



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Health and Social Services	Senior Advisor, Culturally Safe Child and Family Services	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
49-16351	Yellowknife	Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism / HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Advisor, Culturally Safe Child and Family Services is responsible and accountable for establishing and supporting a system-wide shift towards prioritizing the needs of children, youth and families in the Northwest Territories (NWT) - in particular Indigenous Children and Youth who are over-represented in the Child and Family Services System. The role includes the development and implementation of a new approach to Child and Family Services (CFS) that centers community participation in priority setting and in the planning, design, and implementation of new standards and practices.

Effective engagement and relationship building with Indigenous partners and clients are the foundational elements of creating and sustaining the change required within CFS to improve the quality of, and equitable access to, high quality culturally safe services for children, youth and families in the NWT.

SCOPE

The Health and Social Services (HSS) system in the NWT oversees the provision of a comprehensive range of services to a population of 45,493 people, including 20,035 Indigenous people, across an extensive geographic area of 1.2 million square kilometers, with the supports of approximately 1,400 health and social services staff working in the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), Tłıchǝ Community Services Agency (TCSA), and Hay River Health and Social Services Authority (HRHSSA). The NWT HSS system has the second highest per capita expenditures in Canada, with a complex legislative landscape and multiple Federal funding arrangements to navigate. Efforts to support improved population wellness across multiple systems are faced with growing pressures, including rising costs and budgetary constraints, stretched human resources, and rising population needs and expectations. Indigenous peoples face more health disparities than other groups due to historical and social factors that create barriers to health care access. Addressing these barriers requires new and



innovative ways of working, grounded in Indigenous health priorities and a focus on supporting Indigenous self-determination in health.

One significant challenge faced by governments is that mainstream organizations, like health and social services, cannot be separated from the legacy of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada. In health and social services settings, present day anti-Indigenous racism and systemic racism impact access to services, quality of care, and health outcomes for Indigenous peoples. Systemic racism also results in a system that inherently privileges the ideas, needs and norms of the dominant white settler population, including the privileging of western knowledge over Indigenous approaches and ways of knowing.

The HSS system is committed to addressing and eliminating anti-Indigenous racism and promoting cultural safety and anti-racism. DHSS staff are expected to honour and promote a culturally safe and anti-racist environment at all times and to interact with clients, families, community members, partners and colleagues in a relationship-based approach. This involves being tactful, respectful, self-aware, and humble to develop and maintain ongoing and trusting relationships.

Systemic racism is the manifestation of racism within organizations like governments, where racist ideas become part of policies and practices. In Canada, there is increasing awareness of systemic racism in health and social services, especially against Indigenous people. In the NWT, the HSS system is focusing on cultural safety and anti-racism to address this problem through the 2016 commitment to action document, “Building a Culturally Respectful Health and Social Services System” and the 2019 document, “Cultural Safety Action Plan”. Cultural safety means Indigenous people feel safe and respected, free of racism and discrimination, when using HSS. To achieve cultural safety, anti-racism and relationship-based care -which is a way to build strong relationships between clients and providers - are necessary.

The Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism division leads the NWT HSS system efforts to eradicate anti-Indigenous racism by integrating new cultural safety and anti-racism knowledge and research into policies, practices, and educational programs. By developing ground-breaking research and prioritizing Indigenous knowledge, they are collaborating across the organization to assist HSS teams in accomplishing the four objectives outlined in the Cultural Safety Action Plan, namely creating a culture of cultural safety, building staff capacity, honoring Indigenous knowledge and wellness, and improving community and client experience. As territorial and national leaders in the field, the team provides direction, guidance, and support to other Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Departments for a shared vision of a culturally safe GNWT system and works at the frontline of the GNWT’s efforts in anti-racist approaches.

The Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism (CSAR) division strives to promote equity, respect, and inclusivity for Indigenous people in the NWT HSS system through cultivating a safe



environment by tackling both conscious and unconscious biases and discrimination, at both individual and systemic levels. Through collaborative efforts across two units, CSAR Learning Initiatives and Indigenous Wellness and Knowledge, the division aims to build trusting relationships through humility and respect, and establish an environment for learning and unlearning, which enables the advancement of cultural safety and anti-racism initiatives.

The Senior Advisor, Culturally Safe Child and Family Services (Senior Advisor) is based in Yellowknife and reports to the Director, Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism. In addition to strong working relationships with the Child and Family Services Departmental Manager of System Quality and Performance, the incumbent has a functional relationship to the Territorial (Statutory) Executive Director, Child and Family Services.

The Senior Advisor is responsible for managing projects related to new and innovative approaches as the NWT Child and Family Services (CFS) system undergoes reform. The incumbent will be required to draw from social work practice to solve complex problems and develop creative solutions, employing Indigenous worldviews and cultural safety principles, while adhering to and contributing to the development and improvement of territorial and federal CFS standards and legislation.

