



## **IDENTIFICATION**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Position Title</b>	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Physiotherapist	
<b>Position Number</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Division/Region</b>
48-4099	Yellowknife	Rehabilitation Services and Continuing Care/Yellowknife Region

## **PURPOSE OF THE POSITION**

To provide assessment, diagnostic, rehabilitative and preventative services to patients of the Physiotherapy Unit in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Rules of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) and the philosophy and strategic priorities of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Service Authority (NTHSSA) to ensure that patients realize and maintain maximum physical mobility and functional independence.

## **SCOPE**

NTHSSA is the single provider of all health and social services in the Northwest Territories (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.

While the Tłı̨chǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA) and Hay River Health and Social Services Agency (HRHSSA) operate under separate boards, NTHSSA will set clinical standards, procedures, guidelines and monitoring for the entire NWT. 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.

NTHSSA administers health and social services to the residents of the Yellowknife Region in the NWT. NTHSSA directly and contractually employs over 300 staff who deliver these services in Yellowknife, Ft. Resolution, Lutselk'e, N'dilo, and Dettah for the Yellowknife Region. NTHSSA



provides and supports the delivery of services to adults, children, and seniors on an inpatient, outpatient, and outreach basis at multiple sites across the city of Yellowknife and the Communities of Lutselk'e, N'dilo, Dettah, and Ft. Resolution. These services include community-based social services, a public health clinic, primary care services, rehabilitation services, home and community care services, and long-term care/extended care services.

There are four regional rehabilitation teams located in Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, and Yellowknife. Rehabilitation services consist of audiology, occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy (PT) and speech language pathology (SLP). All teams provide PT, OT and SLP services; the Yellowknife and Inuvik teams provide audiology services. Each regional team is responsible for delivering services within the community where they are located as well as other smaller communities. The provision of regional services is achieved using various methods of delivery including community travel clinics, telehealth, telephone, etc. Child Development Teams (CDT) are located within the Yellowknife and Inuvik rehabilitation teams. Additionally, a territorial Youth Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Diagnostic and Family/Community Support program is embedded in the Yellowknife CDT.

Reporting directly to the Territorial Manager, Physiotherapy, the incumbent is one of a team of Physiotherapists who independently manage their caseload and provide diagnostic, intervention, treatment, referral services, health promotion and injury prevention education to in-patients, out-patients, home care and community patients ranging from pediatrics to geriatrics. The Physiotherapy Unit consists of the Territorial Manager, Physiotherapy; Physiotherapists; Rehabilitation Assistant(s); Physiotherapy Aide(s); and Program Assistant.

The Yellowknife Physiotherapy Unit has approximately 10,000 encounters a year (approximately 10 encounters per Therapist per day). Patients of the Physiotherapy Unit are referred by physicians, nurse practitioners, community nurses and self-referrals. The Physiotherapist will perform clinical assessments and provide ongoing direct and indirect care, i.e., treatment, education, referrals services, based on a best practice approach. The incumbent will design and implement client-centered programs, provide instruction and educational material on health and injury prevention, and deliver workshops on topics related to physiotherapy. Unlike Physiotherapists in southern institutions, the incumbent must have advanced knowledge in all areas of physiotherapy as opposed to a specialization in one area.

The Physiotherapist works with patients of all ages with a wide range of acute and chronic problems involving the musculoskeletal, neurological, pulmonary, and cardiovascular systems. These acute or chronic problems may be congenital or caused by a wide variety of illnesses or injuries.

The Physiotherapist evaluates the patient's need by assessing physical function (e.g., mobility, strength, endurance, etc.), diagnosing the condition and prescribing, developing, implementing, and monitoring a treatment plan designed to meet the specific needs of the patient.



The treatment plan may contain but not be limited to; prescribed exercise program, manual therapy, and/or provision of assistive equipment such as braces or walkers. The Physiotherapist may identify other needs such as caregiver support and education or may recommend further diagnostic investigation or cross referral to other health care providers (e.g., Occupational Therapists, Orthopedic Specialists, Social Workers, Audiologists, Speech Language Pathologists, etc.).

