



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Audiologist	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
48-4252	Yellowknife	Rehabilitation Services and Continuing Care / Yellowknife Region

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Audiologist provides assessment, diagnostic and treatment services to patients of the Audiology Department in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Rules of Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Canada (SAC) and the philosophy and strategic priorities of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Service Authority (NTHSSA) to ensure that the patient realizes and maintains maximum audiological functioning.

SCOPE

NTHSSA is the single provider of all health and social services in the Northwest Territories (NWT), except for Hay River and Tłıchǫ 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 Tłıchǫ 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 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 NTHSSA.

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 always honor and promote a culturally safe environment. Practicing from a trauma informed



care perspective is expected and the position requires that interaction with clients and families is tactful, respectful, and humble.

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.

Located in Yellowknife and reporting directly to the Territorial Manager, Audiology and Speech Language Pathology (Manager) the incumbent is one of two Audiologists who independently provide diagnostic, intervention, preventative, educational, counseling and referral services to in- and out-patients, ranging from pediatric to geriatric, that suffer from hearing difficulties. The Audiology Department consists of the Manager, Territorial Specialist, Audiology, Audiologists, Hearing Aid Practitioner, Hearing and Speech Aide, Rehabilitation Assistant – Audiology and a Program Assistant. Audiologists regularly travel throughout the NWT and Nunavut to provide audiology services.

The Audiology Department has approximately 5,500 encounters a year. Patients of the Audiology Department may access services directly or may be referred by physicians, public health nurses, teachers, parents, social workers, etc. The Audiologist provides direct care (e.g., assessment, diagnosis, intervention, etc.), monitors the delivery of treatment delegated to the client, family and/or school staff and acts as an educational resource to clients, family, school staff, other health care professionals, etc. in various locations that include, but are not limited to, the hospital, community health centers, the workplace, schools, etc.

The incumbent will design and implement (deliver directly or monitor the delivery of) programs, research, prepare educational material and deliver workshops on topics related to



hearing difficulties. Unlike Audiologists in southern institutions the incumbent must have advanced knowledge in all areas of audiology as opposed to a specialization in one area.

The Audiologist works with patients of all ages who have hearing disorders. Services are provided to people who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons at risk of hearing loss due to noise exposure, genetic causes, and exposure to certain drugs, or middle ear infections or other identified risk factor. Diagnostic assessment includes but is not limited to: Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR), Visual Reinforced Audiometry, etc. The Audiologists manage the Infant Hearing Program in the NWT by overseeing screening through diagnostic evaluation to fitting of devices where necessary. Some testing requires infants/young children to be sedated; this is done in the operating room with an anesthesiologist and other required staff. The Audiologist will work closely with speech language pathologists and other professions for rehabilitation of hearing-impaired children. The Audiologist is a member of the Child Development Team and will participate in meetings/co-ordination of care where appropriate. Audiologists will assess the extent of hearing loss, balance and related disorders and recommend and/or prescribe interventions (e.g., hearing aids).

Types of care delivered to the patient may include, but not be limited to electrophysiological testing, hearing aid prescription and fitting, troubleshooting, and maintaining hearing aids, designing and implementing rehabilitation strategies, consultation regarding noise exposure, etc. The focus of the intervention is to maximize and maintain the patient's ability to communicate effectively in home, school, social or professional settings as well as to improve quality of life. Some of the incumbent's patients have communication disorders and therefore may not be able to request assistance or communicate needs when required.

The Audiologist evaluates the patient's need based on presenting impairment, disability, and handicap. The Audiologist prescribes an intervention that meets the specific needs of the patient, keeping in mind evidence-based information, relevant best practice, and clinical expertise. The intervention will contain, but not be limited to, identifying other necessary resources (both human and material) and educational needs (e.g., alternative communication) and cost-effective intervention strategies. The incumbent may recommend further diagnostic investigation (e.g., may suspect autism) or cross referral to other health care providers (e.g., ENT Specialists, pediatricians, social workers, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.).

The incumbent educates the patient, family/care givers, school staff and the health care team involved in the health care plan on the nature of the diagnosis, purpose of the interventions and self-management strategies. The Audiologist also links the patient and family with appropriate community resources.

As an Audiologist within NTHSSA the incumbent also provides functional expertise and

direction to other health care providers on the delivery of audiological intervention to clients.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provides diagnostic and intervention services to a wide variety of patients using a problem-solving approach and in accordance with the standards, guidelines, and scope of audiology to facilitate individualized patient care.

- Evaluates patient's auditory and vestibular function and need for audiology intervention.
- Assesses hearing disorders, diagnoses, implements, documents, evaluates, and modifies intervention as necessary to ensure a coordinated holistic approach which best meets the needs of the patient (intervention will be based on the patient's diagnosis).
- Assists patients in realizing and maintaining maximum residual hearing,
- Advocates for the dignity and self-respect of patients.
- 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.

