



Hay River Health & Social Services Authority | Administration des services de santé et des services sociaux de Hay River  
37911 MacKenzie Highway | 37911, route MacKenzie  
Hay River, NT X0E 0R6

## Job Description

### IDENTIFICATION

<i>Position Number</i>	<i>Position Title</i>	
<b>U-02-39, U-03-39, U-05-39, U-08-39, CA-1380</b>	<b>Public Health Nurse</b>	
<i>Department</i>	<i>Position Reports To</i>	<i>Site</i>
<b>Community Health</b>	<b>Community Health Supervisor</b>	<b>H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital</b>

### PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

To provide holistic, community health services that prevent and reduce the incidence of communicable disease, protect the health status of clients within the community, promote community wellness, and ensure comprehensive public health services are provided using the principles of Primary Health Care. Functions within the parameters of established health authority, regional, territorial, and professional nursing standards and policies.

### SCOPE

This position may be located at one of the Hay River Health & Social Services Authority (HRHSSA) locations. They include the Hay River Regional Health Center (HRRHC), the Gensen Building, Woodland Manor, Supportive Living Services and/or H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital (HHWMH). The HRHSSA is an accredited, integrated health authority that provides the following services: 19 acute inpatient beds (14 Community Support Beds, 1 Family Suite (Palliative), 2 Secure Rooms, 2 Observation beds), Emergency and Ambulatory Care, including dialysis and endoscopy; Midwifery Care and Delivery; 25 Long Term Care beds; Supportive Living Campus, a Territorial campus providing 11 permanent residences; Diagnostic Services (Diagnostic Imaging,

Ultrasound, Mammography); Laboratory; Medical and Specialty Clinics including Diabetes programming; Social Programs (Community Counselling, Healthy Families and Child and Family Services) Community Health and Home Care, Rehabilitation which include Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Speech Language Pathology; and a full range of Support Services.

Located in the Hay River Community Health Services office, this position is accountable to the Community Health Supervisor. There are 3.5 full-time equivalent public health nurses that work within the various programs. The incumbent in conjunction with other community health nurses develops, coordinates and provides services with programs such as: Communicable Diseases, Maternal Child Health, School Health, Chronic Disorders, Sexual Health, Adult Health and Occupational Health. This position has a direct impact on the health of the community through prevention, screening, follow up, and treatment of persons with various communicable diseases. Furthermore, by implementing various health promotion and injury prevention activities the health of the community is directly affected.

The incumbent makes decisions regularly outside of any set guidelines and is required to use own judgment. Works as part of a multi-disciplinary team in partnership with other health authorities, departments, schools, business sector, aboriginal groups, non-governmental agencies, the GNWT Department of Health & Social Services, other governmental departments, and community agencies.

Clients include individuals, families, groups, and agencies from the community of Hay River, Hay River Dene Reserve and Enterprise: population approximately 5,000. As well, when deliveries are performed in the community, initial postpartum care is provided to residents in Fort Resolution, Fort Smith and Fort Providence. In a typical month this nurse will see approximately 108 clients and give 59 immunizations. As well, this nurse will hold at least 3 group presentations per month. On average there are 60 babies born a year to parents from Hay River and the Hay River Dene Reserve.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1. Provide community health nursing services to clients in accordance with territorial health Authority, and professional nursing standards to assist clients in the protection, restoration and promotion of health, and to prevent and reduce the incidence of disease, disability and death. Services are provided to a diverse population, including neonates, children, adolescents and adults.**

### **Main Activities:**

Participates in specialized community health programs and activities including but not limited to:

- Communicable disease control (identification, referral, monitoring, treatment, and follow-up, including reporting to appropriate agencies)
- Maternal-child care (home visits, prenatal classes and postnatal support)
- Scheduled immunization clinics (Well-Child/Adult/International Travel)
- School health programs (hearing, vision & speech assessments and referrals, teaching, immunizations, special needs, sexual health program (HIV testing, STI contact tracing, needle exchange)

