



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Program Assistant, Primary Care	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-15809	Fort Smith	Primary Care / Fort Smith

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Program Assistant, Primary Care, is a member of the integrated health care team within the Fort Smith Primary Care Clinic. The incumbent is responsible for providing dedicated support to a designated Integrated Care Team (ICT) in the coordination and management of administrative duties to ensure residents have access to timely, professional and sustainable health services required to maintain optimal health.

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-indigenous persons. Health and social services includes 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.

Under the direction of the Minister of Health and Social Services, the NTHSSA was established to move toward one integrated delivery system as part of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) transformation strategy. The NTHSSA sets clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and monitoring for the entire Northwest Territories. While the Tłıchʼo Community Services Agency (TCSA) operates under a separate board, and Hay River Health and Social Services Agency (HRHSSA) remains separate in the interim, Service Agreements will be established with these boards to identify performance requirements and ensure adherence to clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and policies as established by the NTHSSA.

The NTHSSA is responsible for the effective delivery of regional Primary Care services to residents of Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Yellowknife. The NTHSSA provides and supports the delivery of health and social services across the lifespan on an outpatient and outreach basis in order to enhance healthy communities and well-being through excellence, accountability, and respect for regional diversity, and works with communities to promote healthy lifestyles.

Since 2013, the NWT health and social services system has been engaged in a strategic renewal process. This began with System Transformation, a multi-year, community engagement-driven process to develop a model for an integrated health and social services system. The resulting changes to the system's governance structure have enabled a one-system approach, allowing for greater efficiency and integration while better respecting the unique contexts and strengths of the NWT's distinct regions and cultures.

Building off the results and momentum of System Transformation, the strategic renewal effort has now begun a process of Primary Health Care Reform to shift the system and its care models towards a team and relationship based approach that is driven through public participation, community feedback, and data, and built upon a foundation of trust and cultural safety. Using a community development approach, we are changing the way we work with people and communities, at every level of the health and social services system, to enable public participation in priority setting, planning, and design that integrates the social determinants of health. As the first point of contact for people seeking services, the Program Assistant, Primary Care has particular responsibility for developing trusting, caring relationships with clients while actively contributing to ongoing design and renewal activities.

This position is located in Fort Smith and reports to Regional Manager, Primary Care. The Primary Care Clinic includes a number of interdisciplinary health care practitioners providing comprehensive patient assessment, coordinated intervention/plans of care, case management of complex or high need clients, personalized teaching and client follow-up. The Program Assistant, Primary Care collaborates with the Integrated Care Team to ensure effective and efficient schedule coordination, verbal and written communication, information research/transfer, and system coordination. The incumbent acts as a liaison with outside organizations to coordinate information and referrals according to the policies and procedures of the NTHSSA and acts to ensure that persons accessing the services receive optimal care. The incumbent may be required to assist with other activities such as scanning and linking documents to the Electronic Medical Records (EMR's) and is responsible for maintaining communication and assisting with meeting individuals' access needs in a fast paced environment.

The Program Assistant, Primary Care is guided by general procedures but must be able to make independent decisions regarding competing priorities such as handling the wide variety of telephone calls, client and integrated primary care team requests. These include, but are not limited to, making judgments about the nature and urgency of the request and when and whether to consult with other members of the integrated care team. In this interdisciplinary environment the Program Assistant, Primary Care must be organized and have excellent attention to detail, as well as have the ability to understand the various roles of the Integrated Primary Care Team (for i.e. Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Community Health Nurse,

Primary Care, Public Health Nurses, Midwives, and Wellness Specialist) when booking client appointments in order to ensure that each client encounter occurs with the right provider at the right time.

The legacies of colonization and residential schools have impacted Indigenous health outcomes and the way health and social services are delivered and accessed. This position honours and promotes a culturally safe environment at all times and practices from a trauma informed care perspective where interaction with clients and families is tactful, respectful and humble. This position requires the ability to handle several complex issues concurrently while maintaining attention to detail. The incumbent is expected to remain calm, controlled and professional, regardless of the situation, and demonstrate compassionate care that is free of racism and discrimination, to clients, families, community members, and other members of the health care team. The incumbent is required to be motivated and innovative in the area of continuing education and practice, such as engaging in self-reflection, to encourage the professional growth of self and others.

The Program Assistant, Primary Care may be required to work additional and flexible hours including days, evenings and Saturdays for part or all of a 7.5 hour shift.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Deliver administrative and clerical support to members of the core primary care team, clients and other members of the integrated primary care team while maintaining exceptional customer service and cultural safety principles.

- Provide client and family centered care and quality principles in the provision of services to clients and families.
- Verify and modifies client demographic information within the Electronic Medical Record (EMR).
- Answer and direct telephone calls politely, respectfully and professionally, and takes clear, concise messages, referring messages to the appropriate integrated team member and/or program as needed.
- Assist clients in coordinating/completing forms as appropriate.
- Arrange for interpreters as required.
- Schedule and coordinate procedures, appointments and follow-up appointments for integrated care team members.
- Coordinate and communicate schedule changes/appointments to both the client and members of the integrated care team.
- Develop and maintain successful working relationships with clients, their families, colleagues and others.
- Understand key concepts of the integrated care team model including interdisciplinary collaboration, open access, continuity of care, empanelment, and case management.
- Facilitate and coordinate booking of specialist appointments and diagnostic tests, in and outside of Yellowknife, as requested by integrated care team members.
- Contribute to a safe and respectful workplace.
- Relay messages between integrated care team members and clients in a timely and efficient manner.

