

IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-17500	Yellowknife	Territorial Operations/ Clinical Integration/ Mental Health and Community Wellness

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist is responsible to provide comprehensive care, assessment and case management services for individuals who are experiencing substance use disorders across the Northwest Territories.

The Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist ensures that clients experiencing substance use disorders are appropriately assessed and provided with wrap around support through the development of care plans, connections to treatment, and referral to programs and services intended to maximize their independence.

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 Tẖcẖo 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 include 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 Tẖcẖo 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.

Located in Yellowknife, the Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist reports Territorial Manager Mental Health and Substance Use. The incumbent provides territorial support, including case management to clients across NTHSSA Regions and provides expert advice to the multidisciplinary team which includes community health and acute care providers.

The incumbent ensures individual client's needs are correctly assessed and appropriate interventions are planned. The incumbent provides direct nursing care to clients and acts as a patient advocate, facilitating communication between patient, families, the physician, specialists and other health care professionals. This will result in a holistic approach to planning, organizing, teaching and relationship development that will best meet the needs of the client. The incumbent 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.

Often clients within the program are experiencing complex social needs including incarceration, addiction, homelessness, systemic trauma, chronic illness, and limited social supports.

The Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist acts as a mentor and leader within the health services team. They will provide oversight and support to nursing students and expert advice to other members of the health care team as an advocate for clients experiencing substance use disorders and encourage professional growth of self and others.

The position is required to liaise with community health organizations such as Public Health, Community Health Centre's, Acute Care Centre's including the Emergency Department and Medical Units and specialized clinics to ensure that optimal client outcomes are achieved, and clients experience a smooth transition through the health care system.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Provide specialized direct nursing care to clients who are experiencing a substance use disorder using a collaborative approach, in order to: protect, prevent and improve client outcomes; promote a healthy lifestyle and wellness; and decrease suffering.**
 - Provide care to high-risk clients who may present with complex medical, social and substance use issues (chronic pain, trauma, homelessness, poverty, Child and Family Services, Corrections, mental health, etc.).



- Safeguard the trust of clients by adhering to the Health Information Act and ensuring that information is shared outside the health care team only with the client's expressed permission, or as legally required.
- Complete initial intake for potential clients to evaluate client suitability, and offer appropriate resources and follow up for clients not meeting program criteria.
- Maintain a comprehensive patient record using the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system, ensuring that all intake, treatment, and follow-up details are accurately documented.
- Complete a comprehensive psycho-social assessment and preliminary medical assessment for all new and returning clients.
- Ensure appropriate laboratory studies are performed and reviewed, including urine drug screening, applicable serology, pregnancy testing, and cardiac studies.
- Complete patient screening and laboratory studies in accordance with established processes and procedures for specimen collection, labelling, and patient documentation practices.
- Complete a thorough chart review in and initial assessment of clients referred from Correction Services and provide a detailed written clinical impression to the Corrections physician.
- Complete initial and ongoing safety planning for all clients including harm reduction, withdrawal management planning, overdose prevention education, and needle exchange information.
- Proactively monitor and coordinate routine screening and preventative health care needs in person or via EMR.
- Identify and address immediate, short-term, and long-term goals that target the client's multiple needs and match services aimed at facilitating a client's recovery.
- Discuss interventions with the client to prioritize client - directed goals and outcomes.
- Propose a plan of self-care that empowers client responsibility, autonomy, and independence throughout the recovery process.
- Collaborate with primary care providers to support direct admissions to acute care for planned medical detoxification.
- Complete crisis and risk assessments in consultation with client, supervisor and/or other community members or agencies.
- Implements a plan of care to mitigate risk to the client.
- Advocates for the dignity and self-respect of all clients.
- Safeguards the trust of clients that information learned in the context of a professional relationship is shared outside the health care team only with the client's permission or as legally required.
- Applies and promotes the principles of equity and fairness to assist clients in receiving unbiased treatment and a share of health services and resources proportionate to their needs.
- Utilizes well-developed communication and problem solving to assist clients to achieve optimum spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health and well-being.



