



## IDENTIFICATION

| Department                                                   | Position Title                                     |                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authorities | Territorial Medical Device Reprocessing Specialist |                                        |
| Position Number                                              | Community                                          | Division/Region                        |
| 48-15554                                                     | Yellowknife                                        | Quality, Risk and Client Experience/HQ |

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Territorial Medical Device Reprocessing Specialist is a subject matter expert on all aspects of medical device reprocessing and is responsible for leading the development, implementation, maintenance and evaluation of medical device reprocessing programs and services, across the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) in accordance with Accreditation Canada Standards, best practices, Federal and Territorial legislation, as well as the policies and procedures of the NTHSSA.

## SCOPE

Reporting to the Territorial Manager, Infection Prevention and Control (Manager), the Territorial Medical Device Reprocessing (MDR) Specialist (Specialist) is located in Yellowknife and is responsible for leading the planning, development, implementation, maintenance, and evaluation of the NTHSSA Medical Devices Reprocessing (MDR) program, including risk identification, prevention, mitigation and in-depth investigation into all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences where MDR processes are involved. The Specialist is also responsible for ensuring organizational compliance with IPAC and MDR Accreditation Standards. The Specialist is required to be at the forefront of science and technology in MDR clinical processes and policy development.

The NTHSSA is the single provider of all health and social services in the Northwest Territories (NWT), with the exception of the Hay River and Tłıch'ı regions, and was established to move toward one integrated delivery system as part of the government's transformation strategy. Health and social services includes the full range of primary, secondary and tertiary health and social services.

While the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA) will operate under a separate board and the Hay River Health and Social Services Agency (HRHSSA) will also operate under a separate board 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.

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) plays an important role in the connectivity between the NTHSSA, the TCSA and the HRHSSA because it establishes the common policy framework and common standards for the entire system. Operational consistency and collaboration across these three authorities is required to provide a quality, integrated Health and Social Services system for the NWT.

The Territorial Specialist, MDR works extremely closely with the MDR Department at Stanton Territorial Hospital (STH). This hospital is a referral centre for the approximately 43,000 residents of the NWT and approximately 6000 residents of the Kitikmeot Region, Nunavut (NU). The majority of operating room procedures are performed in STH, and/or coordinated by STH to be performed in other regional centres.

The STH provides surgical services in Orthopedics, General Surgery, Gynecology, ENT, Ophthalmology, dental, and minor Urology and requires significant support from MDR. Other hospitals/health center sites utilizing MDR services include Beaufort Delta Region, NTHSSA, Fort Smith Region, NTHSSA, and the HRHSSA. MDR is a critical component of safe, quality care for patients and the safety, effectiveness and efficiency of this program directly impacts the OR, Endoscopies, and all surgical procedures. Sterilization processes use multiple machines and are extremely complex, requiring step by step processes to be implemented with no variation in practice.

The Specialist works within a legislative and policy framework that includes the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*, *Medical Profession Act*, *Nursing Profession Act*, *Guardianship Act*, *Public Health Act*, *Coroners Act*, *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPPA)*, *Health Information Act (HIA)*, RNANT/NU Bylaws, NTHSSA Medical and Professional Staff Bylaws, *Mental Health Act*, *Child and Family Services Act*, as well as GNWT, DHSS and NTHSSA policies and procedures. The Specialist must have an in-depth knowledge of the Communicable Disease Policy and national legislation and standards for IPAC and MOR.

The Quality, Risk and Client Experience Division promotes and supports safe, quality patient/client centered care and services through leading in-depth investigations into patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences involving IPAC processes while providing subject matter expertise and education, minimizing risk and facilitating the implementation of best practices and system knowledge.

As the complexity of health care continues to progress, the rate of Health care-Associated Infections (HAIs) also has increased. Mitigating the transmission of HAIs is a corner stone of an IPAC program. An effective MDR program not only decreases the rate HAIs, but also

improves patient care outcomes, decreases the length of hospital stay, lessens antimicrobial resistance, and lowers financial burdens associated with HAIs (Infection Prevention and Control Canada, 2016, p. 16). The care delivery model for health care continues to change and evolve. The NTHSSA, HRHSSA and TCSA, continually endeavor to improve the IPAC and MDR practices in all health care settings, while fostering increased public awareness about best practices to prevent the transmission of infections in all health care facilities and the community.