- Receive medical referrals and ensure that the referral is complete prior to sending the requested referral to the appropriate specialist.
 - Assist clients in accessing care by the team member that can best meet their needs.
 - Direct client flow through the clinic.
 - Keep waiting and examination rooms organized.
- 2. Maintain current data and client information for statistical, informational and educational purposes utilizing best practices and available electronic resources.**
- Provide reporting and statistics on quality outcomes, including but not limited to wait times and patient numbers, provider continuity, referrals, no shows, etc., on an ongoing basis.
 - Organize and coordinate data collection under the direction of the Regional Manager of Primary Care or the NIC.
- 3. Provide record management services in accordance with GNWT archival and electronic record legislation, policy, and protocols including *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP)* and the *Health Information Act (HIA)*.**
- Maintain and ensure all charts and files are kept current and accurate, e.g. results of tests, visits to other areas, other medical reports received from various agencies in and outside of the NWT.
 - File scan and photocopy documents, records and files.
 - Administer requests for information from client files for review by integrated care team members (including but not limited to: retrieval of information to fill prescriptions and request for information from external sources).
 - Retrieve and print clinical documents from the medical record (paper or electronic), to accompany referrals or external requests for information (e.g. insurance information requests, WSCC), at the request of the patient or integrated care team member, and in keeping with release of information policies.
- 4. Organize, coordinate, and support daily Telemerge and Telephone Consult Activities.**
- Organize, coordinate, and schedule clinical and educational Telemerge sessions in collaboration with local staff.
 - Prepare and distribute the Telemerge Schedules as appropriate.
 - Ensure proper functioning of Telemerge equipment and arranges maintenance when required.
 - Support medical staff and other professional staff during Telemerge sessions
 - Communicate regularly with telecommunication partners to arrange bookings, track, report, and solve problems.
 - Troubleshoot and problem-solve individually and with colleagues to ensure smooth operation of Telemerge.
 - Maintain Telemerge calendar for Telemerge units at the health centre and elementary school: completes bookings, records and submits monthly stats.

5. Contribute to a culture of patient safety and equitable care within the NTHSSA.

- Ensure positive patient identification through the use of dual patient identifiers.
- Reduce the spread of infection through effective hand hygiene.
- Use effective and respectful communication at point of patient information transfer and discharge.
- Effectively assess patient risk through established Health Authority protocols.
- Advocate for the dignity and respect of patients.
- Promote the autonomy and rights of patients and helps them to express their health and health care 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.

6. Facilitate, support and promote a culture of teamwork.

- Receive and share information, opinions, concerns and feedback in a supportive manner.
- Work collaboratively to build rapport and create supportive relationships with team members both within primary care and across the organization.
- Develop a supportive rapport with individuals and their families to facilitate collaborative relationships with other integrated team members.
- Determine the most appropriate, effective and efficient mode of communication among interdisciplinary team members in accordance with identified policies and procedures.
- Coordinate and participate in formal and informal case conferences to share appropriate information concerning individual concerns or progress and to utilize the team's skills and resources in the most efficient and effective manner.
- Contribute to a positive, strengths-based team environment and support team colleagues.
- Collaborate proactively with all integrated and interdisciplinary team members utilizing a client centered approach to facilitate and maximize healthcare outcomes.
- Communicate effectively with other health care team members to provide continuity of care and promote collaborative efforts directed toward quality patient care.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

As the first point of contact, there will be exposure to communicable diseases. In performing some of the duties there is also a risk to exposure to body fluids, human waste, and hazardous materials (sharps, toxic wastes, cleaning solutions).

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

The incumbent must be able to transition effortlessly into various situations as there is little control over work pace and many interruptions.

As the first point of contact, the incumbent will routinely be dealing with challenging situations including, demanding/irate clients who feel that they are entitled to faster and better service, either in the clinic or as a client referred to a southern facility.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of standard office administration protocols, procedures and best practices.
- Knowledge of medical records and the ability to learn records management and to use an electronic medical record system.
- Knowledge, application and maintenance of quality, safety and infection control standards.
- Ability to perform computer based tasks and utilize electronic health record system which includes accessing and reading charts/provider notes for basic information to respond to client's inquiries/requests; enter notes in records; and perform complex scanning of documents to health records.
- Organization and attention to detail skills in order to administer the multitude of activities to ensure clients are served in a respectful, confidential and timely manner.
- Interpersonal skills with ability to communicate with people of diverse cultures and backgrounds, medical backgrounds and other professional practitioners.
- Ability to follow through on commitments relating to work activities and personal actions.
- Ability to develop and monitor a system for tracking the status of various actions and correspondence.
- Ability to defuse conflict when dealing with irate/upset patients in an effective and professional manner.
- Ability to work in an electronic environment, including but not limited to Microsoft Office suite, Electronic Medical Records and other computer systems.
- Skillful at prioritizing needs, problem solving and decision making in a clinical setting.
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple responsibilities.
- Ability to comprehend and follow direction both in writing and verbally.
- Apply organizational and time management skills to facilitate the multitude of activities which ensure patients are seen in a timely manner.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision and be self-directed.
- Ability to understand and recognize the cultural, social, and political realities in the Northwest Territories.
- Ability to acquire knowledge to recognize the impacts of colonization and residential schools on Indigenous health outcomes and the way health and social services is delivered
- Ability to engage in self-reflection to learn about personal biases and assumptions.
- Ability to orient new staff in the performance of duties and to ensure backup coverage by other clinic staff.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

- Medical Office Assistant diploma, AND,
- Two (2)) years of experience in a medical or health care facility.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices.

To be completed within the first 6 months of employment:

- Hand hygiene training
- Fire Safety Training
- WHMIS
- Medical terminology course

Position Security

- ☐ 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