



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Territorial Nurse Practitioner-Mental Health and Substance Use	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-17511	Yellowknife	Territorial Operations/ Clinical Integration/ Mental Health and Community Wellness

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Territorial Nurse Practitioner-Mental Health and Substance Use (TNP-MHSU) provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to health assessment, diagnosis, and clinical expertise for the Substance Use Medicine (SUM) team and client care.

The TNP-MHSU exhibits sound professional judgement and initiative while practicing in accordance with acts, regulations, policies, standards, guidelines, mission and objectives of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) to ensure clients receive timely health assessment and diagnosis, optimum support and continuity of care within the scope of the Nurse Practitioner. The TNP-MHSU collaborates with patients, clients/families, residents, and other health professionals to identify and assess trends and patterns that have implications for health care in communities; develops and implements population and evidence-based strategies to improve health and participates in policy-making activities that influence health services and practice.

SCOPE

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



While the Tłıchq 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. Under the direction of the Minister of Health and Social Services, the NTHSSA is established to move toward one integrated delivery system as part of the government's transformation strategy.

The Territorial Nurse Practitioner -Mental Health and Substance Use (TNP-MHSU) is located in Yellowknife and reports directly to the Territorial Manager Mental Health and Substance Use Nursing. The incumbent works directly with care providers across the Northwest Territories (NWT), including Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Community Health Nurses (CHNs), Community Mental Health Nurses (CMHN), Community Counselling Program (CPP), Community Health Centre Nurse In-Charge (NIC), Mental Health and Substance Use Medicine teams, Community partners, the Senior Indigenous Patient Advocate, and Indigenous Regional Wellness Coordinator to ensure culturally safe anti-racist care as required to provide a broad scope of professional mental health/substance use clinical coordination to individuals of all ages and families at the community level.

The TNP-MHSU provides specialized, autonomous care to individuals experiencing mental health challenges and substance use disorders. The TNP-MHSU plays a crucial role in the comprehensive intake, assessment, treatment, and management of clients needing mental health/substance use services, including detox support, in collaboration with other healthcare professionals.

The incumbent delivers specialized services and coordinated efforts to individuals with mental illness and/or problems, concurrent medical disorders, substance use and suicide ideation/attempts. They ensure all individual clients' mental health/substance use needs are correctly assessed and appropriate interventions, treatment, and follow-up are planned and implemented. This includes prevention, intervention, advocacy, communication between clients, families, and physicians, and educational activities to promote mental wellness and reduce risk factors, stigma and discrimination. The incumbent ensures all related duties and responsibilities are carried out in a confidential, non-judgmental, compassionate manner. This results in a holistic approach to planning, organizing, teaching and relationship development that best meets the needs of the client.

The TNP-MHSU consults and/or refers to the collaborating practice partner, or other family physician, at any point in the assessment of the client, or when planning, implementing or evaluating client care when the client's condition is such that: diagnosis and/or treatment plan is unclear or beyond the scope of the TNP-MHSU to determine; care that is required approaches or reaches the limits of the scope of practice of the TNP-MHSU; it is potentially life-threatening;



or a chronic health problem destabilizes. The degree to which the family physician becomes involved may vary from: providing an opinion and recommendation; an opinion, recommendation, and concurrent intervention; and/or assuming primary responsibility for the care of the client.

Mental Health and Substance Use Services are provided in accordance with the Canadian Standards for Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, the NWT Community Counselling Program Standards, the NWT Mental Health Act, Accreditation Canada Mental Health/Substance Use Standards, and other applicable legislation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The TNP-MHSU provides comprehensive health assessment and services to clients (individuals, families, residents and communities) on a routine and emergency basis (if appropriate) to initiate medical treatment including health care management, therapeutic interventions and prescribed medication.

- Case manage an NWT client caseload of people who have accessed the Community Health Center, or outpatient care for mental health related diagnoses; clients who are returning from regional/territorial or out-of-territory services for psychiatric, substance use, and/or trauma; and ensure that these clients have the appropriate follow-up planned.
- Systematically assess individual health status and mental health status through the collection of an appropriate history, performance of physical and mental assessment, and the ordering and interpretation of diagnostic tests.
- Establish a diagnosis through analysis and synthesis of data from multiple sources, communicate health findings, and establish a plan of care with the client.
- Develop a plan of care based on client need, independently or in consultation with a physician and members of the primary care team and the mental health & substance use team.
- Implement a comprehensive care plan, which may include prescribing and dispensing pharmaceuticals in accordance with established regulations, policies, practices and safety procedures as well as non-pharmacological interventions.
- Provide periodic review and monitoring to assist clients with chronic conditions to manage their health status.
- Safeguard the trust of clients 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.

