



## **IDENTIFICATION**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Position Title</b>	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Community Mental Health Nurse	
<b>Position Number</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Division/Region</b>
48-17771	Fort Smith	Primary Care

## **PURPOSE OF THE POSITION**

The Community Mental Health Nurse is required to provide a comprehensive Community Mental Health Nursing Service to residents of Fort Smith in accordance with the Community Care Nursing Practice Guidelines, Mental Health and Addictions Services Accreditation Standards, established standards of nursing practice, and the philosophy and objectives of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) to protect, restore and promote 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 Tłı̄chǫ 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, substance use, and developmental activities, delivered by more than 1,400 health and social services staff.

While the Tłı̄chǫ 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.



Under the direction of the Minister of Health and Social Services, the NTHSSA is established to move toward one integrated delivery system as part of the government's transformation strategy.

Located within the Primary Care Clinic in the Fort Smith Region, the Community Mental Health Nurse [CMHN] reports directly to the Regional Manager Health Services. The incumbent works with multidisciplinary Mental Health and Substance Use services and provides culturally sensitive care to individuals with chronic mental health and substance use disorders who are on specialized psychiatric medications (oral and injectable), and/or require complex clinical case management. Services are intended to promote adherence with medication, foster self-care and independence, and stabilize health. The provision of these services allows clients to remain in their community rather than being hospitalized, while allowing families and support systems to be directly involved in client care.

This position impacts on community health and well-being by increasing awareness of and access to treatment for mental health and substance use issues, promoting suicide prevention strategies, and providing psychoeducation. The incumbent is proactive in the delivery of mental health and substance use services within the Region of Fort Smith. The CMHN may be required to provide outreach services and travel to all the communities within the region and acts as a resource for the region to improve equitable access to care according to the least intensive and most effective options.

This position operates with a philosophy of recovery-oriented care and supports clients to achieve and maintain the highest level of wellness, independence, and autonomy that is possible for the individual. This involves working with several cultural groups and serving client populations across the lifespan. The incumbent works collaboratively with other disciplines within NTHSSA i.e. Social Services, Primary and Community Care, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Psychiatry services. Mental Health Services are provided in accordance with requirements under the College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the Canadian Standards of Practice for Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, the NWT *Mental Health Act*, *Accreditation Canada Mental Health/Substance Use Standards* and other applicable legislation, program guidelines, policies, and procedures.

The Community Mental Health Nurse ensures that individual client mental health needs are adequately assessed, and appropriate interventions are planned. The incumbent provides direct nursing care to clients and acts as a client advocate, facilitating communication between the client, family, physician, specialists, and other health care professionals. This will result in a holistic approach to planning, organizing, teaching and relationship development that will best meet the needs of the client. The incumbent 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.



## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Act as a case manager for clients in the provision of comprehensive mental health nursing services to provide support to the client in the community, and to promote wellness, autonomy and independence.**

- Provide case management services such as triaging, referrals, and transitional care planning according to applicable policies, guidelines, and service standards.
- Dispense and/or administer medication to clients,
- Liaise between the client, prescriber, pharmacy, and drug companies to facilitate optimal treatment for the client,
- Support medication monitoring through coordinating and assessing lab work.
- Provide system navigation for services within the NTHSSA and facilitate access to external programs and supports (I.e. NGO's, services provided through Federal, Indigenous, and Community Governments, etc.).
- Collaborate with the Opioid Recovery Program to assist with coordination of care, provision of specialized treatment (i.e. long-acting injectable opioid agonist therapy medications), and supporting treatment plans for clients experiencing opioid use disorder,
- Collaborate with primary and community care practitioners, acute care staff, and the Substance Use Medicine Team to support community-based withdrawal management and admissions to acute care for planned medical detoxification,
- Prepare and support program clients in the completion of facility-based treatment applications, providing case management for the referral and arranging appropriate aftercare,
- Advocate for the dignity and self-respect of the client,
- Promote the autonomy of clients and help them to express their health needs and values to obtain appropriate information and services,
- Apply and promote principles of equity and fairness to assist clients in receiving unbiased treatment and a share of health services and resources proportionate to their need,
- Make decisions regarding client management and facilitates referrals to other health care professionals to support early diagnosis and prompt intervention in the disease process.

