



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 | ☎ (867) 874-8000 📠 (867) 874-8141

## Job Description

### IDENTIFICATION

<i>Position Number</i>	<i>Position Title</i>	
U-01-48, U-04-48	Speech Language Pathologist	
<i>Department</i>	<i>Position Reports To</i>	<i>Site</i>
Rehabilitation Services	Manager, Primary Care & Community Health	Hay River Regional Health Centre

### PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

To provide diagnostic, intervention and referral services to communication impaired patients of the Speech Language Pathology Unit in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Rules of the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) and the philosophy and objective of the Hay River Health & Social Services Authority (HRHSSA) to overcome and prevent communication problems/disorders in language, speech, voice and fluency.

### 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.

The Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) provides services to South Slave communities including Hay River, the Hay River Dene Reserve, Fort Providence, Kakisa, Enterprise, Fort Resolution and Fort Smith. The SLP provides services to adults and children on an inpatient, outpatient and outreach basis in order to restore health with dignity.

Located within the HRHSSA and reporting to the Manager, Primary Care & Community Health, the incumbent is a Speech Language Pathologist who independently provides diagnostic, treatment, preventative, counseling, educational and referral services to in and out-patients ranging from newborns to geriatrics. Speech Language Pathology consists of 1 Speech Language Pathologist, providing services in Hay River and other smaller communities to clients that range from preschoolers to adults.

Speech Language Pathology has approximately 4 – 8 encounters per day. Patients of Speech Language Pathology may be referred by physicians, public health nurses, daycares, parents, school staff, social workers, etc. or may request treatment directly. The Speech Language Pathologist provides direct care (i.e. assessment, diagnosis, treatment etc.), monitors the delivery of treatment delegated to the client, family, school staff or other health care providers and acts as an educational resource to clients, family, school staff and other health care professionals in various locations in the South Slave Region that include but are not limited to; the hospital, community health centres, schools and daycares. The incumbent will design and implement programs, research, educational material and design and deliver workshops on topics related to speech language. Unlike Speech Language Pathologists in southern institutions, the incumbent must have advanced knowledge in all areas of speech language pathology as opposed to a specialization in one area.

The Speech Language Pathologist works with patients of all ages who have speech, language, voice, and/or fluency delays/disorders. Communication disorders may be secondary to loss of hearing, head injury, FAS, FAE, autism, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, etc. Types of care delivered may include but not be limited to; designing and teaching patient specific augmentative communication, improving articulation and/or language skills, increasing fluency, etc. The focus of the therapy is to maximize and maintain the patient's ability to succeed in professional school and social settings as well as to improve the patient's quality of life. All of the incumbent's patients have communication delays/disorders and therefore may not be able to request assistance, or communicate needs when required.

The Speech Language Pathologist evaluates the patient's need based on presenting impairment, disability and handicap. The Speech Language Pathologist designs and prescribes a treatment plan that meets the specific needs of the patient, keeping in mind evidence-based information, relevant best practice and clinical expertise. The treatment plan will contain but not be limited to; identifying other necessary resources (both

human and material) and educational needs (i.e. augmentative communication), cost effective intervention strategies and discharge planning. The incumbent may recommend further diagnostic investigation or cross referral to other health care providers (i.e., ENT Specialists, Pediatricians and social workers, audiologists, 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 as well as self-management strategies. The Speech Language Pathologist also links the patient and family with appropriate community partners/services.

As a Speech Language Pathologist within HRHSSA the incumbent also provides functional expertise and direction to other health care providers on the delivery of speech language therapy to clients.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1. Provides direct assessment, diagnosis and treatment to a wide variety of patients (pre school to geriatric) requiring speech language therapy using a problem solving approach and in accordance with the standards, guidelines and scope of speech therapy to facilitate individualized patient care.**

### ***Main Activities:***

- The Speech Language Pathologist evaluates patients' need for speech language therapy service,
- The Speech Language Pathologist will assess communication disorders, diagnose, implement, document and evaluate and modify intervention as necessary to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the patient,
- Assist patients in realizing and maintaining maximum speech language capacity,
- Advocate the dignity and self-respect of patients,
- Promote the autonomy of patients and help them to express their health needs and values to obtain appropriate information and services,
- Safeguard 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,
- Apply and promote principles of equity and fairness to assist patients in receiving unbiased treatment and a share of health services and resources proportionate to their needs, and
- Act in a manner consistent with their professional responsibilities and standards of practice.

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

***Main Activities:***

- Use a holistic approach to facilitate individual learning of patients and, where applicable, their families upon transfer, discharge or during appointments in relation to patient illness or injury (i.e. self-management/care, health promotion, etc.),
- Assess the patient's knowledge of their health, injury, impairment and learning needs,
- Counsels clients, families, caregivers, etc. regarding all aspects of language and communication disorders,
- Provides on-going community education and health promotion including public education material and workshops within the communities, and
- Develop, revise and evaluate on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support patients.