2. The TNP-MHSU manages the intake process for the Medical Detox Service, ensuring clients are properly assessed, admitted, or referred as appropriate. They collaborate closely with Community Health Nurses (CHNs), Substance Use Nurses, and the Nurse-



in-Charge (NIC) to deliver care that includes both substance use management and mental health support.

- Review and assess Medical Detox Intake Forms received from the Substance Use Nurse.
- Determine eligibility for inpatient medical detox and communicate the outcome to the client and relevant team members.
- Conduct holistic assessments for clients with substance use disorders, including active withdrawal evaluations.
- Collaborate with community health centers, Substance Use Nurses, and the NIC to ensure appropriate follow-up and care for clients.
- Work closely with Stanton Territorial Hospital (STH) and regional medical teams on clients qualifying for inpatient detox,
- Lead the clinical management of clients admitted for medical detox, including collaboration with the Emergency Department (ED) physician and/or hospitalist for admission orders.
- Develop and implement individualized treatment plans for clients with concurrent mental health and substance use disorders.
- Provide direct therapeutic interventions, including the prescribing of medications when necessary.
- Maintain comprehensive patient records using the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system, ensuring that all intake, treatment, and follow-up details are accurately documented.
- Provide leadership in the development of care pathways and processes related to detox and mental health interventions.
- Stay current with best practices in substance use medicine and mental health by engaging in continuing education and professional development.
- Participate in program evaluations, research initiatives, and policy development to improve care services in the region.

3. The TNP-MHSU exercises accountability and a high level of autonomous practice including health promotion, health management, injury and illness prevention, supportive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative care, education, and advocacy.

- Act in a manner consistent with professional responsibilities and standards of practice.
- Demonstrate a high level of autonomy in decision making and accountability related to client health outcomes.
- Advocate for the dignity and self-respect of clients and their families.
- Recognize the cultural diversity of the community and incorporate this into the planning and delivery of services.
- Apply and promote principles of equity and fairness to assist clients in receiving unbiased treatment.
- Incorporate appropriate complementary and traditional therapies considering no contra-indications with what the client may be using or wish to use.



4. The TNP-MHSU provides clinical leadership as an educator, leader, researcher, and advanced clinical practitioner within the Mental Health and Substance Use team.

- Participate in research and special project initiatives that contribute to evidence-based practice. This includes reviewing literature on current clinical practice, recommending changes to clinical practice standards, protocols and procedures based on an assessment of evidence and analysis of resources to implement change.
- Participate in committees and task forces as related to the role of the TNP-MHSU.
- Participate in Grand rounds, nursing rounds and communities of practice.
- Review policies and provide feedback based on best practice.
- Promote the autonomy of clients and help them to express their health needs and values to obtain appropriate information and services.
- Collaborate with physicians, nursing colleagues and other members of the primary care and community care team to advocate for health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of clients and others in the setting.
- Collaborate with other health professionals to identify and assess trends and patterns that have implications for patients, clients, residents, and communities.

5. The TNP-MHSU establishes and maintains consultative relationships with physicians, pharmacists, other health care providers and community agencies and organizations. They provide professional guidance to other health professionals and practices autonomously within the context of an interdisciplinary team, making referrals to specialist physicians and others as appropriate.

- Refer clients to other members of the primary care team and Mental Health & Substance Use team as determined by the client's needs. Delegate client care and/or nursing care to other members of the primary care team, community health center team and Mental Health & Substance Use team.
- Recognize need for crisis intervention and counselling for common, emergent, or urgent psychological conditions and situations by taking necessary action.
- Provide coaching and clinical leadership to peers, students, and other members of the health care team to develop skill levels necessary to achieve the standard of care (i.e. including but not limited to being a preceptor or mentor for nursing staff, students or other members of the primary care team, community health center team and Mental Health & Substance Use team).
- Coordinate health and social services and assist with comprehensive discharge planning back to the community.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The incumbent will be required to work in a clinical office environment where, from time to



time, physical effort may be warranted. There will be physical demands on the incumbent as they will be required to assist in the transferring of clients and perform patient assessment where they may be required to stand in an awkward position such as bending or stooping for extended periods of time.

