



## **IDENTIFICATION**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Position Title</b>	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Medical Laboratory Assistant 1 – Specimen Control	
<b>Position Number</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Division/Region</b>
48-4223	Yellowknife	Clinical Integration/Laboratory Services/Stanton

## **PURPOSE OF THE POSITION**

The Medical Laboratory Assistant 1 (MLA1) collects, sorts, processes and distributes laboratory samples and maintains patient results within the laboratory of Stanton Territorial Hospital (STH). The MLA1 works in accordance with established laboratory policies and procedures, the Government of the Northwest Territories' legislative requirements, and the NTHSSA's mission, vision, values, and guiding principles to ensure that healthcare team members have the test results necessary to diagnose, treat, and manage disease.

## **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), except in the Hay River and Tłı̄chǫ regions. It covers 1.2 million square kilometres and serves approximately 45,000 people, including First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and non-indigenous persons. Health and social services include the full range of primary, secondary, and tertiary health services, as well as 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 advance a single 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 Tłı̄chǫ 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.



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, improved efficiency and integration while respecting the unique contexts and strengths of the NWT's 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.

Cultural safety is an outcome where Indigenous peoples feel safe and respected, free of racism and discrimination, when accessing health and social services. Relationship-based care is fundamental to cultural safety because it prioritizes trusting, caring, and ongoing relationships between patients, clients, and their providers. Embedding a culturally safe approach in Health and Social Services has been identified as critical to supporting equitable access to care, with the long-term goal of improving health outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

The incumbent is expected to model, honour, and always promote a culturally safe environment, working from an anti-racist, trauma-informed perspective and employing self-reflection to encourage the professional growth and whole-person development of self and others. Indigenous worldviews, practices, and customs must also be respected.

Stanton Territorial Hospital (STH) is an Accreditation Canada-accredited facility located in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (NWT). STH is the referral center for approximately 45,000 NWT residents and 5,900 residents from the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut. STH provides health care services to adults and children on an inpatient, outpatient, and outreach basis to restore health with dignity. STH maintains a tobacco-free environment within the building and throughout the property, recognizing the health hazards associated with tobacco in the workplace, both to smokers and non-smokers alike.

Located within STH and reporting directly to the Technical Supervisor, Specimen Control, the incumbent in the STH Laboratory, striving to maintain a consistent flow of patients, laboratory samples and reports, in and out of the Laboratory. As part of a regular rotation, the incumbent also works at Yellowknife Primary Care Centre, providing outpatient laboratory collection services.



The STH Laboratory handles over 410,000 tests per year.

Laboratory services are provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

In addition to providing services to STH, the Laboratory provides services to:

- 3 hospitals within the Northwest Territories
- 21 Health Centres located in the NWT
- 4 medical clinics - NTHSSA
- the Department of H&SS-Office of the Chief Public Health Officer's Office

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Collects and handles laboratory samples as part of the healthcare team.**

- Performs peripheral blood collection for adult, pediatric and neonatal patients using a closed collection system (i.e. Vacutainer), needle with syringe, and/or micro-collection techniques using routine practices and additional precautions as required.
- Provides instructions to patients on the proper collection and handling of biological samples to achieve high-quality laboratory results.
- Performs electrocardiograms (ECGs) following established standard operating procedures.
- Prepare samples for analysis by ensuring appropriate handling of the specimens (eg, centrifugation, aliquoting, freezing).
- Prepare biological samples for transportation to southern referral laboratories, adhering to established International Dangerous Goods Regulations.
- Sorts and distributes biological samples collected within STH as well as biological samples referred in from other health facilities within the NWT.

### **2. Performs and reports Point of Care Testing.**

- In accordance with the NTHSSA Point of Care Testing policy and procedures, the incumbent performs and reports approved point of care tests, including, but not limited to, whole blood glucose and other whole blood analytes, macroscopic urinalysis, urine pregnancy testing, and virus testing.
- Performs and records quality control for point-of-care tests.
- Troubleshoots point-of-care tests as required.
- Performs and documents maintenance and quality assurance activities for point-of-care tests.
- Collaborates with the Territorial Specialist, Point of Care Testing and Quality Assurance as needed to ensure the ongoing provision of high-quality point of care testing and compliance with international, national and Accreditation Canada Point of Care testing standards.