Substantial changes to CFS programming, policy and delivery approaches are expected to result in a system that operates from the belief that Indigenous families and communities know how to care for their children, families and communities. The incumbent is required to work closely with staff from across the NWT health and social services system, as well as regular contact with communities and Indigenous Governments, all of who will frequently have competing priorities. This will regularly expose the incumbent to conflicting interests and perspectives which will require resolution. The incumbent will also face tight deadlines, and constantly shifting priorities.

The incumbent works across the HSS system and with three health and social services authorities (HSSAs) to ensure quality, improvement and integration of medium to large size projects. This includes working closely with the CFS Service delivery team to ensure principles of cultural safety and anti-racism are foundational to CFS reform efforts.

In light of significant quality issues and emergence of the new Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Child, Youth and Families, the NWT HSS system is committed to reforming the CFS system through a cultural safety and anti-racist approach grounded in the wisdom of Indigenous peoples and communities, and informed through public participation, engagement, and community development methodologies. The Senior Advisor position emerges from this context.

During engagement activities and training sessions the incumbent will assemble and transport meeting supplies and assist with the set-up of meeting locations.



RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide strategic analysis and advice on matters directly related to embedding CSAR, including Indigenous values, within the NWT Child and Family Service System.

- Conduct research in CSAR related to Child and Family Services at the local, national and international levels to monitor trends and identify relevant strategies.
- Identify best practices and application in the NWT which includes leading the development of actions and interventions by implementing an effective participatory approach for action planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Provide expert advice for the consideration of the Territorial Executive Director, Child and Family Services and the Director, CSAR; on the design and delivery of a culturally safe and anti-racist Child and Family Services System, including new or improved approaches to service models and programs, and implementation.
- Act as an expert resource by providing consultation and advice to DHSS, HSSAs, and other key stakeholders internal and external to the department to address CFS issues and influence decisions regarding policy, practice, and guidelines to ensure high quality culturally safe services for children, youth and families in the NWT.
- Monitor international, national and territorial legislation, protocols, frameworks and guidelines relevant to cultural safety and anti-racism within Child and Family Services standards, and policies.
- Support the division, Director; Territorial Executive Director, Child and Family Services and/or the directorate through investigating and/or addressing issues, developing correspondence, writing briefing notes, developing submissions or position papers.
- Represent the department at working groups, committees, and conferences which pertain to a culturally safe and anti-racist Child and Family Services and complete follow up activities as required.
- Create and facilitate workshops, in-service sessions, courses, briefings and presentations to respond to articulated training needs and promote projects and approaches established as priorities within HSS.
- Provide policy direction, support and interpretation of requirements to the three HSSAs (regular participation in the Child and Family Services Coordinating Committee).

2. Lead the development of Indigenous public participation approaches for Child and Family Services to support the involvement of Indigenous governments and communities in the design and delivery of Child and Family Services programs and services.

- Establish engagement tools and techniques, based on Indigenous public participation feedback, for ongoing engagement and partnerships with Indigenous communities to advance critical Child and Family Services projects.
- Develop guidelines, protocols and procedures for engagement related to Child and Family Services.



- Support training and education for staff using multiple forms of communication and media, on new and revised standards of practice (i.e. out of home placement/care), procedures, policies, directives.
- 3. Collaborate on the development and implementation of Child and Family Services Practice Standards that align with the Federal Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Child, Youth and Families.**
- Develop new practice standards aligned with legislation based on Indigenous public participation approaches and key data sources.
 - Receive feedback and recommendations from the Statutory Director, Department, and HSSAs with respect to practice standards that should be considered.
 - Ensure that Child and Family Services standards are maintained and updated in a regular schedule through ongoing Indigenous engagement, to ensure that they are continuously improved and relevant for Indigenous children, youth, and families.
 - Work with Child and Family Services Curriculum and Training Specialists to develop and deliver workshops, in-service sessions, briefings and presentations on new practice standards.
 - Provide support and interpretation of requirements to the three HSSAs (regular participation in the Child and Family Services Coordinating Committee).
 - Provide guidance on the approaches required to co-create long term plans with Indigenous children and youth in order to preserve their identity and sense of belonging while preserving family and community connections.
 - Participate in internal working group to ensure the GNWT can respond efficiently and collaboratively if/when an Indigenous government would like to enact legislation.
- 4. Lead the development and coordination of strategic initiatives to embed CSAR across the NWT Health and Social Services system and ensure that an equity focus is employed at the territorial and regional level.**
- Develop project plans; define project goals and objectives; define activities, tasks and deliverables; determine sequencing and timelines; define project outcomes.
 - Engage and collaborate with other HSS staff at DHSS and HSSAs, other Departments, NGOs and stakeholder groups or committees to identify and implement a range of projects and policies.
 - Integrate community engagement activities, key data sources, and leading practices into the overall project and/or initiative.
 - Ensure that communications flows effectively within project teams, across division units and to senior management.
 - Establish a Community of Practice for Indigenous Social Workers.
 - Chair the Culturally Respectful Child and Family Services Quality Working Group.
 - In collaboration with the Statutory Director, oversees the co-development of out-of-home placement models with Indigenous communities so that more children and



youth can remain in the care of their family, extended family and within their own community.