### **2. Develop, facilitate, implement, and modify nursing care plans and health promotion plans based on the needs of the client.**

- Promote service accessibility by providing care via telehealth, virtual services, or in person based on clients' needs,
- Assess the client's mental health status and physical and psychological needs,



- Recognize need for crisis intervention and counselling for common, emergent, or urgent psychological conditions and situations by taking necessary action.
- Plan, implement, document, and evaluate care to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the client,
- Develop an individualized nursing care plan including client needs, support systems, nursing interventions, and resources required,
- Support clients to develop strategies to adhere to prescribed medications,
- Promote strategies for a safe and healthy environment in client's homes,
- Safeguard the trust of the clients that information learned in the context of a professional relationship is shared outside the health care team only with the client's permission or as legally required,
- Implement measurement-based care (MBC) by utilizing standardized clinical tools, either in paper format or through electronic software solutions.
- Participating in facility discharge planning as required for the purpose of compiling joint assessments and planning care/treatment for inpatient and community clients.
- Provides follow up care to clients discharged from Health facilities such as hospital or out of territory treatment facilities based on clients' needs.
- Work collaboratively with multidisciplinary healthcare teams, playing an active role in the development, implementation, and evaluation of community treatment plans.

**3. Establishes and maintains consultative relationships with Regional Manager Health Services, Community Health Nurses (CHNs), physicians, other health care providers, community agencies / organizations.**

- Provide expert guidance in mental health nursing, practices autonomously within an interdisciplinary team, and facilitates integrated, client-centered care.
- Serve as a consultant, providing expert advice and clinical support to healthcare teams managing clients experiencing acute mental health crises or substance use withdrawal.
- Offer specialized knowledge on best practices for care management, including medication administration and the application of the Mental Health Act. They ensure care plans align with evidence-based standards while promoting a collaborative, client-centered approach.
- Provide training, coaching and clinical leadership to peers, students, and other members of the health care team to develop skill levels necessary to achieve the standard of care (i.e. including but not limited to being a preceptor or mentor for nursing staff, students or other members of the primary care team, community health center team and other health care providers.

**4. Perform administrative functions that contribute to the effective functioning of mental health and substance use medicine programs and services, and enhance program development, delivery and continuity.**



- Obtain client medications as required,
- Provide ongoing evaluation of client's status and program efficiency,
- Collect and document demographic and statistical information according to program indicators,
- Communicate and collaborate with other members of the health care team regarding the client's care to provide continuity of care and promote collaborative efforts directed toward quality client care,
- Contribute to program development and participate in committees, task forces, and research projects as related to the program.

**5. Facilitate and implement client and family education/teaching based on the needs of the client.**

- Assess the client's knowledge of their health and disease process to establish learning needs,
- Use a holistic and recovery-oriented approach to facilitate individual learning of clients and their families in relation to client illness or injury (i.e. self-care, health promotion, etc.), Identify and use appropriate existing educational resources to support the client based on the assessment,
- Research, develop, revise and evaluate on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support clients,
- Provide psychoeducation to clients about risks, benefits, and side effects of prescribed medications.

**6. Advocate for practice environments that have the organization and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent and ethical nursing care.**

- Act in a manner consistent with their professional code of ethics, responsibilities, and standards of practice,
- Participate in competency assessments and individualized learning and development planning to identify and monitor learning goals.
- Participate in the development of specialty education and teaching materials.
- Collaborate across disciplines and support the Regional Team with expertise in mental health and substance use disorders, case management for serious mental illness and co- occurring disorders, and triaging requests for services.
- Collaborate with Nurse Educators, Mentors, and Supervisors in providing 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.
- Collaborate with nurses, peers, and other members of the health care team to advocate for health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of clients and staff.



## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

The incumbent will be required to bend and stand in awkward positions while performing client assessment or care during home visits or in the clinic. The incumbent may be required to provide outreach services to a variety of sites.

### **Environmental Conditions**

The incumbent could spend up to 50% of their day in client homes where the incumbent may be (and often is) exposed to unsanitary conditions, cigarette smoke, pets and loud noises. An incumbent may be exposed to communicable diseases (such as TB, whooping cough etc.), needle stick injuries, hazardous materials, blood and body fluid.

In addition, the incumbent will be exposed to all weather conditions (ranging from -40 to +30) when driving to and from clients' homes and may be required to travel on small planes and on ice or winter roads when traveling to or from communities.

### **Sensory Demands**

Time will be spent providing direct client care where the incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of touch, sight, smell and hearing during assessment and provision of care in an uncontrolled setting (i.e. client's home). The combined used of senses is critical to all assessments.

The Community Mental Health Nurse must be constantly aware of clients' physical and emotional needs (mood, hygiene, etc.) when making an assessment and recommending an appropriate course of action that will recognize the clients' abilities, support systems and potential.

### **Mental Demands**

There can be significant lack of control over the work pace, with frequent interruptions. Working within the client home may be extremely distracting and make normal assessment and diagnosis more difficult as these settings may be distraction for both the incumbent and the client (noise level family interruptions, visual commotion etc.).

There is uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, especially in uncontrolled setting (i.e. home visits). The CMHN 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.



There is legitimate concern about risk of verbal or physical assault and unknown and unpredictable situations (i.e. Client or family members under the influence of alcohol and/or non-compliant with medication thus rendering them unstable and potentially dangerous).

The incumbent may be exposed to hearing traumatic situations (i.e. sexual abuse, physical and emotional abuse, neglect, multiple losses, family violence, substance use, etc.).

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

- Knowledge of evidence-based nursing in primary care, psychiatry, mental health, substance use, health promotion, and disease prevention. Skilled in advanced nursing processes (assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation), triaging, bio-psychosocial intake assessments, and applying DSM-V diagnostic criteria.
- Proficiency in risk assessments, clinical tools for mental health issues, and case management for clients with serious mental illness, substance use, and co-occurring disorders.
- Ability to create care plans using biological, physical, and behavioral science principles. Skilled in educating clients and families about mental health conditions, substance use disorders, treatment options, medications, and self-care techniques.
- Familiarity with Trauma-Informed Practice, Harm Reduction, cultural safety, and the Mental Health Act. Knowledge of standardized mental health/substance use tools and relevant legislation, policies, and guidelines.
- Knowledge and administering psychotropic medications, using medical equipment, and applying pharmacy-related functions. Skilled in using electronic health records, Microsoft Office, and other digital tools.
- Communication skills, adaptability, and teamwork under pressure.
- Organizational skills, ability to prioritize workloads, meet deadlines, and handle confidential information with discretion.
- Knowledge of and an ability to network resources within and outside the NTHSSA (i.e. Social Services, Public Health, acute care, Community Counselling, NGO's etc.),
- Ability to provide training, advice and assessment using specialized equipment, medications, tools and techniques,
- Ability to be self-directed and work independently on complex matters, meet deadlines, prioritize own workload and manage several tasks at once,
- Ability to lead and work effectively in teams with a variety of people, sometimes under stressful or time limited conditions.
- Ability to legally operate a motor vehicle,
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as cultural safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.



**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

Baccalaureate degree in Nursing (BN or BScN) from a recognized university with additional training in mental health or psychiatric nursing/Diploma in Psychiatry Nursing and three (3) years of experience in Mental Health or Psychiatry

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Proof of immunization in keeping with current public health practices is required.
- Must be registered or eligible to register with CANN.
- A Canadian Nurses Association certification program in psychiatry (Recommended).
- Awareness of diversity, specifically Indigenous cultures and values would be an asset. Must have a valid class 5 Driver's License

**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