Environmental Conditions

The incumbent may be exposed to moderate levels of communicable disease (such as TB, whooping cough, etc), needle-stick injuries, hazardous materials and blood and body fluids.

In addition, the incumbent may be required to travel on small planes and on ice winter roads when travelling to or from communities and will be exposed to all weather conditions (ranging from -40°C to +30°C).

Sensory Demands

50% - 75% of the incumbent's day 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 controlled settings (i.e. primary care clinic and community health centers) and on rare occasion uncontrolled settings (i.e. client's home).

Mental Demands

The TNP-MHSU may be exposed to hearing traumatic situations (i.e. sexual abuse, physical and emotional abuse, neglect, multiple losses, family violence, substance use, etc.). The TNP-MHSU may be exposed to death/dying and other emotionally disturbing experiences. The TNP-MHSU 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.

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

There is uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work. There is legitimate concern about being responsible for the lives of clients and their families, risk of assault and unknown and unpredictable situations.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Advanced clinical knowledge and skills to practice autonomously.



- Knowledge of, and an ability to apply, advanced nursing practice skills (assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation) to ensure that all clients' physical, emotional, psycho-social, spiritual, educational, and daily living needs are met.
- Knowledge and application of the DSM-5 (diagnostic criteria for psychiatric disorders).
- Knowledge of evidence-based nursing practices relating to primary care, psychiatry, mental health and substance use.
- Knowledge of psychiatric medications specific to psychotic, anxiety, mood disorders and substance use.
- Knowledge of medications used to manage and treat substance use disorders including pharmacotherapy for alcohol use disorder, management of alcohol withdrawal, and opioid replacement therapy.
- Knowledge of and ability to network with resources within and outside the NTHSSA (i.e. Social Services, Public Health, Medevac teams, Stanton Territorial Hospital, Community Health Centers, Childcare Services, etc.) in order to ensure continuity of care of clients and their families.
- Knowledge of Trauma Informed Practice and Harm Reduction approaches, with ability to provide culturally sensitive care to diverse and marginalized populations.
- Knowledge of or ability to acquire knowledge relating to all applicable GNWT legislation and regulations, standards, policies and guidelines related to advanced nursing practice in order to provide current, relevant and feasible provision of clinical services.
- Ability to educate clients and families (where applicable) on the underlying disease process for mental illness & substance use disorders, treatment options including medications, and other relevant aspects of the client's care plan including appropriate self-care methods and techniques.
- Ability to provide emergency care and treatment, as the position is required to perform advanced nursing functions.
- Ability to operate and use medical equipment (such as but not limited to thermometers, sphygmomanometer, blood glucose monitors, syringes, etc.).
- Ability to work in an electronic environment, including but not limited to Microsoft Outlook, Electronic Medical Records, Medi Patient, HealthNet Viewer and other computer systems as needed.
- Ability to contribute to the satisfaction and goodwill of clients, colleagues and co-workers is essential to the position. The incumbent must have the ability to deal with care givers and health care workers in situations of extreme stress and cope with these situations diplomatically and with empathy.
- Conceptual understanding of the model of integrated community care delivery, and the application of nurse practitioner competencies to multidisciplinary practice settings.
- Ability to modify workload in order to support urgent, short-notice client needs.
- 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 master's degree in nursing, a certificate as a Nurse Practitioner is required and 2 years of mental health nursing experience is preferred.

Post-master's certification as Psychiatric – Mental Health Nurse Practitioner is preferred.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

Financial and institutional support may be available for motivated candidates who are willing to pursue their post-master's certification in Psychiatric – Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Board Certification (PMHNP-BC).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices.

Within the Northwest Territories all nurse practitioners must be registered or eligible to register with CANN.

Must be able to acquire within a reasonable time frame and remain current with the following training and certifications:

- WHMIS
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention
- BCLS
- Suicide Risk Assessment training
- Mental Health First Aid for Northern Peoples
- Training as required to meet Accreditation Canada mental health/substance use standards

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