



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Relief Registered Nurse – Chemotherapy Services	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-11866	Yellowknife	Patient Care Services/Stanton

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Relief Registered Nurse Chemotherapy Services provides specialized Chemotherapy nursing care to patients of the Chemotherapy Unit in accordance with established standards of nursing practice and the philosophy and objectives of the Stanton Territorial Hospital to ensure that the patients' physical, emotional, psycho-social, spiritual and educational needs are met.

## 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 Tłıchʼo 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 Tłıchʼo 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.

Stanton Territorial Hospital (STH) is an accredited facility, located in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (NWT). Stanton Territorial Hospital is the referral center for approximately 43,000 NWT residents and 6,000 residents from the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut.



Located within STH, and reporting directly to the Manager, Specialist, Renal and Chemotherapy, the Relief Registered Nurse, Chemotherapy Services (RN) participates in a team of RNs who, with the support of Clinical Coordinator and the Unit Clerk, provides Chemotherapy to outpatients in the Chemotherapy Unit.

A variable number of cases are performed in the Chemotherapy Unit per day with varying levels of complexity of the individual procedures, tests or treatments. The unit is open during the day Monday-Friday. The hours of operation may vary slightly depending upon the procedures scheduled for the day.

In emergent or unusual situations, the staff may be requested to stay or return to work off-hours to perform treatments which nursing staff from other units may not be familiar with.

The Relief-RN is a member of a patient care team that provides direct care to outpatients who are prepared for and undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments. The most responsible physicians for the majority of the cases done in the Chemotherapy Unit are specialists in Oncology, Internal Medicine and General Surgery.

The incumbent may function in a supportive/assisting role in a delegated, independent manner. The incumbent acts as a patient advocate and facilitates communication between the patient, family, the physician, specialists, and other health care professionals within and beyond STH. Patients, family members and other caregivers (i.e. Community Health Nurses, physicians, etc.) of patients will often contact the Chemotherapy Unit staff for advice or direction prior, during and/or after the procedure, test or treatment. This constant and continuing communication and support results in a holistic approach to planning, organizing, teaching, and relationship development that will best meet the short- and long-term needs of the patient.

The Chemotherapy Unit patients' medical outcomes are somewhat predictable but may be of an unstable nature and normally require specialized professional nursing services. The incumbent will need to independently make decisions regarding individual nursing care plans or interventions based on medical orders.

To avoid potentially serious complications during patients' medical procedures, tests, or treatments, the incumbent assesses the patient pre-treatment and advises the physician if there are any medical concerns/conditions (i.e. irregular blood work, Changes in Health status etc.), which may result in an increased risk for the patients, or rescheduling or cancellation of the procedure.

Patients who attend the Chemotherapy Unit for procedures, tests or treatments may be diagnosed with life threatening diseases or conditions. The patients and their family members may be very anxious or distressed regarding the invasive tests and real or potential diagnosis.



Many of the chemotherapy patients are undergoing palliative treatments for their cancer and will eventually die of the disease possibly after months or years of treatment in the Chemotherapy Unit. The RN 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.

Staff members of the Chemotherapy Unit are the only STH staff members that are familiar with the use and care of the specialized medications used in the unit. Improper use, handling, or trouble shooting of issues with these medications could result in significant risk of injury to patients and others.

The Relief RN will be required to give advice and assist with the care of their patients on other units in emergent situations such as in-patient units or the Emergency Department. The incumbent may be required to work or assist in any or all of the Outpatient Care areas on any given day, depending upon skill mix, staffing, activity, and acuity. The incumbent may be responsible for multiple patients at any one time. Based on patient census and acuity throughout STH the incumbent may be required to provide standardized nursing care to any and/or all of the nursing units within the scope of a RNs practice.

The Relief RN is required to be motivated and innovative in the area of continuing education and practice to encourage the professional growth of self and others.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Provides advanced nursing care to patients using a problem-solving approach and in accordance with the standards, guidelines and scope of professional nursing practice to facilitate individualized nursing care to patients of the Chemotherapy Unit.**

- Assesses, plans, implements, documents and evaluates care to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the patient.
- Provides Chemotherapy:
- Administers chemotherapy medications, basic and advanced to adult oncology patients and on a case by case basis (age dependent), pediatric oncology patients.
- Central Venous Catheter (CVC) care.
- Provides care, including but not limited to Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC), Broviac, Implanted Vascular Access Device (IVAD) care, maintenance and problem solving of these devices.
- Staff and Medical Staff from Cross Cancer Institute.
- Ensures that equipment is working properly by testing, calibrating, troubleshooting before initiating care.
- Assists patients to achieve their optimum level of health in situations of normal health, illness, injury, or through the process of dying.



- Advocates for the dignity and self-respect of patients.
- Promotes the autonomy of patients and help them to express their health needs and values to obtain appropriate information and services.
- Safeguards 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.
- Applies and promotes principles of equity and fairness to assist patients in receiving unbiased treatment and a share of health services and resources proportionate to their needs.
- Acts in a manner consistent with their professional code of ethics, responsibilities and standards of practice.
- Makes decisions necessary to promote change and ultimate goal of attainment,
- Communicates and collaborates with other health professionals for patient/family care planning, discharge and follow up requirements.
- Researches, develops, revises and evaluates on an ongoing basis, best practice guidelines related to new procedures, tests, and treatments.
- In the absence of the Clinical Coordinator, Renal and Chemotherapy Services the incumbent may be required to take charge or make decisions regarding the day-to-day operation of the unit (i.e. the addition of cases or management of equipment issues).
- Facilitates communication between family physicians, surgeons, oncologist, and other community-based health professionals.
- Applies the knowledge of cancer disease process, treatments, side effects and complications anticipating patient's needs including emotional and practical needs.
- Provides cancer patients and their families with assistance and strategies to navigate through the NWT and Alberta Health care systems.
- Educates patients and families through the provision of resource material, individualized education, intervention, and support.
- Researches, develops, revises and evaluates on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support patients.

