



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Regional Audiologist	
Position Number(s)	Community	Division/Region(s)
48-15263	Inuvik	Rehabilitation Services/ Beaufort Delta

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

To provide assessment, diagnostic and treatment services to patients of the Allied Health Services Department in accordance with the code of ethics and rules of Speech- Language and Audiology Canada (SAC) and the philosophy and objectives of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) to ensure patients realize and maintain maximum audiological functioning.

## 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 Tẖcẖ 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.

This position is located in the Inuvik Regional Hospital (IRH), which is a 51 bed, accredited facility serving the town of Inuvik and 12 outlying communities serviced by the NTHSSA Beaufort Delta and Sahtu regions. The NTHSSA provides and supports the delivery of health care services to adults and children on an inpatient, outpatient and outreach basis in order to enhance healthy communities and well-being through excellence, accountability and respect for regional diversity.

Reporting directly to the Regional Manager Rehabilitation, the incumbent independently provides diagnostic, intervention, preventative, educational, counseling and referral services to in and out-patients, ranging from pediatric to geriatric, that suffer from hearing difficulties. The Audiologist is part of the Rehabilitation Services Department which consists of 2 Physiotherapists, 3 Occupational Therapists, 3 Speech Language Pathologists, an Audiologist, 2 Rehabilitation Assistants, 2 Program Assistants and a Child Development Team Coordinator.

Patients of the Audiology Department may access services directly or may be referred by physicians, public health nurses, teachers, parents, social workers, etc. The Audiologist provides direct care (i.e. assessment, diagnosis, intervention, etc.), monitors the delivery of treatment delegated to the client, family and/or school staff and acts as an educational resource to clients, family, school staff, other health care professionals, etc. in various locations that include but are not limited to; the hospital, community health centers, the workplace, schools, etc.

The incumbent will design and implement (deliver directly or monitor the delivery of) programs, research, educational material and deliver workshops on topics related to hearing difficulties. Unlike Audiologists in southern institutions the incumbent must have advanced knowledge in all areas of audiology as opposed to a specialization in one area.

The Audiologist works with patients of all ages who have hearing disorders. Services are provided to people who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons at risk of hearing loss due to noise exposure, genetic causes, and exposure to certain drugs, or middle ear infections or other identified risk factor. The audiologists manage the Infant Hearing Program in the NWT by overseeing screening through diagnostic evaluation to fitting of devices where necessary. The audiologist will work closely with speech language pathologists and other professions for rehabilitation of hearing impaired children. The audiologist is a member of the Child Development Team and will participate in meetings/co-ordination of care where appropriate. Audiologists will assess the extent of hearing loss, balance and related disorders and recommend and/or prescribe intervention (i.e. hearing aids).

Types of care delivered to the patient may include but not be limited to; hearing aid prescription and fitting, troubleshooting and maintaining hearing aids, designing and implementing rehabilitation strategies, consultation regarding noise exposure, etc. The focus of the intervention is to maximize and maintain the patient's ability to communicate effectively in home, school, social or professional settings as well as to improve quality of life. Some of the incumbent's patients have communication disorders and therefore may not be able to request assistance, or communicate needs when required.

The Audiologist evaluates the patient's need based on presenting impairment, disability and handicap. The Audiologist prescribes an intervention that meets the specific needs of the patient, keeping in mind evidence-based information, relevant best practice and clinical expertise. The intervention will contain but not be limited to; identifying other necessary resources (both human and material) and educational needs (i.e. alternative communication) and cost effective intervention strategies. The incumbent may recommend further diagnostic investigation (i.e. may suspect autism) or cross referral to other health care providers (i.e., ENT

Specialists, pediatricians, social workers, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.).

The incumbent educates the patient, family/care givers, school staff and the health care team involved in the health care plan on the nature of the diagnosis, purpose of the interventions and self-management strategies. The Audiologist also links the patient and family with appropriate community resources.

As an Audiologist within the IRH, the incumbent also provides functional expertise and direction to other health care providers on the delivery of audiological intervention to clients.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. Delivers patient and family centered care by providing diagnostic and intervention services to a wide variety of patients and their families, using a problem solving approach and in accordance with the standards, guidelines and scope of audiology to facilitate individualized patient care.**

### **Main Activities:**

- Evaluates patient's auditory and vestibular function and need for audiology intervention.
- Assesses hearing disorders, diagnoses, implements, documents, evaluates and modifies intervention as necessary to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the patient (intervention will be based on the patient's diagnosis).
- Assist patients in realizing and maintaining maximum residual hearing,
- 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.
- Safeguards the trust of patients that information learned in the context of a professional relationship is shared outside the health care team only with the patient's permission or as legally required.
- Applies and promotes principles of equity and fairness to assist patients in receiving unbiased treatment and a share of health services and resources proportionate to their needs.
- Acts in a manner consistent with their professional responsibilities and standards of practice.

**2. The Audiologist develops, modifies, coordinates and facilitates education/teaching based on the needs of the patient, families, care givers and other stakeholders.**

### **Main Activities:**

- Uses a holistic approach to facilitate individual learning of patients and, where applicable, their families during appointments in relation to patient illness or injury (i.e. self-management/care, health promotion, etc.).

