



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Pharmacy Technician	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-17686	Yellowknife	Pharmacy/Stanton

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Pharmacy Technician procures and distributes medications and vaccines for Stanton Territorial Hospital (STH), its affiliated clinics, and select health centers throughout the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA). Pharmacy technicians will operationally support NTHSSA programs and all processes are in accordance with the NWT Pharmacy Act and Bylaws, NTHSSA Policies, STH Standard Operating Procedures (SOSs), and the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists Standards of Practice, to ensure safe, adequate, and timely supply of medications to patients and clients.

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 Tłı̨chʼı̨ 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 Tłı̨chʼı̨ 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). STH is the referral center for approximately 43,000 NWT residents and 6,000 residents from the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut.

Located in Yellowknife and reporting directly to the Manager of Pharmacy Services, the position is one of four Pharmacy Technicians who procure and distribute medications and vaccines. STH pharmacy provides 24-hour unit dose distribution for acute care units through automated dispensing cabinets (e.g. Pyxis ES).

STH pharmacy provides support to an out-patient dialysis unit by providing ward stock and other patient specific medications as required. STH pharmacy prepares and distributes hazardous products to support the chemotherapy unit, prepares sterile intravenous products for administration in the day procedure unit, manages logistics to support various Territorial programs (e.g. Take Home Naloxone Kits, Post-Exposure Prophylactic Kits, Medical Assistance in Dying Kits, etc.), distributes over \$ 500,000 of vaccines to health centers and public health units in the the Kitikmeot Region, and provides health centers within the NTHSSA with pharmaceutical inventory.

The legacies of colonization and residential schools have impacted Indigenous health outcomes and the way health and social services are delivered and accessed. The incumbent is required to honour and promote a culturally safe environment at all times. Practicing from a trauma informed care perspective is expected and the position requires that interaction with clients and families is tactful and respectful.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Maintain operations of automated dispensing cabinets throughout the hospital (e.g. BD/Pyxis ES)

- Assess and troubleshoot any concerns as it relates to the automated dispensing cabinets and determine when additional technical support from vendor would be required.
- Coordinate any repair work that may be required and assist on-site vendor technician with additional support and supervision pertaining to Pyxis ES.
- Maintain an inventory of backup supplies for the automated dispensing cabinets.
- Manage user access to system.
- Update the facility formulary within the system to align with the pharmacy information system.
- Configure drawers within the system so that essential medications are accessible to staff in the appropriate format within the allotted space of the medstations.
- Assure appropriate safeguards are in place to mitigate any medication errors at dispensing (e.g. barcode scanning upon loading medications, attach high-alert notices as appropriate).



2. Maintains an adequate supply of medications on all units/clinics

- Maintains appropriate medication stock levels within the automated dispensing cabinets (e.g. Pyxis ES).
- Performs regular top-up of ward stock items.
- Fills and delivers interim doses to units.
- Distributes narcotic and controlled drugs to nursing units in accordance with hospital policy and relevant Acts.
- Manages all medications associated with crash cart medication trays, code white kits, operating room anesthesia trays and narcotic kits.

3. Prepares medications/vaccines for distribution to patient care areas within STH

- Prepacking of oral and liquid unit dose medications.
- Packaging of bulk items for unit dose dispensing.
- Compounding of oral, topical and parenteral formulations (including hazardous medications), in accordance with established standards of practice, departmental policies and procedures.
- Follow appropriate handling procedures when preparing hazardous preparations.
- Involved in tech check tech process for select pharmaceutical dispensing for quality assurance purposes.
- Obtain training on handling of hazardous preparations and deliver to appropriate patient care areas.

4. Process and distribute pharmaceutical and vaccine orders to internal and external NTHSSA facilities.

- Review orders for appropriateness.
- Coordinate logistics and maintain open communication with all sites to assure timely delivery of orders.
- Manage distribution of 75% of the NWT vaccine requirements.
- Follow procedures to assure temperature sensitive pharmaceuticals/vaccines maintain their appropriate storage during transit and reach their destination without any temperature excursions.
- Manage the logistics in the distribution of Post Exposure Prophylactic kits, Take Home Naloxone Kits and Medical Assistance in Dying kits.
- Maintain appropriate distribution documentation in the pharmacy information system.

5. Maintains pharmacy inventory

- Monitor stock levels, make recommendations to the pharmacy manager and prepare order forms for the ordering of adequate supplies from manufacturers and distributors for a pharmacy inventory valued over \$1.4M.
- Receive stock and verify all shipments before storing stock in appropriate locations within the department and hospital.



