



## IDENTIFICATION

| Department   | Position Title          |  |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority | Community Health Worker |  |
| Position Number(s)   | Community               | Division/Region(s)                           |
| 37-8404  | Jean Marie River        | Community Programs / Health Services/Deh Cho |

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

Reporting to the Nurse in Charge NIC Fort Simpson this position is responsible for the provision of community health services within their communities, in collaboration with either the community health nurse or the doctor for that community

## SCOPE

The NTHSSA administers all regional health and social services delivered through 3 Community Health Centers, 6 Community Health Station and 1 Long Term Care facility in the Deh Cho Region. The NTHSSA provides and supports the delivery of health care services to adults and children on an outpatient and outreach basis as well as to residents of the Long Term Care facility in order to enhance healthy communities' well-being through excellence, accountability and respect for regional diversity.

Located within the Health Station and reporting directly to the NIC in Fort Simpson the CHW is the only health care provider located within the community. The CHW plays a critical liaison role between the community and the Fort Simpson Health Centre and ensures that individuals within the community have access to care and treatment and that the nurse for that community or the NIC are aware of the medical needs of the community.

The CHW provides health care in the absence of trained medical and/or nursing personnel under the long-distance direction and guidance of the medical/nursing staff of the Fort Simpson Health Centre. Services include but are not limited to delivering and ensuring that prepackaged medications are delivered and ingested by patients; assisting in the scheduling of residents into special clinics as appropriate; monitoring and reordering of stocked

medications and other supplies; participating in community health education in the absence of the Community Health Representative; and taking the local lead in dealing with any emergency medical situations (emergency situation often result in medevac).

When providing basic and emergency care or assessment the CHW will be required to independently perform a basic assessment (vital signs) and provide the results to medical/nursing personnel for diagnosis and treatment.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Provide patient care to patients/clients in the absence of trained medical and/or nursing personnel in order to ensure adequate access to emergency and continuous health care for all residents.**

- Assess a variety of medical conditions and emergencies, noting full details of the patients conditions such as but not limited to temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respirations, skin condition, location and severity of pain, and general condition (i.e. restlessness, anxious, aggressive, comatose, etc.),
- Record accurate signs and symptoms and history of illness or injury (where, when, how) and chart all treatments provided,
- Deliver and ensure ingestion of medications (pre-dispensed in bubble packs) as directed by the CHN or Physician,
- Monitor condition of patients/clients throughout the duration of their illness, injury or condition,
- Provide medical interpretation to residents using the NWT's Medical interpreter's guide,
- Assist patients to achieve their optimum level of health in situation of normal health, illness, injury, or through the process of dying
- 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,

### **2. Provides emergency first aid and treatment of conditions usually handled by a physician or Community Health Nurse (CHN).**

- Report emergency problems to the CHN or NIC in Fort Simpson to provide medical direction,
- Identify the first aid treatment required and provide the treatment based on standard First Aid training (i.e. including but not limited to maintaining the airway, breathing and circulation - ABCs, controlling bleeding, applying splints, providing cardio-pulmonary resuscitation - CPR).
- Prepare patients for transportation (Medevac) and ensure they receive safe transport to the airport for pick up, and

3. **Assist the NIC, CHN or Medical Travel Clerk arrange for the transportation (including medevac and appointments for special clinics) of patients to and from regional centers in order to ensure the patient receives appropriate care and/or after care.**
4. **Facilitate patient and family educational/teaching based on community health needs and the needs of individual patients.**
  - Ensure local clients are aware of special clinic visits and when they are to come to the Health Station for appointments,
  - Make regular home visits and teach simple first aid, home nursing and good sanitation habits in order to help people improve their level of wellness,
  - Assist the CHR with teaching safety procedures (i.e. fire, water, vehicles, etc.),
  - Introduce new medical and nursing staff to local residents, traditional way of life and culture,
  - Interpret as required, to facilitate dialogue between clients and health personnel (i.e. during home visits, medevac, clinics, etc.), and
  - Attend health related meetings within the community as a NTHSSA representative and ensure that the Community health nurse / NIC are aware of community concerns.
5. **Provide administrative and record keeping functions within the local health center.**
  - Monitor the condition of the Health Station and notify the NIC in Fort Simpson of any problems,
  - Ensure that phone communication equipment is in good working order at all times and report any problems to the NIC in Fort Simpson,
  - Ensure medical supplies are safely stored (i.e. not accessible by anyone other than the CHW and stored at the proper temperatures), and
  - Monitor stock levels and order medications (and other stock items) through Fort Simpson Health Centre as required.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