- STI screening, treatment and follow-up and promotes healthy sexual practices and develops positive relationships through effective communication.
- Chronic disease, mental health and special needs clients (monitors & supports)
- Outreach activities such as health promotion sessions, flu clinics, committee work (including both community and territorial committees)
- Participates in the community to develop healthy public policies and create supportive environments for clients eg. supporting no-smoking bylaw
- Occupational health program
- Applies the nursing process (assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation) when providing direct client care, developing programs, and implementing health promotion/disease prevention strategies
- Analyzes, designs, coordinates, and evaluates community health programs on an ongoing basis in response to community needs and issues
- Determines that resources and methods are used effectively, appropriately, and recognizes and respects individual, social and cultural differences
- Organizes, coordinates, and facilitates health related workshops and education seminars/classes within the community in response to identified needs i.e. prenatal and post-natal classes, outreach health promotion activities, STI in-services
- Organizes, co-ordinates and facilitates health related workshops and education seminars/classes for health care providers from Hay River and other NWT communities
- Advocates for clients to promote development of resources and equitable access to health and related services
- Maintains confidentiality of all work and client related information
- Performs sanctioned medical transfer functions as required, which may include, venipuncture, dispensing medications, travel immunizations, provide STI and TB assessment including lab and x-ray, contact tracing, treatment and follow-up according to local policies and standards and guidelines according to the administrative manual. The dispensing of medication in accordance with established regulations, policies, practices and safety regulations
- Consults and seeks clarifications from colleagues, and other appropriate care providers when identifying abnormal findings during client assessments, and when indicated, appropriate referrals and/or follow-up are done.
- Develops, obtains, and distributes health promotion print and video materials which target specific topics and/or groups with special needs.

**2. Collaborates with other government agencies, health authority departments, community agencies and community resources in order to establish partnerships, encourage input, action, and ownership within the community for resolution of health issues, and promote healthy behaviors in the community.**

**Main Activities:**

- Enables and empowers people to take responsibility for their own health with the ultimate goal of building healthy communities
- Acts as a resource to colleagues, school staff, community agencies, groups or individuals
- Collaborates and communicates with schools, day-cares, boarding homes, work

sites, community businesses and other community agencies to promote safe, health work environments and provides immunizations as needed to clients and staff

- Collaborates and communicates with the regional and chief Medical Health Officers, Environmental Health Officers and others to address concerns of a public nature and ensures adherence to the Public Health Act
- Participates in interagency meetings to plan, implement and evaluate joint health related projects in order to meet the overall objectives as determined by the Hay River Health & Social Services
- Participates in individual/family case conferences with nursing, medical and other pertinent care providers and community agencies

**3. Performs administrative functions within the community health unit, which contribute to the effective functioning of the unit and enhances program development and delivery and continuity of care.**

**Main Activities:**

- Participates in the orientation, support, and guidance of new health authority employees
- Informs Community Health Supervisor of any defective equipment or vehicle problems to maintain a safe working environment
- Prepares reports, processes correspondence, requisitions, processes and receives supplies, equipment and pharmaceuticals/biological agents
- Attends and actively participates in staff meetings to exchange information and assist in ongoing program planning, implementation and evaluation
- Participates in quality assurance activities (Community Care CQI team meetings, chart audits, accreditation, client satisfaction surveys)
- Organizes preceptor experiences and/or supervises clinical experiences of nursing students from both local and southern post-secondary institutions
- Performs computerized data entry on client information system.
- Delegates work assignments to appropriate staff or auxiliary personnel including volunteers.
- Assumes Acting Supervisor functions upon request
- Prepares, submits, implements and evaluates proposals for additional programs and funds

**4. Documents care by providing a written plan of care to aid communication and to meet legal requirements.**

**Main Activities:**

- Obtains a client consent
- Maintains a chart for each client, including progress records for every client
- Records each client encounter and documents any observations, recommendations and appropriate follow up
- Records daily statistics in order to provide statistical data for the department and GNWT
- Maintains client and administrative records in a concise, accurate and confidential manner within professional and legal guidelines

