



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Nurse Practitioner- Public Health	
Position Number(s)	Community	Division/Region(s)
57-12752	Yellowknife	Population Health/Yellowknife

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Public Health Nurse Practitioner (PHNP) is an autonomous practitioner, responsible for providing comprehensive public health nursing services as well as advanced health assessment, diagnosis, intervention and follow-up care to residents of Yellowknife, N'Dilo and Dettah. The incumbent practices in accordance with current NWT health legislation (Public Health Act) and established standards and competencies of nursing practice from the Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories. The PHNP is accountable to the mission, values, strategic plan, administrative directives and standard operating procedures of Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority. The aim of this position is to positively impact client outcomes and improve the overall health of the NTHSSA service population by bridging preventative and primary care skills and services. The position provides clinical nursing leadership within the Public Health Unit and is a champion for the integration of preventative chronic disease management into public health practice.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife, the Public Health Nurse Practitioner reports directly to the Manager of Yellowknife Public Health. There are 11 registered nurses in the Public Health Unit who provide culturally-sensitive care to people in the communities of Yellowknife, N'Dilo and Dettah. Yellowknife has a diverse population consisting of Dene, Metis and Inuit, as well as many different cultures from around the world. Yellowknife, as the capital city and territorial referral center, provides service to a large transient population from other parts of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, and the Public Health Unit serves as a Territorial resource for public health issues for a large part of the northern population.

This position is critical to ensure the health of the people of Yellowknife, N'Dilo and Dettah. The PHNP has in-depth knowledge of the Public Health Act and the Reportable Disease Control and Disease Surveillance Regulations. The PHNP works directly with the GN WT's Office of the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer and has an assigned designation as a Public Health Officer. The PHNP has an essential role in the timely identification of communicable diseases, the delivery of prevention and outbreak management and control interventions, especially in the areas of vaccine delivery, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections, communicable disease surveillance, case management, contact tracing and treatment.

The PHNP is an autonomous practitioner who provides comprehensive health assessment, makes diagnoses, referral, and develops interventions within the Nurse Practitioner's scope of practice. The PHNP is able to implement a wide range of secondary screening interventions and interpretations outside the normal public health nursing scope and thus help bridge the gap between prevention and tertiary primary care services. The PHNP is a leader in implementing a prevention and public health role in chronic disease management, especially in relation to lifestyle diseases such as Diabetes.

The PHNP role promotes the health of individuals, families, communities and various populations and their environments. The PHNP practices in diverse settings, such as, clinics, homes, schools, local hospital and primary care clinics, shelters, churches and nongovernmental organizations and in public areas, such as, malls, bars and the street. The PHNP collaborates with individuals, families, groups, communities and other care providers to develop, deliver and evaluate a wide range of health promotion, illness and injury prevention, supportive, curative and disease prevention strategies.

The PHNP is a clinical leader within Public Health and is knowledgeable on best practices within Public Health. The PHNP is expected to mentor and lead other public health nurses, administrative staff, team members and other health care providers when delivering programming in his/her area of expertise or when facilitating and advocating for clients or programs.

The PHNP communicates with and educates all clients, community members, groups and health care providers using principles of self-management and other appropriate strategies. The incumbent is a mentor for nursing and advanced practice nursing students during their practicum experiences at NTHSSA. The PHNP provides expert advice and guidance to other health and non-health related professionals within the Northwest Territories on a wide range of specialized public health issues. The PHNP may be asked to represent NTHSSA on relevant local, departmental and territorial health committees and research projects and at workshops/conferences.

The PHNP will work in a variety of settings beyond NTHSSA clinics in a variety of community outreach settings and schools.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Provides advanced health assessment, and NP care and services to public health clients on a routine basis to promote a healthy lifestyle, to prevent and/or reduce incidence of disease, disability and death; to support rehabilitation and to restore health; and to support and facilitate client choice in their own care.**
 - Systematically assess individual health status through the collection of an appropriate history, performance of a physical assessment, and the ordering and interpretation of diagnostic tests.
 - Establishes a diagnosis through analysis and synthesis of data from multiple sources; communicates health findings and establishes a plan of care with the client and health care team
 - Develops a plan of care based on client needs, independently or in consultation with physicians and other members of the public health and primary care team.
 - Implements a comprehensive care plan which may include the prescribing of pharmaceuticals in accordance with established regulations, policies, practices and safety procedures as well as non-pharmacological interventions.
 - Participates in case management rounds for the Tuberculosis program and provides clinical assessment support and case management of all latent cases for the program.
 - Provides clinical support to the Maternal Child team for diagnosis and treatment of breastfeeding challenges.
 - Provides clinical support and oversight to the Public Health STI nurse and the advanced practice skills in the program and is a backup practitioner for the program in the areas of contraception prescribing, pelvic exams and disease treatment.
 - Takes a lead role when prescribing medications in response to an outbreak such as Meningitis or Pertussis.
 - Provides prescription services to the Public Health Travel Clinics
 - Provides clinical support to areas of chronic disease management such as the Diabetes program.
 - Provides clinical support to all areas of Public Health as needed.
- 2. Delivers comprehensive public health programs and services to prevent and or minimize the impact of communicable and chronic diseases, maternal and infant mortality and morbidity and the impacts of the social determinants of health on at risk populations, according to established national and territorial legislation and standards**
 - Works in a number of designated public health clinics such as General Adult Immunization, Travel Health Clinics, STI clinics.
 - Provides outreach immunization clinics at local nursing homes and shelters as well as mass flu vaccination clinics in various settings.
 - Applies epidemiological principles in the screening, diagnosis, treatment, control and management, reporting and surveillance of communicable diseases.
 - Carries out case management and assists with contact tracing for clients with laboratory confirmed communicable diseases.