2. Provide comprehensive clinical case management for substance use clients, allowing clients the opportunity to maximize independence and overall wellness.

- Coordinate client care during the induction phase of opioid agonist treatment (OAT) under the guidance of a prescriber, including assessing withdrawal, treatment efficacy, and adverse effects, and consulting with the prescriber when dose increases are indicated.
- Administers medications specific to the program and encourages clients to be compliant with their medications.
- Provide on-going case management support to assess progress and monitor goals and treatment plan outcomes as needed.
- Coordinate weekly clinical rounds for the substance use clinical team, which includes providing updated client assessments, and care plan updates in clients electronic medical records.
- Coordinate follow up for individuals released from Correction Services to ensure continuity of their substance use disorder treatment plan, i.e. OAT follow up appointments with ORP members or health professionals in their communities, ensuring they have access to Take Home Naloxone, etc.
- Takes the lead in the coordination of program appointment booking with practitioners, community health nurse and/or counsellors involved in the substance use program clinical team.
- Coordinate and participate in formal and informal case conferences to share appropriate information concerning individual concerns or progress and to utilize the team's skills and resources in the most efficient and effective manner.
- Make frequent decisions about the most appropriate, effective and efficient mode of communication among interdisciplinary team members in accordance with identified policies and procedures.
- Coordinate Telehealth and virtual care appointments, ensuring clients have access to required technology where applicable.
- Develop, monitor and assess personalized care plans in collaboration with the client and other relevant agencies.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders to ensure appropriate care and support for the client.
- Prepare and support client in the completion of residential treatment applications. Takes the lead to ensure case management during out of territory (OOT) treatment and appropriate after-care is arranged.
- Coordinate care for clients who are transferring into or out of the Territory, or moving between communities within the Territory, to prevent disruptions in treatment and ensure continuity of care.
- Coordinate care for clients of the program temporarily travelling within or outside of the NWT, including arranging for prescription transfers, coordinating communication between pharmacies, and organizing Telehealth or virtual care follow ups as needed.



- Provide routine monitoring of clients receiving OAT in communities without a consistent OAT provider and proactively assist as required to prevent treatment disruptions.
- Liaise with Health Administration to urgently expedite all applications for NWT Health Care Cards for clients requiring Extended Health Benefits to ensure rapid access to medication coverage.

3. Plan, facilitate and implement health programs and system education designed to promote client health and wellness and to improve client and system knowledge of substance use harms and treatment. Assess system needs within NTHSSA Regions, TCSA and HRHSSA and make recommendations on system gaps and quality improvements.

- Collect and document demographic and statistical information according to program indicators.
- Develop, review, revise and evaluate on an ongoing basis educational resource necessary to support clients.
- Facilitate, implement and modify health promotion education programs based on the learning needs of the clients.
- Apply and promote principles of equity and fairness to assist clients in receiving unbiased treatment.
- Participate in program development for program education and teaching.
- Use a holistic approach, honouring Indigenous knowledge, wisdom and diversity, to promote client centered learning to individuals to promote wellness, decrease suffering and prevent injury (e.g. self-care, health promotion, etc.).
- Participate in regional and territorial level environment scan and analysis to determine baseline data pertaining to programming, resource allocation.
- Complete Health Center audits to understand patient population size, health indicators, performance indicators and relevant substance indicators.
- Complete community needs assessments to understand service gaps and resource allocation, with a focus on community pharmacy capacity, health center capacity and the other community-based addiction support services.
- Conduct Barrier analysis of incarcerated individuals through the development and implementation of shared care pathways.

4. Advocate for practice and work environments that have the organization and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent and ethical nursing care.

- Provide mentoring and leadership to peers, students and other members of the health teams to develop skill levels necessary to achieve the highest standard of care.
- Collaborate with nurses, peers and other members of the health teams to advocate health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and wellness of clients and staff.
- Collect and report ongoing data which contributes to program efficiency.



- Advocate for health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of clients and others.
- Participates in committees, task forces, research projects as related to the program.