The Specialist works closely with the Territorial Manager of IPAC, the IPAC Coordinators, the Territorial IPAC Specialist, the Chief Operating Officers (COOs) of all NTHSSA, TCSA, HRHSSA and Nunavut Regions, Regional Managers, all Territorial Managers and other stakeholders. The Specialist will be called upon daily by the Manager, COO, Senior Executive, Medical, Territorial and Regional Leadership to provide advice, assistance, support and recommendations on all patient safety incidents, critical incidents, unusual occurrences, and various quality issues, concerns, and situations that involve MDR and often arise unexpectedly.

The Specialist provides leadership in MDR investigations, legal reviews, coroner's investigations, potential litigation incidents and all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences related to MDR, which can require immediate and accurate attention. Many of the issues that arise from these investigations are unique, complex, very personal and of a highly confidential nature, and generally relate to patients/clients, staff, physicians and/or the business operations of the organization. Consequently, the nature of these investigations will require the incumbent to develop therapeutic, client centered relationships with individuals who have experienced traumatic events as a result of system errors. Given the nature of these investigations some patients, clients and/or staff may become abusive.

The Specialist is responsible for working collaboratively with all stakeholders throughout the NTHSSA, TCSA, HRHSSA and DHSS to ensure the MDR programs operated by NTHSSA practice safe and appropriate sterilization processes for all medical devices and equipment used in patient medical care. The incumbent is also required to maintain bench hours in order to ensure competency and maintain their knowledge and skill set.

The Specialist ensures that client/patient needs for MDR are being supported and addressed, identifies and addresses MDR program challenges and recommends opportunities for improvement. The Specialist establishes program objectives for all regions, and contributes to the evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the MDR program delivery in the region. The Specialist leads the development of standardized procedures across the NWT through the participation on cross-territory initiatives and projects.

The Specialist is required to actively promote a high quality, friendly, respectful workplace that is safe, healthy, supportive and client-centered. The Specialist fosters respectful, compassionate, culturally appropriate care that is responsive to the needs, values, beliefs and preferences of the clients and their family, supporting mutually beneficial partnerships between clients, families and health care providers.

The Specialist has a significant amount of latitude provided that the policies, guidelines and interests of the GNWT are complied with. This latitude is tempered by the knowledge that incorrect decision-making is likely to result in harm to the reputation of the NTHSSA, diminished public confidence in the health and social services system and could ultimately result in harm to future patients entering the health and social services system. A variety of duties are assigned to the Specialist and the incumbent must effectively assess and prioritize incident investigations and other projects in order to achieve a successful outcome.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Provides subject matter expertise and consultation throughout the NTHSSA and HRHSSA on medical device reprocessing and incident investigations related to MDR.**

- Provides advice, recommendations and subject matter expertise on all patient complaint and concerns regarding MDR, investigations into all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences related to MDR, the interpretation of legislation and regulations, the development of policies and procedures and the implementation of best practices at the regional and territorial level.
- Leads and participates in a variety of planning and decision-making meetings and activities throughout the NWT, ensuring that all processes and procedures consider infection prevention and control strategies and medical device reprocessing standards (where applicable) and align with the Accreditation Canada standards.
- Is expected to maintain current knowledge and skills in MDR through working bench hours in each MDR department throughout the Territory on an annual basis.
- Conducts front-line investigations and inspections to identify, plan and mitigate potential MDR related risks to the organization.
- Identifies areas for improvement in MDR, and provide insights and recommendations to NTHSSA, TCSA, HRHSSA and the DHSS.
- Develops, tracks and evaluates MDR performance indicators based on best practice guidelines, standards process reviews, and policy changes to analyze and identify territorial, regional and program specific quality trends.

### **2. Leads, investigates, coordinates and evaluates all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences related to MDR throughout the NTHSSA, in collaboration with the Manager, C00's, Territorial Managers, Regional Managers and other stakeholders.**

- Proactively leads the intake and investigation of all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences involving MDR. This includes an initial discussion and disclosure of the incident to the patient, client or family. The incumbent is usually the first point of contact for patients experiencing grief or trauma as a result of system errors and offers the apology, under the *Apology Act*, to the patient, client or family.
- Throughout these investigations, the Specialist is required to maintain a therapeutic relationship with the patient, client or family and provide them with frequent updates, referrals, advice and be their advocate throughout the process.
- The Specialist is responsible to ensure a thorough analysis of all details surrounding all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences involving MDR is completed including conducting interviews with staff, practitioners, patients, clients

and families, as well as other stakeholders as deemed necessary to ensure due diligence (RCMP, Legal Advisors, GNWT Risk Management, Chief Public Health Officer, etc.).