- Works with the Public Health School team to assist with education and health promotion related to preventable communicable and chronic diseases with a focus on sexual health and tobacco initiatives.
- Works with the Public Health Sexual Health Nurse to assist with contact tracing, education and outreach activities related to sexual health.
- Works with the Public Health Maternity and Child Health Team and the Healthy Family Team to identify children and families at risk and provide prevention and diagnosis and treatment interventions as appropriate.
- Acts in a mentorship and teaching role with Public Health nursing staff in regards to evidence based, current health research and practice.
- Works with the Deputy Chief Public Health Officer in the appointed role as Public Health Officer.

3. Integrated preventative and primary care to populations at risk for life style related chronic diseases to promote a healthy lifestyle and to prevent and or reduce incidence of disease, disability and death, to support rehabilitation and to restore health.

- Assesses individual risk factors for preventable chronic diseases and orders and follows up on a variety of secondary prevention screening tests such as mammograms and FIT Tests.
- Develops a plan of care based on client risks, needs and current situation which is shared with client and other members of the health care team as appropriate.
- Employs mental health screening tests i.e. depression scales where appropriate as an assessment of client readiness to engage in self-management and healthy lifestyle behaviors.
- Provides appropriate health information and a supportive environment to enable clients to take responsibility for their health care by employing various facilitated self-management techniques.
- Applies harm reduction principles to identify, reduce and/or eliminate risk factors in different settings such as the home (smoking), neighborhood (safe playgrounds, fitness facilities) and in individual clients (safe sex, needle exchange, methadone).
- Refers clients to other members of the primary community care team or to medical specialists as determined by the client's needs.
- Communicates and plans ongoing care with the client and other members of the Public Health and Primary Care team.
- Works specifically with the Diabetes Education Program to integrate primary public health prevention strategies such as childhood obesity initiatives with intervention strategies for people with Diabetes.

4. Designs, monitors and evaluates preventative and primary health interventions and their impact on client outcomes and improvements in population health.

- Uses epidemiological principles to build business cases for program development and expansion in areas such as harm reduction strategies, outreach programs, school sexual health curriculums, etc.
- Works to develop program rules and define data elements with the NTHSSA EMR.

- Collaborates with individuals, communities and other stakeholders in identifying needs, assets, available resources and shared outcome goals.
- Identifies root causes of illness and disease and works with individuals and communities to: raise awareness of health issues and trends, shift social norms, change behaviors and facilitate supports.
- Applies the social determinants of health lens to illness and disease trends ensuring equitable access of services to populations and individuals at risk.
- Assists individuals, families and communities in making informed choices about preventive health practices such as immunization, breastfeeding, smoking cessation, nutrition, hand washing, infection control and contraception.
- Completes and submits statistical information and reports to other applicable stakeholders as required.
- Engages in evidence informed practice by critically appraising and applying relevant research, best practice guidelines and theory when providing health care services.

5. Provides leadership and expertise in the field of public health to other health care providers, community agencies and other professionals.

- Provides leadership and acts as a resource in the management of clinical care of public health clients and targeted populations to other health care providers.
- Takes a lead role when writing and updating policies for Public Health. Participates in the advancement of public health and NP nursing practice by acting as a mentor and preceptor for students and new practitioners from local, as well as, national nursing and advanced practice nursing programs.
- Acts as an advocate for change using the principles of social justice. Actively participates on relevant committees
- Participates in special projects and research, as requested or identified (i.e. BETTER PROJECT).
- Applies the nursing process (assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation) in delivering culturally-sensitive nursing care to all clients.
- Applies evidence-based, current knowledge in order to maintain competence in his/her practice.
- Makes decisions based upon ethical standards of practice and principles.
- Documents public health and NP nursing activities in a comprehensive, timely and appropriate manner.
- Provides constructive feedback (for example, chart audits) to peers, as necessary, to improve public health nursing practice.
- Participates in professional development opportunities consistent with current practice, new and emerging issues, demographic trends, determinants of health and new research.
- Promote healthy public policy

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

Off-site visits represent 40% to 60% of the PHN's time. When the PHN practices out of the clinic s/he is required to carry supplies, vaccine coolers and equipment, including vision and hearing screening machines, up and down stairs, as well as, into and out of a vehicle. This often includes multiple trips carrying supplies and equipment of various sizes and weights. These supplies often must be carried great distances from parking lots. Because Yellowknife is located in the North, the PHN must carry these supplies and equipment over uneven slippery roads and walk ways and travel in extreme cold weather. The PHN may also be required to perform patient assessment or care while in an awkward position (bending and stooping).