5. Provides services that are continuous in all phases of mental health and/or alcohol and drug services care and support by:

- Participating in facility discharge planning as required for the purpose of compiling joint assessments and planning care/treatment for inpatient and community clients.
- Assisting other care providers on the multidisciplinary/interagency team by providing input and feedback; Attending at various sites in the community.
- Developing community support components to care/treatment plans that maximize the client's inclusion in the life of the community in collaboration with client, family, contracted support services, community agencies, and other sources of support for the client.

6. Performs other related duties as required.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The incumbent will be required to provide outreach service to a variety of sites, including the correctional health and acute care centres. Due to the type of work, there may be threats of physical confrontation with those who are high risk, may be under the influence of substances or experiencing a mental health crisis. Potential exposure to hostile and unpredictable behaviour poses a safety risk daily.

Environmental Conditions

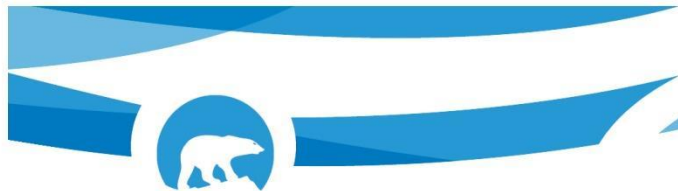
The incumbent spends 75% of their day providing service in a health clinic setting. Other times, service is provided to a variety of settings including acute care including the emergency department and correctional centre.

There may be some exposure to communicable diseases due to the direct provision of service to individuals.

Sensory Demands

Time will be spent providing direct patient care where the incumbent will be required to use combined sense of touch, sight, smell and hearing during assessment and provision of care. The combined use of senses is critical to all assessments.

The Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist must be constantly aware of patient's physical and emotional needs when making an assessment given the nature of providing service to clients with such a variety of complex needs.



Mental Demands

The Territorial Substance Use Nurse Specialist may be called upon to respond to crisis at any time, often without foreknowledge of the type of situation they may be walking into.

The incumbent may work with clients who may be experiencing a mental health crisis or have a history of psychiatric illness, concurrent addictions, and a propensity for violence. Some individuals may pose a real and significant threat and danger to personal safety. The incumbent may be exposed to unpredictable situations (i.e. Patient or family members under the influence of alcohol and/or noncompliant with medication thus rendering them unstable and potentially dangerous) or crisis situations requiring immediate attention and intervention. There may also be exposure to clients in public places after hours.

The incumbent may be required to travel to remote northern communities occasionally.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of physical, psychological, and social effects of opioid and alcohol use disorders, other substances, and concurrent disorders.
- Knowledge and practical experience utilizing best-practices in case management and addictions recovery.
- Knowledge and practical experience in systems integration, determinants of health, and the socio-economic drivers of wellness.
- Knowledge of and ability to apply sanctioned transferrable medical functions as outlined in applicable standards, policies, and guidelines.
- Knowledge of Trauma Informed Practice and Harm Reduction approaches, with ability to provide culturally sensitive care to diverse and marginalized populations.
- Knowledge of relevant GNWT statutes, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Understanding of diversity, specifically Indigenous cultures and values.
- Interpersonal, mediation and negotiation skills in order to appropriately interact with clientele, partners and public.
- Oral, written and electronic communication skills; as well as the ability to adapt communication styles to accommodate different needs with tact and diplomacy.
- Adaptability and initiative is essential.
- Ability to interpret changing information and guidelines and provide up to date evidence-based information to colleagues and clients.
- Ability to work independently on complex matters, and lead and work effectively in teams.
- Ability to work effectively with a variety of people, frequently under stressful or time limited conditions.
- Ability to build and sustain effective working relationships and work collaboratively with stakeholders, departments, Aboriginal governments and non-government organizations.
- 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:

The successful completion of a Nursing or Psychiatric Nursing Degree and a minimum of three (3) years' experience working in the field of mental health and/or addictions.

Must be eligible for College and Association of Nurses (CANN) Registration as a Registered Nurse or Registered Psychiatric Nurse.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

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