- Works with the Regional COO's and IPAC Coordinators to evaluate RL6 incident reports related to MDR and implement proactive risk mitigation plans,
- Ensures the chain of evidence and continuity of incident investigations are maintained.
- The Specialist is responsible for ensuring a qualitative report is completed for all patient safety incidents, critical incidents and unusual occurrences involving MDR, that the results are professionally and sensitively provided to the patient, client or family and that all recommendations are acted upon.
- The Specialist is responsible for providing the patient, client or family with the final apology and disclosure at a final disclosure meeting that includes the appropriate program or service representative. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring that the communication at this meeting is professional, respectful and that the family is provided with the support, resources and referrals necessary.
- Facilitates, supports, tracks and trends regional systems review processes and investigations in response to critical incidents, adverse events and complaints involving MDR, including the development of reports and recommendations on necessary quality improvements.
- Assists in the preparation and submission of all potential lawsuits and insurance claims for the Insurer and Legal Counsel, in a proactive, timely and concise fashion.

**3. Ensures the effective and safe implementation of MDR processes in NTHSSA and HRHSSA departments.**

- Conducts regular regional site visits to monitor the quality of MDR processes.
- Provides feedback, monitors, supports, coaches and provides education to MDR staff.
- Supports MDR Departments/Supervisors in the development of sterilization processes that meet the volume/demand requirements of Nursing Units, including but not limited to the Operating Room.
- Supports/monitors sterilization processes used by other health system departments that utilize and sterilize their own medical devices (i.e. Diagnostic Imaging, Northern Options for Women, etc.).
- Reports and investigates incidents which may or have compromised patient or staff safety to NTHSSA leadership and assists with identifying interventions to prevent further incidents.
- Ensures a smooth transition of MDR to the new Stanton Hospital.
- Ensures that staff is appropriately prepared for the delivery of care within their program areas in the new Stanton Hospital.

**4. Provides clinical consultation, support and education to MDR programs in the NTHSSA.**

- Provides clinical support and education to NTHSSA and HRHSSA MDR departments and staff clinical on processes, including education on MDR best practices, relevant standards and procedures, troubleshooting and addressing sterilization issues, and providing assistance in formulating appropriate long term clinical solutions.

- Completes reprocessing work in each facility.
- Provides orientation and mentorship to new interns/staff in collaboration with site supervisors.
- Provides recommendations on territorial procedures/policies for review and approval by NTHSSA/HRHSSA.
- Collaborates with the Senior Manager, Nursing, the Manager and other Territorial Managers to identify current and future clinical delivery requirements in MDR services through consistent territory-wide program development.
- Develops a work plan in conjunction with Regional MDR sites to ensure appropriate quality assurance processes are implemented across the NTHSSA and HRHSSA.
- Provides consultation and support on sterilization processes to the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut.

**5. Supports the NTHSSA Accreditation process for MOR.**

- Implements program and policy updates, standardizes policies, procedures, metrics and program services to align with the Accreditation Canada Standards of Excellence.
- Ensures MDR team members receive an orientation and education on Accreditation Canada's Program and the Accreditation Process.
- Implements action plans, based on results of any work required to align with program standards, and recommendation from onsite Accreditation Canada Surveys.
- Works collaboratively with others to improve the quality of the organizational culture.
- Engages MDR staff in quality improvement/work planning to support client, patient, family quality outcomes.

**6. Develops and facilitates the implementation of standardized clinical policies, procedures, and processes for MOR Departments.**

- Oversees and updates standards and procedures, revises and implement policies and procedures, including but not limited to new sterilization processes and systems, ensuring that policies, procedures and processes meet Accreditation and/or other certification requirements, including manufacturer's specifications.
- Researches best practices in MDR in other jurisdictions, and identifies best practices that should be reviewed and adopted by NTHSSA and HRHSSA.
- Must maintain current knowledge of emerging best practices in MDR and proactively position the NTHSSA MDR program to implement current best practices.
- Leads the development of NTHSSA and HRHSSA standards and/or procedures, and provides a recommendation for adoption/approval.
- Liaises with the Manager, Nursing Departments, Administration, and Practitioners as required to provide information and education on sterilization procedures adopted by MDR and the rationale for these procedures.
- Creates and maintains a standardized MDR manual that integrates diagrammatic/pictorial and didactic information to provide clear and concise direction to staff on sterilization procedures and appropriate and safe equipment disassembly and reassembly.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

There is significant physical effort required in the cleaning process and there is the potential to sustain serious injuries while cleaning equipment that is bio-hazardous and has sharp edges.