- Assesses the patient's knowledge of their health, injury, impairment and learning needs.
- Counsels clients, families, caregivers, etc. regarding all aspects of hearing and communication disorders.
- Develops, revises and evaluates on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support patients, as well as for individuals and groups in relation to hearing disorder (i.e. health promotion, environmental and occupational hearing conservation programs, etc.) that can be carried out in pre-school, school, home or work settings as well as.

**3. The Audiologist arranges travel clinics in to provide care to residents of the smaller communities within the Beaufort-Delta and Sahtu Regions.**

**Main Activities:**

- Coordinates community clinics and collaborates with community healthcare staff and other stakeholders to determine schedule, caseload, services, and follow-up.
- Provides aftercare programs (intervention plans) for community patients.
- Provides necessary training to the patient, family, nurses and other health care staff regarding troubleshooting hearing aids and hearing aid fittings.
- Monitors delivery of services delegated to community health care staff.

**4. Ensures appropriate maintenance on audiological equipment.**

**Main Activities:**

- Troubleshoot and perform and/or ensure timely and appropriate maintenance and repairs on audiological equipment.
- Ensures that appropriate levels of supplies are available for the program.
- Ensures that equipment meets program specifications.

**5. Advocates practice environments that have the organizational and resource allocations necessary for patient and family centered, safe, competent and ethical care.**

**Main Activities:**

- Collaborates with physicians, nurses and other members of the health team to advocate health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of patients and others in the setting.
- 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.
- Provides consultation and professional opinion on the diagnosis and treatment of conditions affecting the hearing system to other health care providers (i.e. ENT specialists, family physicians, community health nurses).
- Refers client to other health providers when appropriate.
- Orientates new employees to audiology services and mandate.

- Provides information and recommendations on capital expenditures.
- Participates in committees, task teams, and research projects as required.

**6. Work Place Health and Safety: Employees of the Authority are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and respectful workplace for employees and patients/clients. Building a safe and respectful workplace is everyone's responsibility.**

- All employees and contractors have a professional and personal responsibility to perform their duties to health and safety regulations, standards, practices and procedures.
- All stakeholders (management, staff, Union of Northern Workers, and Workplace Safety and Compensation Commission) need to ensure our Workplace Health and Safety Committee works effectively, with a shared purpose of continuous quality improvement in health and safety.
- All Managers play an active role in workplace health and safety through their daily management: identifying prevention opportunities, ensuring staff are trained in Risk Monitor Pro, investigating potential risk and accidents, and applying timely corrective measures.
- A healthy workplace, where employees can provide quality service under safe conditions, is the right thing to do and makes good business sense.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical Demands**

Approximately 25% of the incumbent's day will be spent standing and leaning over patients while performing assessment or care. While visiting smaller communities the incumbent will need to travel with heavy baggage that holds testing equipment (i.e. diagnostic equipment, etc.).

**Environmental Conditions**

During their day an incumbent may be exposed to communicable diseases, blood and body fluid that can result in potential health risk to the incumbent. Incumbent will be required to travel in small noisy aircraft 20 times per year for 30-120 minutes duration, as well as travel on ice and isolated roads about 5 times per year with duration of each trip 90-180 minutes in length.

**Sensory Demands**

The incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of sight, touch and hearing during assessment and provision of care in a variety of settings that vary from controlled (i.e. hospital) to uncontrolled (i.e. school). These settings may be distracting for both the incumbent and the patient (noise level, visual commotion, etc.).

The Audiologist must be constantly aware of patients' physical and emotional needs (mood, etc.) while providing care (75% of the workday). A high intensity of listening, alertness and comprehension skills are needed to obtain an accurate diagnosis as well as to try to help patients describe problems for which they may not know the words.

## **Mental Demands**

The Audiologist has the opportunity to develop relationships with the clients of the Rehabilitation Services Department. The Audiologist 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.

The incumbent will travel to communities approximately 10 weeks per year, which may cause moderate levels of stress on the incumbent's family and social life.

In addition, within the health care setting there can be significant lack of control over the work pace, with frequent interruptions that may lead to mental fatigue or stress.

The Audiologist is required to be motivated and innovative in the area of continuing education and practice to encourage the professional growth of self and others.

## **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- The Audiologist must have knowledge of cognitive and functional development and impairment related to audiology including anatomy, physiology and pathology in a variety of age groups.
- Must be sensitive to the cultural, social and regional conditions in order to develop effective programs.
- Must be able to travel to outlying communities via ice road and small aircraft. A valid NWT Driver's license would be considered an asset.
- An ability to apply therapeutic processes (assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation) to ensure that the patients' physical, emotional, psychosocial, educational and day-to-day living needs are met.
- An ability to educate patients, their families (where applicable) and other health care professionals on appropriate self-care methods and techniques.
- Knowledge of biological, physical, behavioral and mental health 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 network resources within and outside IRH (i.e. Social Services, Community Health Nurses, Daycare, etc.) in order to ensure support of patients and their families (i.e. discharge planning).
- Knowledge of and ability to operate a desk top computer in order to send and receive electronic mail and conduct research over the Internet,
- Knowledge of and ability to operate word processing applications (i.e. Microsoft Word) in the completion of reports, training materials and presentations.

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

This level of knowledge is typically acquired through the successful completion of a Master's Degree in Audiology. Preference will be given to candidates with a minimum of 2 years work experience.

The incumbent must maintain their certification as a member of Speech-Language and Audiology Canada

**Position Security** (check one)

- 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