**3. Assists in laboratory quality assurance activities**

- Assist the Technical Supervisor, Specimen Control, to maintain, order, and receive inventory required for the laboratory.
- Performs laboratory equipment monitoring, cleaning, and maintenance, such as ECG machines, centrifuges, refrigerators, Biological Safety Cabinets and complex laboratory instrumentation.
- Reports nonconforming events into online incident reporting software and participates in incident investigations and process improvement activities.
- Completes mandatory training and regular certification as assigned and ensures all certifications are up to date.
- Participates in ongoing training and competency assessment activities as required.

**4. Uses a computerized database of patient records to enable the distribution and tracking of patient results/reports.**

- Ensures that laboratory orders are accurately entered into the appropriate computer systems.
- Ensures that laboratory records and confidential client information are handled in accordance with the Health Information Act.
- Provide clerical support functions to the laboratory (i.e., faxing, photocopying) as needed.

**5. As part of the laboratory team, provides exceptional customer service to all laboratory clients**

- Complies with the organizational dress code policy and wears appropriate personal protective equipment when performing direct patient care activities and when working in the laboratory.
- Provides patient instructions and advice only within the scope of the role of a Medical Laboratory Assistant as identified by the Canadian Society of Medical Laboratory Technology.
- Ensures that all interactions with colleagues and clients are in accordance with the Government of the Northwest Territories Harassment Free and Respectful Workplace Policy.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Physical Demands**

The majority of the incumbent's time (4 - 7 hours/day) will be spent on direct, hands-on patient contact and collecting biological samples. This will involve standing in awkward positions, bending over patients and workbenches, and walking to nursing units to collect samples, which may cause significant physical stress on the incumbent. In addition, the incumbent will package samples, which involves lifting and moving boxes and packages ranging from small to large.



### **Environmental Conditions**

The incumbent works with and is continuously exposed (4 - 7 hours per day) to infectious agents, including biological samples, human waste, unpleasant odours, sharps, chemicals, and toxic or corrosive agents used in the performance of duties, which can lead to headaches, nausea, or ill health.

Within the STH Laboratory, there is a significant amount of "white noise" resulting from many fans and loud equipment, which may cause headaches and distraction within the work unit.

### **Sensory Demands**

Short but frequent periods of concentration are required to obtain and package biological samples. Due to the nature of the work (i.e., collecting blood), the incumbent must have a well-developed sense of touch to locate the vein and accurately insert a needle.

### **Mental Demands**

In healthcare, there is a significant lack of control over work pace, with frequent interruptions and unrealistic demands (e.g., collecting and/or delivering samples in unreasonable timeframes) that can lead to mental fatigue or stress.

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

- Knowledge of laboratory medicine with a focus on pre-analytical functions, principles, and standards of practice, including venipuncture, ECGs, medical terminology, and the ability to operate and understand complex sample preparation and collection processes to perform basic analyte testing preparation, aid medical laboratory technologists and assist medical and non-medical professionals in advising patients for testing preparation.
- Ability to prioritize work.
- Ability to listen and respond positively in all client situations.
- Ability to adapt communication styles to multiple cultural environments (e.g., communication when following elder protocols or cultural safety protocols).
- Ability to understand and follow standard operating procedures.
- An ability to operate computerized and mechanical laboratory equipment.
- An ability to operate desktop computers to produce written documents (word- processing), send and receive electronic mail and conduct research over the internet.
- Knowledge of and an ability to accurately input and retrieve information from Laboratory Information Systems.
- Skilled in attention to detail to ensure that patient information and laboratory data are documented accurately.
- The incumbent must be aware of the importance of patient and health care information confidentiality and must comply with all legislation and procedures directing the handling



of confidential patient and organizational information.

- The incumbent is exposed to emotionally disturbing situations and is expected to remain calm, controlled, and professional, regardless of the situation and demonstrate care and compassion to the client/patient and other members of the health care team.
- Skilled in teamwork with members from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.
- As part of the healthcare team, the incumbent must be able to recognize workplace and interpersonal conflict and utilize appropriate conflict resolution techniques.
- 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:**

This level of knowledge is typically acquired through the successful completion of an Accreditation Canada-recognized Medical Laboratory Assistant Program at a minimum of a certificate level.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Incumbent must be certified at the time of employment and maintain active registration with the Canadian Society of Medical Laboratory Science as a Certified Medical Laboratory Assistant throughout the term of employment.

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

STH has several certifications that are required upon hire, depending on the area where the employee works, including but not limited to: Aboriginal Cultural Awareness, Biohazardous Waste, Biosafety & Biosecurity, Infection Control, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), 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