**2. Facilitates implements and modifies patient and family education/teaching based on the needs of the patient.**

- Uses a holistic approach to facilitate individual learning of patients and their families upon admission and transfer or discharge in relation to cancer care (i.e. self-care, health promotion, etc.).
- Assesses the patient for physical and psychological needs, their knowledge of their health, disease process and learning needs.
- Researches, develops, revises and evaluates on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support patients.



- Facilitates the admission and transfer or discharge of patients. This includes explaining and ensuring that the patient understands the admission or discharge plan (established by the Health Care Team for the patients care and treatment).

**3. Advocates practice environments that have the organizational and human support systems, and the resource allocations necessary for safe, competent and ethical nursing care.**

- Provides 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.
- Collaborates with nursing colleagues and other members of the health care team 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.
- Orientates new employees to specific specialty programs.
- Communicates with nurses and other members of the health care team regarding the patient's health status and care plan in order to provide continuity of care and promote a collaborative effort directed toward quality patient care.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical Demands**

The majority of the day will be spent standing and walking for long periods of time. In addition, the incumbent will be required to perform patient assessment or care while standing or bending often in an awkward position. (i.e. accessing central lines while the patient is sitting in a chemo chair).

Lifting and pushing will also be required to move and support patients. This may be done on an individual basis or as a group. The RN will be required to assist with moving furniture and equipment throughout the day to accommodate the changing needs of the patients and operation of the unit (i.e. chemo chairs, equipment, and equipment carts).

**Environmental Conditions**

During their shift the RN will have significant levels of exposure to communicable diseases, blood, and body fluids, hazardous materials (sharps, toxic cleaning and sterilizing solutions) that can result in potential health risks to the incumbent.

The incumbent is responsible for the administration of drugs such as chemotherapy medications, which are highly toxic, where minimal levels of exposure to the incumbent are unavoidable.



Within the small space of the Chemotherapy Unit there is frequent and prolonged exposure to noise or repetitive sounds from multiple sources including equipment (ie. the suction pump, pulse oximeter, IV pumps), and patients.

### **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 to monitor the patients within the Chemotherapy Unit. Many of the patients within the Chemotherapy Unit are prone to complications arising from their treatment or procedure. Therefore, the RN, Chemotherapy must be constantly alert (100% of the shift) to patients' physical, psychosocial, spiritual, educational and emotional needs.

### **Mental Demands**

The incumbent works in an atmosphere of change, critical patient flow and must be prepared for all procedures and the anticipated and unanticipated aspects of the procedures. The workload in the unit can be irregular. The RN, often has no control over the time it takes to complete a procedure.

There is uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, and there is legitimate concern about being responsible for the lives of patients and their families, risk of assault and unknown and unpredictable situations. The incumbent will be exposed to death/dying and other emotionally upsetting experiences on a daily basis.

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

- Knowledge of and an ability to apply advanced nursing processes (assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation) and current nursing practices.
- Knowledge of advanced biological, physical and behavioural 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 ability to network resources within and outside the STH (i.e. Social Services, Public Health, etc.).
- Knowledge of various methods of infection control and associated risks of cross contamination for patients, visitors and other staff members.
- Ability to operate and/or use standard medical equipment (such as but not limited to - peripheral IV pumps and lines, stretchers, ECG, thermometers, sphygmomanometer, blood glucose monitors, sharps, etc.).
- Ability to effectively operate non-medical equipment used during the care of patients within Medical Daycare (these include but are not limited to wheelchairs, etc.).
- Ability to provide training, advice and assessment in the use of specialized equipment, tools, techniques and medications (including but not limited to chemotherapy, and CVC).



- Computer proficiency including programs and software relevant to GNWT processes.
- Ability to be flexible; to alter normal procedures or ways of working to fit a specific situation to get the job done and/or to meet STH goals.
- Ability to value diversity; monitors and evaluates own beliefs and behaviours with regard to prejudices and personal biases and practice new behaviours as appropriate.
- Skilled in Patient Safety; participates in and demonstrates an understanding of patient safety principle and practices into all day to day activities. Follows all safe work practices and procedures and immediately communicates any activity or action which may constitute a risk to patient safety.
- Ability to 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.
- Ability to be client service oriented (addresses underlying needs).
- Analytical, communication, and teamwork / cooperation skills.
- Ability to 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.
- Ability to uphold privacy/confidentiality practices and legislation; within this role the RN can only access confidential patient information such as medical and computer records if it falls directly within the scope of RN job duties.
- 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:**

A Nursing Degree and chemotherapy training from a hospital approved course and one (1) year of directly related experience in a healthcare setting.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Registration under CANN prior to commencement of employment.
- Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices is required.
- Canadian Nursing Association Certification is desirable.
- Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support Certification, hospital approved certification course in chemotherapy administration and Chemotherapy training with the De Souza institute and/or a nationally recognized chemotherapy training certification would be considered assets.

Stanton Territorial Hospital has a number of certifications that are required upon hire, depending on the area where the employee works, including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal Cultural Awareness.
- Biohazardous Waste.
- Biosafety & Biosecurity.
- Infection Control.
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS).
- Others directly related to the incumbent's scope of practice.

**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