The goal of treatment is to rehabilitate and prevent ongoing physical dysfunction, injury or pain and maintain the ability to function effectively in home, work or leisure settings improving overall quality of life. By minimizing disability and promoting independence, physiotherapy services will reduce future demands that a dependent person will place on publicly funded service, including longer hospital stays.

As a Physiotherapist within NTHSSA, the incumbent also provides functional expertise and direction on the delivery of Physiotherapy to clients, family, and other health care professionals in various locations in the Northwest Territories and Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut that include but are not limited to, the hospital, community health centers, residential care facilities, clients' workplace, and home.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1. Provides direct care to children and adults with a wide variety of conditions requiring physiotherapy using clinical judgment and a problem-solving approach and in accordance with the standards, guidelines, and scope of Physiotherapy to facilitate individualized patient care.**
  - Evaluates patients' physical function and need for Physiotherapy services.
  - Assesses, prescribes, implements, documents, and evaluates care and modifies as necessary to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the patient (treatment will be based on the incumbent's diagnosis).
  - Prescribes client aids and equipment, (e.g., braces, walkers), to assist patients in realizing and maintaining maximum physical mobility and functional independence.
  - Promotes the autonomy of patients and helps them to express their health needs and values by collaborating with them to determine realistic and achievable goals for therapy based on expected outcomes.
  - Advocates for the dignity and self-respect of patients.
  - Advocates for patients with other agencies (e.g., WSCC, NIHB, Income Support, etc.) so that needs relating to the impairment are met (e.g., funding for equipment).
  - Promotes the autonomy of patients and helps 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 responsibilities and standards of practice.
  - Provides some follow-up and consultative services through tele-health.
- 2. The Physiotherapist develops, modifies, coordinates, and facilitates education/teaching based on the needs of the patient, families, care givers and other stakeholders.**
- Uses a holistic approach to facilitate individual learning of patients and, where applicable, their families/caregivers upon transfer, discharge or during appointments in relation to patient illness or injury (e.g., self-care, etc.).
  - Assesses the patient's knowledge of their health, disease process and learning needs.
  - Educates and counsels clients and caregivers on the nature of impairment (via community education, health promotion, public educational material and workshops delivered in the community, etc.).
  - Develops, revises, and evaluates, on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support patients.
  - Aids in the coordination of the transfer or discharge of patients. This includes explaining and ensuring that the patient understands the discharge plan (established by the Health Care Team for the patient's care and treatment) as it relates to their functional needs at home, school/work or in the community.
- 3. Ensures the appropriate maintenance of Physiotherapy equipment needed for patient care.**
- Troubleshoots and ensures timely and appropriate maintenance and repairs on therapeutic equipment (ultrasound, interferential etc.) in areas that include, but are not limited to, the clinical, work and home environments.
  - Ensures that patient health and safety is protected through the use of standard precautions and following policies and procedures on cleaning of equipment.
- 4. Advocates for practice environments that have the organizational and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent, and ethical care.**
- Recognizes the importance of cultural safety and cultural diversity in working with clients and their support systems.



- Collaborates with physicians, nurses, 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 patients and others in the setting.
- Provides consultation and professional opinion on diagnosis, prognosis and appropriate treatment and follow-up of clients to orthopedic specialists, family physicians, community health nurses, etc.
- Refers client to other health providers or recommends further diagnostic investigation or tests when appropriate.
- 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.
- Assists in the recruitment process and orientation of new employees to Physiotherapy services.
- Tracks daily attendances (volume indicators) and clinical outcome measurement for quality management reporting.
- Collaborates in the development and achievement of department goals and objectives.
- Provides information and recommendations on capital expenditures.
- Participates in committees, working groups, and projects, as required.