*(Working Conditions identify the **unusual and unavoidable**, externally imposed conditions under which the work must be performed and which create hardship for the incumbent.)*

#### **Physical Demands**

From time to time (1- 2 times per week at 10 minutes per incident) the incumbent will be required to lift, carry or support patients during assessment and the provision of patient care. This includes incapacitated patients within the Health Station and emergency patients coming to the Health Station.

#### **Environmental Conditions**

For entire shifts the incumbent will have moderate levels of exposure to communicable diseases (i.e. TB, blood, body fluid and hazardous materials, sharps, toxic cleaning and sterilizing solutions) that can result in potential health risk to the incumbent.

As a result of living in an isolated, northern community, the incumbent may be required to travel on small planes and on ice or winter roads when traveling to or from the community.

### **Sensory Demands**

The incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of touch, sight, smell and hearing during on-going assessment and continuous observation of patients within the Health Station (i.e. taking vital signs).

### **Mental Demands**

As the only local health care provider the CHW will experience constant demands from residents within the community who may require health care at any time (day or night). This constant contact may cause extreme levels of disruption to the incumbent's family and social life. Although the incumbent is not on call s/he may be called at any time of any day to provide basic or emergency patient care.

Within the health care setting there can be significant lack of control over the work pace, with frequent interruptions (work is often dictated by external factors) that may lead to mental fatigue or stress.

From time to time the CHW may be required to provide services to abusive patients, individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol where the incumbent may be at risk of physical and/or verbal assault. These incidents may occur while the incumbent is on duty as well as when off duty (within a small community it is difficult to separate the individual from the position) As a result; there is a very real concern for safety and well-being which may cause extreme levels of stress on the incumbent both during and after working hours.

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

- Knowledge of and an ability to apply basic first aid and CPR in order to preserve life and promote healing (including an ability to identify and provide treatment for conditions such as but not limited to drowning, hypothermia, heart attack, etc.),
- Knowledge of and an ability to provide basic home nursing,
- Knowledge of healthy aging process,
- Knowledge of traditional healing methods as well as community and cultural norms,
- An ability to speak, read and write English (this includes an ability to follow verbal and written instruction from nursing, medical and dental personnel and interpret health information accurately - following the Medical interpreter's Guide),
- Ability to operate basic office equipment (i.e. telephone, fax machines, etc.).
- Ability to operate basic medical equipment require to assess patient vital statistics and condition (i.e. thermometer, stethoscope, blood pressure apparatus, Blood Glucose Monitor, forceps, scissors, simple suction equipment, stretchers, etc.).
- An ability to apply bandages dressings and/or splints.
- The incumbent must be aware of the importance of confidentiality and be able to keep

personal and medical information private and confidential at all times.

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

Grade 12 high school diploma or equivalencies

First Aid and CPR certification or be willing to complete within the first year.

The incumbent must maintain current certification in CPR and Standard First Aid.

The incumbent must be able to complete a satisfactory criminal records check.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Deh Cho Region Requirements**

Within the NTHSSA the CHW must be able to-acquire within a reasonable time frame and remain current with the following training and certifications:

- Hand Hygiene,
- WHMIS
- Pathways
- Pharmacology introductory session
- Standard First Aid,
- CPR.

An ability to speak the local aboriginal language and previous homecare experience would be an asset.

Must have current valid driver's license

Training in emergency response would be an asset.

**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)**

- French required
- French preferred
- French not required