



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Community Wellness Worker	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-17629	Tulita	Community Wellness / Sahtu

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Community Wellness Worker plays a key role in ensuring that the delivery of mental health and addictions services is done in a manner that is culturally safe and reflective of the values and practices of the community and region. The Community Wellness Worker delivers relevant education, appropriate counselling, and health promotion and prevention activities to the community. This position offers individuals and families with supports in the areas of substance use/misuse, mental health/wellness, healthy families/family violence and cultural awareness within the scope of community-based service delivery and supportive counselling. This position is often a first point of contact for clients to access support services. Services are provided in accordance with the cultural values of the community and region, the *Northwest Territories (NWT) Mental Health Act*, *Child and Family Services Act*, *Protection against Family Violence Act*, Mental Wellness and Addictions Recovery Action Plan, and the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority standards and protocols of the Community Counselling Program. Services are intended to help improve the mental health and well-being of residents and their community.

## SCOPE

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) is the single provider of all health and social services (HSS) in the NWT, with the exception of Hay River and Tłı̨chǫ regions, covering 1.2 million square kilometers and serving approximately 43,000 people, including First Nations, Inuit, Metis, and non-indigenous. 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.



Located in Tulita, the Community Wellness Worker reports to the Clinical Supervisor. This position is a key member of the Primary Community Care (PCC) and Community Counselling Program (CPP) teams providing services to communities in the Sahtu region and is responsible for serving their community and the region by working with individuals and communities to improve their overall mental health and well-being as well as providing advice to the Community Counsellor, Supervisor, and colleagues on wise approaches to service delivery within the culture of the community they are delivering services in, while adhering to the standards and protocols of the NTHSSA Community Counselling Program. The Community Wellness Worker is a point of first contact and screening for the CCP.

The Community Wellness Worker is a member of the Primary Community Care (PCC) Team and therefore plays a key role in striving to ensure that client needs are met through culturally relevant and appropriate education, screening, intake, assessment, supportive counselling, planning, referral, and aftercare related to cultural identity, mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, and healthy families/family violence. This involves working with various community groups and stakeholders, Indigenous leaders and the public including a diverse population (Elders, adults, adolescents, children, and families). The incumbent works collaboratively, and in partnership with other social and medical professionals, as well as organizations and professionals outside of the health and social services system in the community and region (i.e., Community Counsellors, Child and Youth Counsellors, Community Health Representatives, staff from Indigenous organizations, Local Governments, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Social Workers, Justice and Education Departments, etc.) to promote wellness to residents of the NWT.

Home visits and community-based presentations (30% of the time) will require the incumbent to carry 5-15 lbs. of presentation supplies and aids to the location of the presentations in all climactic conditions (private homes, schools, health centre). The incumbent may be expected to walk to the sites on a daily basis with exposure to various weather conditions when moving between the office and locations for public presentations and home visits.

From time to time the Community Wellness Worker may be required to work with the Community Counsellor and/or Child and Youth Counsellor and/or other service providers in the provision of services to clients, some of whom may be abusive, individuals under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol and RCMP escorts. These incidents may occur while the incumbent is on duty, as well as when off-duty.

The Community Wellness Worker occasionally works with mandated clients (probation, social services), and others that may present as dangerous and unpredictable. As well, the incumbent may be called upon outside of work hours when a traumatic event occurs within the community or to an individual.



As a result of living in an isolated, Northern community, the incumbent may be required to travel on small planes and ice or winter roads when travelling to or from the community, or to provide service to other communities in the region.

Living in an Indigenous region where individuals' mental health and wellness is dependent on connection to culture, the incumbent will be required to meaningfully participate in cultural programs including on-the-land programs, which would require travel by skidoo, boat, ATV's etc.