**5. Maintains a thorough working knowledge of current primary health and public health nursing practices and skills, to maintain a high standard of care to clients that meet the standards of Nursing Practice as determined by the GNWT and the Professional licensing body.**

**Main Activities:**

- Attends in-services, conducts self-directed studies, pursues professional development activities and reviews current literature
- Attends and participates in staff and committee meetings to share knowledge and problem solve issues
- Obtains and maintains certifications for required specialized competencies to ensure accountability to clients and employer
- Maintains a working knowledge of equipment, supplies and materials necessary to perform nursing functions in order to deliver safe and quality care as determined by established RNANT/NU nursing standards
- Participates in the development of organizational protocols and clinical guidelines

**POSITION ROLE IN CLIENT & STAFF SAFETY:**

The HRHSSA is committed to creating a culture of safety throughout the organization. A culture of safety is necessary to provide optimal care to our clients, and a healthy workplace for staff. An organization with a culture of safety is characterized by several elements:

- Client-centered care;
- Healthy workplace;
- Open communication; and a
- Blame-free and accountable environment.

All staff throughout the organization shares the responsibility for client and staff safety by:

- Demonstrating a commitment to safety;
- Complying with safety policies, procedures and best practices;
- Identifying and reporting safety issues; and
- Participating in safety initiatives.

**Commitment to Client Centered Care**

Recognizing that our clients are the experts for their own lives, the Hay River Health & Social Services Authority (HRHSSA) is committed to support our clients as leaders to accomplish the goals that they have set out for us in their personal care. The (HRHSSA) will endeavor to provide client centered care through the following:

- Involving clients in their care by reducing barriers that may inhibit our ability to help them.
- Providing a culture that will ensure clients have a voice and participate in their own personal care.
- Empowering clients through improving client satisfaction, enhancing the quality of care and ultimately the quality of life for our clients.
- Focusing on the experience of the client from their perspective and listening to

their needs.

- Fostering collaboration between the client and organization by working together to achieve our goals.
- Providing continuous dialogue with the clients to ensure that each and every client is seen as a unique individual.
- Ensuring staff are provided with the training and tools required to complete the best job possible.

### **Criminal Record Check**

Employment with the Hay River Health & Social Services Authority is contingent on providing a satisfactory criminal record check including the vulnerable sector check to the Human Resources Office prior to the official start date of a position.

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

Knowledge of current nursing theory, public health practices and regulations such as: Public Health Act; Canadian Guidelines for the Prevention, Diagnosis, Management and Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Infections in Neonates, Children, Adolescents and Adults; Infectious Disease Manual: Outbreak Control; Tuberculosis Protocol for the Northwest Territories; Tuberculosis Surveillance Protocol; Community Health Nursing Program Standards and Protocols of the N.W.T.; Canadian Immunization Standards; N.W.T. Immunization Schedule Vaccination Requirements and Health Advice published by the World Health Organization; HIV Infection and AIDS: Information for Health Professionals of the N.W.T.; Protocol on Community Occupational Health trends in health promotion/disease prevention, communicable disease, growth and development, perinatal issues, practice and programs in order to provide safe nursing care to clients.

Ability to perform basic and advanced nursing skills as well as a willingness to learn specific sanctioned/transferred functions, such as but not limited to venipuncture, immunizations, and dispensing medications within approved health Authority policy and outlined in the Community Health Nursing Program Standards and Protocols

Ability to teach and communicate effectively with clients and colleagues taking into consideration different ages, cultures, learning styles and literacy levels. The nurse will respond to the client needs and work with the multi-disciplinary team to serve the clients best interests.

Ability to be self-directed, meeting deadlines, prioritizing own workload, and manage various projects and requests simultaneously.

Computer literacy skills, including a working knowledge of word processing and spreadsheet skills is required. Familiarity with e-mail and the internet is desired.