- In collaboration with the NTHSSA, support the implementation of the Family Preservation program.

5. Work collaboratively with facilitation team to deliver approximately twelve in-person CSAR Training sessions to approximately 360 staff on a schedule that honours wellbeing and in a manner appropriate to the individual and position.

- Participate in the development, planning, delivery, reporting, debriefing and continuous quality improvement approach for the ongoing development and implementation of the program. This may include co-leading activities and/or facilitating emotionally charged discussions and dialogue.
- Research and promote local, national, and international innovative content and delivery/facilitation techniques to ensure alignment with evidence based and best practice.
- Establish a personalized wellness plan to prevent burnout and prioritize wellbeing as a facilitator.
- Identify resources and training required to sustain work as a facilitator for CSAR Training and have regular check-ins with supervisor.
- Identify CSAR Training needs based on participant and partner feedback and develop and update content based on those needs to ensure staff development and participation in the training.
- Support the development of a facilitation guide and training opportunities for new facilitators, particularly related to emotionally charged scenarios and acts of resistance.
- Cross-train, mentor, and build a supportive network of facilitators.
- Support GNWT department requests for CSAR Training by planning and delivering non-HSS specific training sessions, and cross-train other GNWT staff.

6. Contribute to the efforts of the CSAR division by showcasing public service excellence and committing to a continuous practice of self-reflection and whole person development.

- Implement administrative and financial processes to ensure deadlines, budget requirements, and deliverables are met.
- Complete correspondence, reporting and briefing notes to increase accountability and transparency.
- Contribute expertise and represent the CSAR division in internal and external forums, public participation activities, and priority-setting discussions to identify issues and innovative actions required to transform and integrate the HSS system.
- Foster an environment of community and continuous learning, discovery, joy and solidarity by facilitating and participating in collaborative spaces for divisional staff to



carry out day to day work and onboarding.

- Establish and/or participate in local and cross-jurisdictional communities of practice to enhance training, knowledge exchange and translation, scaling, and sustainability of key initiatives.
- Provide feedback on a variety of written documents from across the HSS system using an equity, cultural safety, anti-racism, family-centered and/or trauma informed lens.
- Develop an awareness of individual positionality within the work, and a commitment to the necessary and ongoing inner and organizational work required to show up meaningfully with humility.
- Showcase a growth mindset and navigate discomfort with curiosity and confidence.
- Seek opportunities to develop and maintain knowledge and practice of Indigenous values and cultures, in a manner appropriate to the individual and position.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

The position engages in topics that include interpersonal and systemic racism, and the intergenerational individual and community impacts of colonization, including the legacy of residential schools.

Travel to NWT communities will be required approximately 3-5 times each year and possibly more, for approximately 3-5 days per occurrence.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of, and/or the ability to acquire knowledge of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Final Report and Calls to Action, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report, the United Nations Declaration of the Right of Indigenous People.
- Knowledge of and skills relating to public participation, health improvement, and project management methodologies.



- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire knowledge of the national, provincial / territorial, and local political environments and other governments' programs and policies related to Child and Family Services and be capable of assessing possible implications for the NWT and the Department.
- Knowledge of Child and Family Services legislation, standards and procedures, policies, directives, legal requirements and risk management requirements.
- Knowledge of Indigenous world views and values to incorporate in all aspects of the work.
- Project management skills and a demonstrated ability to accomplish complex tasks and projects and respond effectively to frequently changing deadlines.
- Skills to analyze health and social policies, programs and resources from an equity, cultural safety, anti-racism, family-centered and/or trauma informed lens.
- Ability to maintain a working understanding of the social determinants of health for Indigenous peoples, and the context and enabling environments in which programs and services operate.
- Ability to maintain a working understanding of Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism (CSAR) frameworks.
- Ability to apply knowledge in a rapidly changing and challenging environment, to work in highly stressful situations, and to be creative and focused on offering solutions.
- Ability to analyze, evaluate and interpret a wide range of information including legislation, policies, provincial/territorial/federal and departmental health and social program initiatives, Cabinet and FMB direction, financial data and strategic plans and apply it within the unique socio-political environment of the NWT.
- Strategic-thinking skills and judgment, as well as a demonstrated ability to research, analyze and synthesize multiple concepts and priorities.
- Coordination and facilitation skills demonstrated in a variety of diverse contexts, including working with Elders and community cultural experts.
- Ability to build and maintain a respectful working relationship with colleagues throughout the GNWT, and with partners in other levels of government as well as indigenous governments, academic institutions and non-government organizations.
- Ability to inspire, influence, persuade and diplomatically maintain the satisfaction and goodwill of HSS staff and key stakeholders in challenging situations.
- Verbal and written communication skills.
- Computer skills including the ability to work with a wide range of computer applications including word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software.
- Ability to challenge longstanding norms that perpetuate inequities within the workforce.



- 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:

A Degree in health and social services field, with an Indigenous focus and three (3) years of related experience-in a diverse cultural environment.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security

- 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: Indigenous Language - Not Specified

- Required
- Preferred