- Validate shipment data to assure all temperature sensitive pharmaceuticals maintained their storage requirements up until receipt.
- Update inventory in the pharmacy information system as necessary, to reflect changes on quantity on hand and contracts, pricing and vendor information.
- Perform monthly out dates on medications within automated dispensing cabinets.
- Perform weekly cycle counts on hazardous drugs, biologics and controlled substances.
- Assist the pharmacy manager in documenting and tracking drug recalls and providing inventory data as it relates to drug shortages.
- Organize the return of outdated inventory to distributors for credit.
- Coordinate the destruction of any pharmaceuticals and maintain appropriate documentation.
- Participate in annual inventory audits conducted through the Office of the Auditor General (of Canada), as required.

6. Performs daily functions to ensure an efficient workflow and safe working environment

- Participate in the training of any new pharmacy staff member.
- Maintain logs, records and other required documentation related to pharmacy workflows.
- Work to keep the department clean and clear of debris.
- Adhere to strict safety guidelines and procedures when handling hazardous material.

7. Effectively communicates with colleagues and other healthcare professionals

- Field questions from other healthcare professionals and assess how to manage their requests.
- Continually assess workflow and workplace and provides feedback to the pharmacy manager as appropriate to create efficiencies towards quality improvement.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The incumbent is required to bend, lift and stand throughout the day. Estimate 75% of the time will be spent in a standing position or walking position, lifting boxes, moving supplies and equipment weighing between 10-20 pounds.

The large footprint of the facility means that the incumbent is exposed to long periods of walking to reach all delivery points of the facility

Heavy lifting of parcels and supplies weighing up to 30 to 50 pounds will occur 10% of the time.



Prepare sterile IV products that may involve consistent, repetitive motions for an extended period of time.

Environmental Conditions

The pharmacy space is limited to authorized staff only however the high demands result in frequent interruptions from general phone calls, call bell, delivery notices, request for STAT doses and nursing/practitioner calls.

For 2.5-4 hours per day, the incumbent is responsible for processing, packaging, and compounding a variety of medications which results in exposure to oral solid and hazardous parenteral pharmaceuticals, biological toxins and non-cytotoxic medications (i.e. many residual traces are present and difficult to avoid or detect).

The incumbent works in a hospital environment and may be exposed to infectious diseases, blood and bodily fluids hazardous materials (sharps, toxic cleaning and sterilizing solutions) and toxic and unpleasant fumes as a result of patient and unit based interactions.

An initial out of province travel will be required to obtain training on Chemotherapy Preparation and Handling through Alberta Health Services.

Sensory Demands

The incumbent will need to focus and avoid any distractions when mixing medications and compounds as well as when reviewing and sorting pharmaceuticals that must be 100% accurate. Inaccuracies in drug distribution process may result in patient adverse medication incidents.

Extended periods of time will be spent entering requisitions and processing purchase orders. A need for sensory attention is required in order to analyze drug procurement information (eg. contracts, vendor details). Eye strain, back discomfort and keyboard tensions are potential stressors.

The incumbent would be required to reconcile shipments received and visually verify

Mental Demands

The incumbent will manage a number of tasks and requests at once, including urgent orders, and will experience interruptions throughout the day. The incumbent is required to prioritize and re-prioritize their workload based on inpatient and outside facility requests and requirements. Mental fatigue and stress are common as a result of imposed unexpected and competing demands often under tight timelines.



The incumbent is also subject to disruption in lifestyle due to rotating standby shifts. It is normal for the individual on standby to be called back into work (almost every standby period), which causes significant stress on the incumbent's family and social life

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of medications and an ability to maintain an adequate supply of medications within a hospital or clinical setting.
- Knowledge of and an understanding of medical terminology and an ability to function within a medical environment.
- Knowledge of and an ability to operate desktop computers in order to send and receive electronic mail and conduct research over the internet.
- Ability to prepare purchase or stock orders and arrange for the acquisition of stocked items.
- Ability to compound sterile preparations using aseptic technique, such as in a Centralized IV Admixture program or Parenteral Chemotherapy program.
- Ability to recognize trends and usage patterns.
- An ability to implement and adhere to operational policies, procedures and standards related to the delivery of pharmaceutical services
- Interpersonal communication skills to work effectively with other healthcare staff and the general public.
- Time management and organizational skills.
- 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
- Ability to prioritize workload and continually reevaluate against acute demands.
- 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:

The completion of a recognized Pharmacy Technician program, and one (1) year of experience in a hospital pharmacy.

The Pharmacy Technician must have at least 1 year experience in compounding sterile preparations using aseptic technique, such as in a Centralized IV Admixture program or Parenteral Chemotherapy program.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

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



STH has a number of certifications that are required upon hire, depending on the area where the employee works, including but not limited to: Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training, Biohazardous Waste, Biosafety & Biosecurity, Infection Prevention and Control, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHIMS) and 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