The responsibilities of this position may necessitate some on-call duty and flexible work schedules.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Provide education, promote wellness, and lead prevention activities in the areas of cultural awareness, mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, and healthy families/family violence.**

- Facilitate opportunities for individuals and groups of all ages with the opportunity to explore their unique cultural identity.
- Provide information on substance use/misuse, mental health/wellness and healthy families through presentations, informational workshops, and resource materials.
- Lead the organization of, and delivery of culturally relevant educational and awareness programs and activities in the community through collaboration with community service providers and organizations in prevention and wellness activities as relates to mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, and healthy families (i.e., going out on the land).
- Provide guidance to the CCP and PCC staff on wise approaches to the delivery of culturally relevant mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, and healthy families services within the community they are delivering service in and act as a key resource to the CCP and PCC teams in terms of cultural knowledge.
- Support and guide individuals, families and communities in understanding and valuing their unique cultural identity.
- Keep the public and community agencies informed of programs, services, and pathways for service in non-crisis and crisis situations, for substance use/misuse, mental health/wellness, and healthy families.
- Work in partnership with the Community Counsellors in providing education sessions.
- Take an active role with regular participation in community interagency meetings.
- Advocate for public understanding and awareness of substance use/misuse, mental health/wellness, and healthy families.



**2. Provide clients and families with culturally appropriate supportive counselling services and Indigenous based programs in the areas of substance use/misuse, mental health/wellness and healthy families/family violence.**

- Provide culturally appropriate supportive counselling to client groups within the Stepped Care 2.0 approach to service delivery (including going out on the land, Indigenous models of care, home visits).
- Coordinate and facilitate the delivery of Indigenous models of care which provides clients with the opportunity to further develop their understanding of Indigenous and cultural identity and knowledge.
- Assessing client needs and supporting client decisions for the need for connection to applicable prevention, education or other additional resources related to mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, or healthy families while following protocols of the CCP.
- Use a team approach to ensure clients are connected to the best resource(s) to meet their needs especially during times of crisis and trauma.
- Provide aftercare and follow-up support for clients including but not limited to small group and individual education, supportive counselling, supporting on-the-land opportunities and connection to self-help resources.
- Provides advice, information and resources to staff and management on cultural knowledge, and Indigenous based models of care.

**3. Provide comprehensive and culturally relevant mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, and healthy families/family violence care coordination services; independently, with other members of the CCP team, and as part of the PCC Team.**

- Develop collaborative working relationships with other staff, Elders, and community agencies to ensure coordination of services.
- Collaborate in care coordination for CCP clients, which may include the PCC Team in service planning for their clients.
- Conduct care coordination/planning involving necessary professionals/cultural supports/services on a regular basis to connect individuals and families to their culture and community supports.
- Seek cultural knowledge wise practice initiatives and continually build a cultural knowledge base by fostering relationships with community knowledge keepers, Elders, and community organizations.
- Provide advocacy and support in case management for clients who are involved with other agencies.
- Lead care coordination meetings to facilitate follow-up support following treatment or hospitalization.
- Complete documentation, clinical notes, referral letters, and other documentation as required in the format set out by the NTHSSA standards and protocols of the Community Counselling Program.



- 4. Community Wellness Workers are responsible for conducting suicide risk assessments and providing recommendations regarding care.**
  - Complete screening, risk assessment, and safety planning for suicide, violence, and other abuses (i.e., physical, emotional, sexual, etc.).
  - Prioritize and identify community and regional resources for each client in crisis.
  - Make referrals where required.
- 5. Play a key role in the implementation and delivery of mental health and addiction crisis response in the community.**
  - Provide an immediate response by organizing a team of the key supports available in the community and work with CCP leadership to access additional resources if needed.
  - Support the creation of a crisis response plan along with leadership from the CCP management team, and community resources such as elders and knowledge keepers.
  - Collaborate with community service providers and organizations in operationalizing the mental health and addiction crisis response plan, when necessary, while ensuring alignment with the NTHSSA standards and protocols of the Community Counselling Program.
  - Update and maintain current, the mental health and addiction crisis response plan for the community.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

Will be required to engage in outdoor activities which could include chopping wood and driving ATV or snowmobile during on the land or cultural programming.

### **Environmental Conditions**

The incumbent will spend 50% of their day in client homes or in public locations with potential exposure to cigarette smoke, pets, and other unsanitary conditions.

