, or using drugs. At times, the incumbent will be required to manage equipment or PPE in extreme weather conditions (ex. swabbing outside -30 where gloves crack).

As a result of living in a northern community, the incumbent may be required to travel on small planes and on ice or winter roads to or from other Tłıchǫ communities.

### **Sensory Demands**

Sixty to 100% of the time will be spent providing direct patient care where the incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of touch, sight, smell, and hearing during assessment and provision of care in an uncontrolled setting (i.e. client's home).

### **Mental Demands**

The environment is dynamic and constantly changing so the PHN continually re-evaluates and shifts priorities. There can be significant lack of control over the work pace, with frequent interruptions.

Working within the client's home can be extremely distracting making assessment and diagnosis more challenging.

The PHN will be required to respond promptly, quickly, and appropriately in outreach settings and home environment with minimal resources available. This requires comprehensive critical thinking, clinical judgement, and adept public health knowledge when working in a lone environment with lack of immediate support.

When making home visits, contacting clients regarding communicable diseases, or delivering necessary outreach programs, the PHN may be exposed to violent clients and/or family members who are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. The PHN will also encounter clients who are



mentally ill or homeless, and/or demonstrate a range of emotional and physical states. At times, the emotional state of clients and family members brings uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, and the incumbent may experience concern about their physical safety in unknown and unpredictable situations.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Knowledge of and an ability to apply sanctioned transferable medical functions (assessment and selection of treatment based on assessment) as outlined in the Nursing Administration Manual's standards, policies, and guidelines (i.e., collection of samples and assessment of patients).
- Knowledge of and an ability to perform basic laboratory functions such as, but not limited to pregnancy tests, various swab specimens, the preparation of specimens for culture and sensitivity, and collection of specimens in uncontrolled settings (i.e., Client homes and off-site locations).
- Knowledge about the history, structure and interaction of public health and health care services at local, provincial/territorial, national and international levels.
- Knowledge of the nursing process to identify the needs of the community in program and policy planning.
- Knowledge of biological, physical, and behavioral sciences in order to recognize interpret and prioritize findings and determine and implement a plan of action based on accepted standards of practice. Knowledge of and an ability to build coalitions and networks within and outside the TCSA (for example, social services, mental health, home care, physician clinics, etc.) to ensure culturally sensitive support of clients and their families.
- Knowledge of the current NWT Public Health Act, Reportable Disease Control and Disease Surveillance Regulations and in accordance with the NWT Communicable Disease Manual.
- Knowledge of immunizations in accordance with the NWT Public Health Act, Immunization Regulations, and the Canadian Immunization Guide.
- Knowledge of computer programs including but not limited to: Word processing; Excel; Internet Explorer; Outlook e-mail; Power Point; EMR (Wolf electronic medical record system); Travax (professional travel health program); MS Team; TCSA Network.
- Ability as a front-line provider to be self-directed and work independently.
- Ability to think critically with strong problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Ability to understand and recognize the cultural, social, and political realities in the NWT.
- Ability to recognize the impacts of colonization and residential schools on Indigenous health outcomes and the way health and social services are delivered.
- Ability to coordinate a wide variety of activities and objectives, to be self-directed, meet deadlines, prioritize own workload, and manage several tasks at once,
- Ability to facilitate creative problem solving using a situational approach incorporating conceptual, analytical, interpretive, evaluative, intuitive, and constructive thinking skills.
- Ability to identify and collaborate with partners in addressing public health issues.
- Able to communicate with individuals, groups, peers, and specialists in the public health field.
- Ability to build community capacity by sharing knowledge, tools, expertise, and experience.
- Knowledge and pharmacy skills, such as prescribing medication under the direction of the CPHO and dispensing medications under approved policies and the NWT Drug Formulary.

- Ability to provide emergency care and treatment in response to a medical emergency (i.e., Anaphylactic reaction, fainting client).
- Ability to educate patients and their families on self-care methods and techniques.
- Ability to facilitate creative problem solving using a situational approach incorporating conceptual, analytical, interpretive, evaluative, intuitive, and constructive thinking skills.
- Ability to legally operate a motor vehicle to get to and from client's home,
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

A BScN or BN nursing degree program with two (2) years of nursing experience in a public health or community health environment.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices is required. Class 5 driver's license in good standing.

Must be eligible for registration with the RNANTNU.

The Public Health Nurse must be able to acquire, within a reasonable time frame, and remain current in the following training and/or certifications:

- Non-violent crisis intervention
- Education Program for Immunization Competency (EPIC)
- Fire/disaster plan for TCSA
- Certification in WHMIS
- Certification in basic CPR
- IPAC training
- GNWT Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training
- Certification in hand hygiene
- Fit testing
- Point of Care testing
- Suicide Risk Assessment
- Mental Health First Aid
- Certification in infection control practices
- Transport of Dangerous Goods
- Breastfeeding course (20 hours)

The incumbent may be required to obtain additional skills training in areas, such as, but not limited to the following, as directed by the supervisor: Venipuncture certification; Pap smear and various swab collection methods; Pregnancy testing; STI diagnosis and treatment; Travel immunizations; Travel prescriptions; Yellow fever vaccine delivery; International lactation consultant certification.

The PHN will be required to follow safe work practices as outlined by TCSA and NWT Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulations while employed with TCSA.

### **Immunization Requirement**

Due to the nature of the PHN position duties and potential exposure to vaccine preventable illnesses; the PHN is required to be up to date with routine immunizations as per the NWT Immunization schedule and complete yearly TST testing.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **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