Environmental Conditions

Exposure to potential communicable diseases, body fluids, human waste, hazardous material (sharps, toxic wastes, cleaning solutions). This exposure is moderate.

Sensory Demands

50-75% of the time the PHN uses the senses of touch, sight, smell and hearing during client assessments. Forty to 60% of the time the PHN uses video display terminals which can put him/her at risk for repetitive strain and visual injuries.

Mental Demands

The environment is dynamic and constantly changing so the incumbent continually re-evaluates and shifts priorities. The incumbent is exposed to clients in a range of emotional and physical states. Many clients are mentally ill and/or homeless. The incumbent must act in a professional manner regardless of the situation. S/He must demonstrate care and compassion for the client, family and other members of the health care team and remain calm at all times. When making home visits, contacting clients in regards to communicable diseases or delivering necessary outreach programs, the incumbent may have some uncertainty about knowing what to expect while at work. There is a potential to be exposed to volatile situations and a legitimate concern about one's personal safety.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of public health nursing sciences to practice and synthesize knowledge from a broad range of theories, models and frameworks.
- Knowledge of and ability to apply advanced nursing processes and practice to ensure that all of the client's physical, emotional, psychosocial, spiritual and daily living needs are met.
- Knowledge of social determinants of health and epidemiology as it applies to the health of populations and the application of that knowledge to service and program delivery and broader healthy public policy.
- Knowledge of best practices in public health setting.
- Knowledge and ability to accurately interpret legislation, regulations, standards, policies and guidelines related to Public Health and advanced nursing practice in Public Health.
- Conceptual understanding of the model of integrated community care delivery, and the application of nurse practitioner competencies to multidisciplinary practice settings.
- Knowledge about the history, structure and interaction of public health and health care services at local, provincial/territorial, national and international levels.
- Knowledge of the nursing process to identify the needs of the community in program and policy planning. Able to help build community capacity by knowledge and expertise sharing.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills including listening, observing, facilitating, reporting and clear, cohesive documentation.
- Knowledge of and an ability to build collaborative partnerships and networks within and outside NTHSSA (for example, social services, public health, home care, physician clinics, NGO's etc.) to ensure culturally-sensitive support of clients and their families.
- Computer literate with an ability to use and/or learn a variety of software applications.
- Ability as a front line provider to be self-directed and work independently.
- Ability to think critically with strong problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Advanced level of communication skills to be able to communicate in a variety of methods to individuals, groups, peers and specialists in the public health field. This advanced skill must include the ability to communicate using English language skills to people and groups at various levels of literacy.
- Ability to provide emergency care and treatment as needed and within scope of practice.
- Knowledge of and sensitivity to cultural, social, gender and age dynamics with an ability to interact with a variety of people in a non-judgmental manner.
- Knowledge of and sensitive to and adheres to confidentiality issues, policies, standards and practices.
- It is expected that the Public Health Nurse Practitioner will maintain current knowledge and enhance competencies relevant to Public Health through professional development activities, peer review and other continuing strategies.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

This level of knowledge is commonly acquired through the successful completion of a BScN or BN nursing degree program with 2 years of nursing experience and 2 years as a Nurse Practitioner in a public health or community health environment and active registration and certification as a Nurse Practitioner.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Yellowknife Regional Requirements

Must be eligible for registration with the RNANT/NU, have completed a satisfactory criminal record check and possess a Class 5 driver's license.

When employed in the Yellowknife Region, the Public Health Nurse Practitioner must be able to acquire, within a reasonable time frame, and remain current in the following training and/or certifications:

- Non-violent crisis intervention
- NWT immunization certification
- Fire/disaster plan for NTHSSA
- Certification in WHMIS
- Certification in basic CPR
- Certification in hand hygiene
- Fit testing
- Certification in infection control practices
- Breastfeeding course (20 hours)

May be required to obtain additional skills training in areas, such as, but not limited to, the following as directed by the supervisor:

- Venipuncture certification
- Travel immunizations
- Travel prescriptions
- Yellow fever vaccine delivery
- International lactation consultant certification
- PHAC Skills Enhancement for Public Health Programs

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