### **Sensory Demands**

The incumbent will spend approximately 70% of the day providing direct client care, either within their office setting or within client homes or public venues. The incumbent will be required to use combined senses of touch, sight, smell and hearing during assessment and provision of care.

### **Mental Demands**

In this profession there is some level of uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, and people in crisis can be abusive to those trying to help. The incumbent may be exposed to, or experience highly emotional situations, such as suicides, as well as competing urgent



priorities. Professionals providing mental health and addiction supportive counselling services have been known to suffer from vicarious traumatization as a result of repeatedly hearing clients' traumatic stories (i.e., sexual abuse, multiple losses, culture, residential schools, etc.).

Providing these services in a small community presents unique challenges to the incumbent. For instance, the incumbent may have to deal with friends, neighbors, relatives, or social acquaintances who are receiving services, as well as victims and perpetrators, on a day-to-day basis even outside of work.

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

- Knowledge of cultural values, customs, and ideology of the Indigenous peoples of the NWT.
- Knowledge of the detrimental effects of colonization, especially the residential school system, and its impacts on Indigenous communities, families and individuals.
- Knowledge of the intergenerational impacts caused by the trauma of colonization on communities, families, and individuals.
- Knowledge of physical, psychological, and social effects of substance use/misuse, mental health / mental health disorders and healthy families.
- Demonstrates ability to adhere to a professional code of ethics.
- Knowledge of and ability to apply wise practices in the management of risk factors for substance use/misuse, mental health/mental health disorders and healthy families.
- Knowledge of and ability to refer clients to community supports and connections to culture within and outside the region to ensure support for clients and their families (i.e., for individuals who require in-patient or alternative [such as psychiatric] assessment and care).
- Knowledge of mental health and addiction treatment options and Indigenous based programming for people of all ages.
- Knowledge of and ability to demonstrate understanding and respect of the culture, traditions, community norms, and cultural values of the community.
- Demonstrates ability to relate to clients and families in a trauma-informed, culturally safe/anti-racist, empathetic, strengths-based, identity-affirming, and respectful manner.
- Demonstrates ability to perform health promotion activities in the area of mental health/wellness, substance use/misuse, and healthy families and have knowledge of its impact on physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional health.
- Demonstrates ability to facilitate individual and group learning using a client-centered approach.
- Ability to acquire and apply knowledge of *NWT Mental Health Act, the Child and Family Services Act* and knowledge of other relevant NWT legislation.
- Demonstrates ability to prepare written documents, which are clear, concise, and easy to understand by all.
- Demonstrates skills in relationship building and working collaboratively and cooperatively as an effective team member within diverse work groups and teams across the organization.
- Demonstrates ability to complete tasks / projects on time through the routine planning of



own work and organization of resources.

- Knowledge of privacy and confidentiality practices and the ability to adhere to the expectations of maintaining client privacy and confidentiality.
- Demonstrates effective oral and written communication skills.
- Demonstrates effective interpersonal skills including problem-solving, decision-making, and facilitation.
- Demonstrates cultural awareness, trustworthiness, cultural humility, self-awareness, and the ability to be self-reflective.
- Demonstrates ability to operate a computer and use Microsoft software, internet, and email programs.
- Must be able to work flexible hours to meet the needs of the community, including some evenings and weekends.
- 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:**

Diploma in the Social Sciences field with a minimum of one (1) year of experience in the delivery of mental health, addictions, and wellness services.

Alternatively, having relevant lived experience for a minimum of three (3) years in Northern Indigenous communities.

Lived experience is defined as someone who has:

- Has lived/is living in a Northern Indigenous community and has had interactions with wellness services as a service provider or participant.
- Has a clear understanding of wellness services personally and professionally
- Has been active and supportive in the community and in their regional Indigenous culture
- Lives healthy lifestyle that is founded in their Indigenous cultural understanding and practices
- Has an Indigenous cultural understanding of healing from personal experience as an Indigenous person and from the knowledge gained through of intergenerational teaching.

Strong awareness of cultural diversity, specifically, Northern Indigenous values and practices.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.



## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices is required.

### **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

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