Great care must be taken by the incumbent to avoid repetitive injuries due to working with heavy equipment in the sterilization process.

### **Environmental Conditions**

Incumbent will work in an environment within a hospital, with significant risk for exposure to infectious disease. The incumbent will travel at least once per month for a week to various northern communities in the NWT and Nunavut.

### **Sensory Demands**

The sensory attention required varies in intensity, duration and frequency and depends on the workload of the Specialist. The nature of distraction in the environment that may affect the Specialist during the work process may include:

- Reading, observing/monitoring, focused listening
- smelling, touching, attending to the nuances of sound
- Auditing, inspecting, tabulating data, proofreading

Bi-weekly the incumbent is required to develop therapeutic client centered relationships with impacted and traumatized individuals, while actively listening, communicating with and observing patients, clients and families for cues to determine their mental and emotional status and intervene as necessary.

### **Mental Demands**

The incumbent is under significant time pressure to complete appropriate sterilization of multiple medical devices in time for the completion of surgical procedures and in response to health system demands. In its clinical role, the incumbent must balance their ability to support MDR departments with the requirement that they hold these departments accountable to appropriate clinical standards.

On a bi-weekly basis the incumbent will be exposed to emotionally upsetting experiences while conducting investigations and providing advocacy, support, and resources to patients, clients, families, staff, lawyers and other stakeholders. On a bi-weekly basis the incumbent will be faced with potentially traumatic information as a result of the details revealed through the incident investigation process. The therapeutic relationship is initiated when the Specialist discloses to the patient, client or family that trauma has occurred and offers an apology on behalf of the system. This relationship is then fostered by the Specialist throughout the investigation, which can take many months to complete. Given the nature of

the loss or trauma being revealed to the patient, client or family, some patients/clients may become abusive.

Daily, the incumbent will be exposed to numerous interruptions, unknown factors, uncontrolled work flow and competing demands as a result of an incident occurrence. Weekly the incumbent may be required to adjust their work hours into the evening and weekends to complete incident investigations or MDR inspections.

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

- Knowledge of professional components of MDR and IPAC.
- Ability to understand the geographical and cultural needs of the regions and to apply sensitivity to how community and culture impact on the delivery of health care.
- Communication skills, written and verbal, necessary to build positive relationships with clients, their families, and other members of the health care team.
- Ability to acquire and apply knowledge of health and social services legislation in the NWT, including the *Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act*, *Public Health Act*, *Coroners' act*, *Safety Act and Regulations*, *WSCC Act and regulations*, *Access To Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPP)*, *health Information Act (HIA)* in order to assess, plan, implement and evaluate occupational health and Safety and infection control practices.
- Analytical and problem solving skills to investigate and initiate corrective action to problems/issues encountered during MDR processing.
- Knowledge of legal aspects of health and social services programs including release of information, rules of confidentiality, legalities in medical chart documentation, consent law and other medico-legal healthcare areas.
- Organizational, time management, analytical, facilitation and presentation skills to manage multi-disciplinary responsibilities.
- Ability to respond sensitively and appropriately to client concerns.
- Inter-group skills to effectively lead and facilitate internal, external, individual or multidisciplinary division team or group.
- Ability to motivate and guide others to promote excellence in nursing practice.
- Ability to be resourceful and innovative in obtaining resources/information on demand to promote lifelong learning in others.
- Ability to utilize research findings to guide nursing practice.
- Ability to identify education needs of staff and assist with providing the appropriate training.

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

Completion of a diploma in Medical Device Reprocessing and a minimum of five (5) years' recent experience in MDR required.

Other combinations of experience, knowledge and skills will be assessed on an individual basis.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

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

Assets would be:

- Leadership and/or Management Certification
- Advanced certifications in IPAC and MDR

### **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