These skills, abilities and knowledge are commonly acquired through a Bachelors Degree in Nursing, plus 2 years of nursing practice in a community health setting or related environment. Active registration with the Northwest Territories Registered Nursing Association and basic CPR with annual certification is mandatory to fulfill legal requirements of the Nursing Profession Act and to maintain skill levels. Must possess a

current Class 5 driver's license in order to provide home visits to clients.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

There are many physical demands required by the incumbent such as; daily carrying heavy, bulky supplies and containers when traveling (scales, sharps containers, immunization equipment, documents) and frequent moving heavy tables, chairs and other equipment and supplies when teaching classes or presenting in-services. **90%**

Prolonged sitting at a computer/desk and keyboard and repetitive hand and arm movements may result in neck, back, shoulder, and wrist or hand strain. Prolonged talking on the hand held telephone might lead to shoulder, neck and back strain. **30%**

### **Environmental Conditions**

The Public Health Nurse works in a health setting and is therefore exposed daily to communicable diseases, biohazardous waste, body fluids and hazardous supplies such as contaminated sharps. The incumbent is also exposed to a busy work environment, noisy patients (crying children) and demanding and impatient clients. The Public Health Nurse may travel in adverse weather conditions to make home visits. The incumbent may be exposed to dog bites, falls, car accidents and verbal and physical assaults when performing the home visit.

### **Sensory Demands**

The Public Health Nurse operates various pieces of equipment: thermometers, blood pressure monitors, stethoscopes, scales, audiometers, vision charts, needles & syringes, otoscopes, ophthalmoscopes, tympanometer, hemoglobinometer, glucose monitoring equipment and teaching tools such as overhead projector, power point, TV and VCR. With some of the equipment, noise may be a factor. The senses of hearing, smelling, touching and focused listening are extremely important in completing client assessments and evaluations. The duration, frequency and intensity will increase as the acuity of the situation increases eg. Communicable disease outbreak

### **Mental Demands**

The Public Health Nurse is often exposed to clients with complex needs and emotionally disturbing experiences and histories. The incumbent may be expected to deal with aggressive, intoxicated, potentially abusive, and volatile clients in home and office setting. As well, the nurse may enter an unfamiliar environment such as a client's home, which may pose a threat to their safety.

Clients expect nurses to advocate for them and assist with needs that are not typical nursing care. Nurses must be flexible and adaptable such as finding that a class has gone on a field trip when the nurse was supposed to be there; arriving for a home visit to find no one at home; and adapting to various sites and spaces when providing immunization such as is found in the different schools

The Public Health Nurse is expected to remain calm, controlled and professional regardless of the situation and demonstrate care and compassion to the client, family and other members of the health team.

The nature of the work demands long periods of concentration (such as entering data

on computer), accompanied by frequent interruptions (such as phone calls) and reprioritizing ones work duties.

Often the Public Health Nurse is the first medical professional contacted with a clients concern. The nurse must make a decision based on their skills and degree of assessment involved without any initial physician involvement.

The incumbent is often asked to provide health information to clients who have cognitive and mental impairments, poor reading and writing skills and language barriers.

The difficulty in recruiting qualified staff leads to mental anguish, stress and fatigue as a result of the increased workload. Overtime is expected when providing evening prenatal classes or community information sessions.



## CERTIFICATION

<hr/> <p>Employee Signature</p> <hr/> <p>Printed Name</p> <hr/> <p>Date</p> <p>I certify that I have read and understand the responsibilities assigned to this position.</p>	<hr/> <p>Supervisor Title</p> <hr/> <p>Supervisor Signature</p> <hr/> <p>Date</p> <p>I certify that this job description is an accurate description of the responsibilities assigned to the position.</p>
<hr/> <p>Director/Chief Executive Officer Signature</p> <hr/> <p>I approve the delegation of the responsibilities outlined herein within the context of the attached organizational structure.</p>	
<hr/> <p>Date</p>	

**The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by the incumbents of this job. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities and activities required of this position**

July 31, 2002 – revision  
Formatting update – March 30, 2004 – Conversion from WPO to Word  
March 2005 – editorial changes  
May 2010 – scope & client safety  
Editorial changes-March 2011  
April 2011 reports to  
Sept. 2011 scope update  
Aug. 2017 – scope, logo, commitment statement