**5. The Physiotherapist arranges travel clinics to provide care to residents of the smaller communities within the NWT and the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut.**

- Coordinates community clinics and collaborates with community healthcare staff to determine schedule, caseload, services, and follow-up.
- Provides aftercare programs for community clients.
- Provides necessary training to the client, family, nurses, and other health care staff regarding client programming.
- Monitors delivery of therapeutic services delegated to community health care staff.
- Delivers in-service education to community health care providers during travel clinics to build capacity of Health Centre staff.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical Demands**

Approximately 80% of the incumbent's day will be spent providing physically demanding services to clients (e.g., lifting and transferring patients, demonstrating exercises etc.) while providing assessment and care. Extensive hand and upper extremity use involved in provision of assessment and manual therapy techniques is required. The incumbent moves and lifts heavy therapeutic equipment during patient assessment, care. This often requires lifting equipment above shoulder height.

When providing treatment, the incumbent may need to arrange the work area (e.g., move furniture) to provide an area for the patient to practice skills or exercise.



While visiting smaller communities the incumbent will need to travel with heavy baggage that holds testing equipment (e.g., educational resources, therapeutic equipment, etc.).

### **Environmental Conditions**

During their day an incumbent may be exposed to communicable diseases, blood and body fluid that can result in potential health risk to the incumbent.

During home visits the incumbent may be exposed to unsanitary conditions, cigarette smoke and loud noises (e.g., crying baby).

### **Sensory Demands**

The incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of touch, sight and hearing during assessment and provision of care in a variety of settings that vary from controlled (e.g., hospital) to uncontrolled (e.g., patient's home). These settings may be distracting for both the incumbent and the patient (noise level, visual commotion etc.).

The Physiotherapist must be constantly aware of patients' physical and emotional needs (mood, etc.) while providing care (80% of the workday).

### **Mental Demands**

The Physiotherapist has the opportunity to develop relationships with the clients of the Rehabilitation Services Department. The Physiotherapist 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.

The incumbent will travel to communities approximately 5 to 30 days per year, which may cause stress on the incumbent's family and social life.

There is uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, especially in uncontrolled settings (e.g., home visits). There is legitimate concern about risk of verbal or physical assault and unknown and unpredictable situations (e.g., patients or family members under the influence of alcohol).

In addition, within the health care setting there can be a significant lack of control over the workspace, with frequent interruptions that may lead to mental fatigue or stress.

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



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

- Knowledge of current accepted standards of rehabilitation practice with a broad base of skills and clinical experience.
- Knowledge of applicable protocols, policies, regulations, and legislation.
- Ability to lead and foster excellence in multi-disciplinary client service delivery.
- Knowledge of educational principles related to adult learners required to develop and deliver subject specific training and development.
- Ability to work with individuals at all levels in a variety of organizations at the community, regional and territorial level.
- Knowledge of and sensitivity to cultural, social, gender and age dynamics as they relate to the delivery of primary health care programs and services with an ability to deal with a variety of people in a non-judgmental manner.
- Sensitivity to issues, and the ability to lead in a collaborative way to inspire, influence and persuade.
- Research and evaluation skills to conduct reviews and analyze or compare practices against evidence based and accepted standards.
- Ability to develop new programs, to facilitate creative problem solving using a situational approach and incorporating conceptual, analytical, interpretive, evaluative, intuitive, and constructive thinking skills.
- Written and oral communication skills including listening, observing, identifying, and reporting; including an ability to communicate effectively and efficiently to a divergent group of people. This includes an ability to communicate and interact professionally and effectively with irate clients.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently personally practicing diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

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

This level of knowledge is typically acquired through the successful completion of a Masters' Degree in Physiotherapy.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Physiotherapists must have provisional professional licensure in any Canadian province and full licensure within six months of hire. In most cases, this will include graduating from a Canadian or other recognized Physiotherapy Program and successful completion of the Physiotherapy Competency Exam within a reasonable time frame.
- Proof of Immunization in keeping with current public health practices is required



NTHSSA 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, Biohazardous Waste, Biosafety and Biosecurity, Infection Control, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and others directly related to the incumbent's scope of practice.

- 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.

**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