**3. The Speech Language Pathologist arranges travel clinics to provide care to residents of the smaller communities within the South Slave Region.**

***Main Activities:***

- Coordinates community clinics and collaborates with community healthcare staff and other stakeholders to determine schedule, caseload, services, and follow-up,
- Provide aftercare programs (treatment plans) for community patients,
- Provide necessary training to the patient, family, nurses and other health care staff regarding client programming, and
- Monitors delivery of services delegated to community health care staff.

**4. Advocate practice environments that have the organizational and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent and ethical care.**

***Main Activities:***

- Collaborate with physicians, nurses, other members of the health team and school staff 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,
- Provide 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,
- Refers client to other health providers when appropriate,
- Orientation of new employees to services and mandate,

- Provide information and recommendations on capital expenditures, and
- Participates in committees, task teams, and research projects as required.
- Provides consultation and professional opinion on diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of conditions affecting language and communication to other health care providers (i.e. ENT, Pediatricians, family physicians, community health nurses, etc.)
- Monitors delivery of delegated therapeutic programs in schools.

### **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**

The Speech Language Pathologist must have knowledge of cognitive and functional development and impairment related to speech and language development including anatomy, physiology and pathology in a variety of age groups.

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), school staff and other health care professionals on appropriate self development 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 the HRHSSA (i.e. Stanton Territorial Hospital, Deh Cho Health & SS, 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.

Writing Skills (Writes Coherently) – Produces written documents which are clear and easy to understand.

Self Control (Responds Calmly) – Feels strong emotion in the course of conversation or other tasks, such as anger, extreme frustration, or high stress, controls emotions, and continues to talk or act calmly.

Flexibility (Adapts Normal Procedures) – Alters normal procedures or ways of working to fit a specific situation to get the job done and/or to meet STHA goals, (i.e. performs co-workers' tasks when needed).

Valuing Diversity (Monitors and Modifies Own Behaviour) – An ability to monitor and evaluate own beliefs and behaviours with regard to prejudices and personal bias, and practice new behaviour as appropriate.

Innovative (Does things new to the Government) – Improves performance by doing things that are unique, leading edge or new to the government.

Information Seeking (Digs Deeper) – Asks a series of probing questions to get at the root of a situation or a problem, below the surface presented. Does not stop at the first question.

Conceptual Thinking (Sees Patterns) – When looking at information, sees patterns, trends, or missing pieces and notices when a current situation shows some similarities to a past situation, and identifies the similarities.

Listening, Understanding & Responding (Accurate Assessment) – Is capable of accurate assessment and sensitivity to the underlying root causes/concerns for individual or group behavioral patterns. After assessing the problem/issue makes a proactive effort to help people/groups resolve the issues/problems.

Impact and Influence (Takes Multiple Customized Influence Actions) – Takes two steps to influence, with each step adapted to the specific audience. Anticipates and prepares for the others' reaction.

Client Service Orientation (Uses a long term perspective) – Works with a long-term perspective in addressing client's problems. May trade off immediate costs for the sake of a long-term relationship. Looks for the long-term benefits to the client.

Expertise (Answers Questions) – An ability to answer questions as an expert when asked. This includes telling people about current understanding of technical issues.

Developing Others (Gives Behavioural Feedback) – An ability to give specific positive or mixed feedback for developmental purposes. This includes giving negative feedback in behavioural rather than personal terms, and expresses positive expectations for future performance.

This level of knowledge is typically acquired through the successful completion of a Masters Degree in Speech Language Pathology. Within the HRHSSA Speech Language Pathologists must be a certified member of the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) or Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC) and have successfully completed a criminal record check.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

Approximately 25% of the incumbent's day will be spent stooping to perform patient assessment or care.

While visiting smaller communities the incumbent will need to travel with heavy baggage that holds testing equipment (i.e. assessment resources, therapeutic equipment, etc). Sometimes the incumbent will be required to drive up to three hours at a time during in adverse driving conditions (cold weather, snow/ice covered gravel roads).

### **Environmental Conditions**

During their day an incumbent may be exposed to communicable diseases that can result in potential health risk to the incumbent.

### **Sensory Demands**

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

The Speech Language Pathologist must be constantly aware of patients' physical and emotional needs (mood, etc) while providing care (60% of the workday). Patients may be unable to request assistance when required, therefore the incumbent must maintain alertness at all times.

### **Mental Demands**

The Speech Language Pathologist has the opportunity to develop relationships with the clients of the Rehabilitation Services Department. The Speech Language Pathologist 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.

Frequent travel to outlying communities will be required, 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 Speech Language Pathologist is required to be motivated and innovative in the area of continuing education and practice to encourage the professional growth of self and others.



# CERTIFICATION

**Position Number: U-04-48-1460**

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

Editorial changes – February 2005  
April 2011 reports to name change  
July 2011 scope & client safety  
May 2014 editorial  
February 2018 logo, scope, commitment statement  
April 2020 – updated reporting to the Manager, Primary Care & Community Health