2. 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 during appointments in relation to patient illness or injury (e.g., self-management/care, health promotion, etc.).
- Assesses the patient's knowledge of their health, injury, impairment and learning needs.
- Counsel's clients, families, caregivers, etc. regarding all aspects of hearing and communication disorders.
- Develops, revises, and evaluates, on an ongoing basis, educational resources necessary to support patients, as well as for individuals and groups in relation to hearing disorder (e.g., health promotion, environmental and occupational hearing conservation programs, etc.) that can be carried out in pre-school, school, home, or work settings as well as.

3. Arranges travel clinics to provide care to residents of the smaller communities within the NWT and the Nunavut (Kitikmeot Region). Travel clinics are usually in conjunction with Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) physicians.



- Coordinates community clinics and collaborates with community healthcare staff and other stakeholders to determine schedule, caseload, services, and follow-up.
- Provides aftercare programs (intervention plans) for community patients.
- Provides necessary training to the patient, family, nurses and other health care staff regarding troubleshooting hearing aids and hearing aid fittings.
- Monitors delivery of services delegated to community health care staff.

4. Advocates practice environments that have the organizational and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent, and ethical care.

- Collaborates with physicians, nurses, and other members of the health team to advocate health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of patients and others in the setting.
- 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.
- Provides consultation and professional opinion on the diagnosis and treatment of conditions affecting the hearing system to other health care providers (e.g., ENT specialists, family physicians, community health nurses).
- Refers client to other health providers when appropriate.
- Orients new employees to audiology services and mandate.
- Provides information and recommendations on capital expenditures.
- Participates in committees, task teams, and research projects as required.
- Troubleshoots and performs and/or ensures timely and appropriate maintenance and repairs on audiological equipment.
- Maintains a well-stocked department, reordering supplies, when necessary, through various manufacturers.

5. Workplace Health and Safety: employees of the Authority are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and respectful workplace for employees and patients/clients. Building a safe and respectful workplace is everyone's responsibility.

- All employees and contractors have a professional and personal responsibility to perform their duties to health and safety regulations, standards, practices, and procedures.
- All stakeholders (management, staff, UNW, and Worker's Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC)) need to ensure our Workplace Health and Safety Committee works effectively, with a shared purpose of continuous quality improvement in health and safety.
- All Managers and Supervisors play an active role in workplace health and safety through their daily management: identifying prevention opportunities, ensuring staff are trained in Risk Monitor Pro, investigating potential risk and accidents, and applying timely corrective measures.



- A healthy workplace, where employees can provide quality service under safe conditions, is the right thing to do and makes good business sense.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

Approximately 80% of the incumbent's day will be spent standing and leaning over patients while performing assessment or care. While visiting smaller communities the incumbent will need to travel with heavy baggage (approximately 50 pounds) that holds testing equipment (e.g., diagnostic equipment, etc.). The incumbent is also required to lift, push, pull equipment.

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.

Sensory Demands

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

The Audiologist must be constantly aware of patients' physical and emotional needs (mood, etc.) while providing care (75% of the workday). A high intensity of listening, alertness and comprehension skills are needed to obtain an accurate diagnosis as well as to try to help patients describe problems for which they may not know the words.

Mental Demands

The Audiologist has the opportunity to develop relationships with the clients of the Rehabilitation Services Department. The Audiologist 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 10 weeks per year, which may cause moderate levels of stress on the incumbent's family and social life.

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

The Audiologist 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 cognitive and functional development and impairment related to audiology including anatomy, physiology, and pathology in a variety of age groups.
- Knowledge of biological, physical, behavioral, and mental health sciences to recognize, interpret and prioritize findings and determine and implement a plan of action based on accepted standards of practice.
- Knowledge of, and an ability to network, resources within and outside Stanton (e.g. Social Services, Community Health Nurses, Daycare, etc.) in order to ensure support of patients and their families (e.g. discharge planning).
- Knowledge of, and ability to operate, a desk top computer in order to send and receive electronic mail and conduct research over the Internet,
- Knowledge of, and ability to operate, word processing applications (e.g., Microsoft Word) in the completion of reports, training materials and presentations.
- An ability to apply therapeutic processes (assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation) to ensure that the patients' physical, emotional, psychosocial, educational and day-to-day living needs are met.
- An ability to educate patients, their families (where applicable) and other health care professionals on appropriate self-care methods and 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 a master's degree in Audiology or Doctor of Audiology degree.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Audiologists must have provisional professional licensure in any Canadian province and full licensure within 6 months of hire. In most cases, this will include graduating from a Canadian or other recognized Audiology Program and successful completion of the certification exam within a reasonable time frame. Audiologists must also be practicing members of Speech and Audiology Canada (SAC).
- 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.

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