



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Health and Social Services	Senior Advisor, Public and Indigenous Engagement	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
49-16399	Yellowknife	Community, Culture and Innovation / HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Advisor, Public and Indigenous Engagement is responsible for leading the planning, development, implementation, communication, and evaluation of public and Indigenous engagement for the health and social services system. The Senior Advisor, Public and Indigenous Engagement is responsible for designing, delivering, and evaluating engagement processes that reflect the needs and priorities of Northwest Territories residents and Indigenous communities. The role is essential in advancing a culturally safe and relationship-based health and social services system.

SCOPE

The Northwest Territories (NWT) HSS system 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 staff working in the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), Tẖcẖ 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, and 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. 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 health and social services. To achieve cultural safety, anti-racism, and relationship-based care which is a way to build strong relationships between clients and providers are necessary.

To address the longstanding and complex issues and inequities in the HSS system, a new approach was developed by the Community, Culture, and Innovation division to support a made-in-the-NWT integration model for health and social services driven by community priorities and based on trust and equity. This involves Primary Health Care Reform (PHCR) which is changing the system to work with people and communities using a community development approach. PHCR supports several community-based initiatives described as highly collaborative environments where system partners, community members, and Indigenous governments are working toward a shared vision of establishing new ways of working to achieve culturally safe and relationship-based care needed to improve the health of the NWT population.

The Community, Culture and Innovation division (CCI) and Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism (CSAR) division work together in a health learning and innovation lab. The goal of both teams is to use a systemic approach to tackle complex problems and advance cultural safety in the NWT. Both teams generate and adapt new models, policies, facilitated collaborative spaces, training, and resources as part of their day-to-day efforts to advance equity. Most importantly, Indigenous knowledge and healing practices are prioritized, and Indigenous community relationships drive the divisions’ ongoing learning.



The Community, Culture and Innovation division is responsible for developing and overseeing NWT HSS system wide initiatives to embed cultural safety, social determinants of health, community development, and public participation within the overall delivery of care for NWT residents. They identify strategic priorities by collaborating with the NWT HSS System, Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Departments, community partners and Indigenous government, and provide leadership, guidance, direction, and support across the system to promote person-centered care and innovation based on Indigenous community priorities and data, with a focus on trust and equity.

The Community, Culture and Innovation division is dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of Indigenous people and communities through collaborative efforts between three units: Indigenous Health and Community Wellness, System Design and Integration, and Learning Health System. The teams strive for sustainable impact by fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement through feedback and reflection, supporting team members to feel heard and valued, and embracing new challenges to enhance skills and knowledge. To maintain their commitment to excellence, the teams continuously adapt and enhance their approach.

The Learning Health System unit drives evidence-generation and organizational learning to support continuous improvement of projects, programs, and policies of the HSS system. To assemble the information needed to inform HSS planning and decision-making, the team facilitates collaboration between divisions, departments, and with communities, using evidence-based methods and community engagement approaches that prioritize Indigenous data sovereignty and ethical practices. The Learning Health System unit works across the HSS system by synthesizing different types of knowledge, distilling organizational learnings, researching, and creating data systems to build capacity for generating evidence and improving health promotion and prevention outcomes.

Located in the NWT, the Senior Advisor, Public and Indigenous Engagement (Advisor) reports to the Manager, Learning Health Systems (Manager), and provides expert support, advice, and guidance to teams within the HSS system and GNWT departments. The Advisor plays a critical role in ensuring Indigenous people and communities in the NWT are engaged in priority setting, planning, and decision-making processes. The incumbent will lead multiple engagement system-wide activities to create a strong culture of client engagement for high-quality healthcare. Given the specific knowledge and expertise upon which the incumbent bases their support and advice, the incumbent regularly works independently and provides advice directly to HSS senior management on recommended approaches and issues related to public engagement. The incumbent's role is to ensure residents, communities, stakeholders, and Indigenous governments in the NWT are meaningfully engaged in the priority setting, planning and decision making of the health and social services system, that their input is relayed to decision makers within the system, and that decisions made based on community



input are relayed back to the public as part of a continuous cycle of accountable and transparent public participation.

The Senior Advisor, Public and Indigenous Engagement leads HSS initiatives, liaising with other GNWT departments when necessary to ensure that appropriate support is provided, and that the HSS system follows established GNWT policies and wise practices, guidelines, and best practices for engaging with the public, stakeholders, and Indigenous governments and communities.

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

This position requires the incumbent to travel to communities in the Northwest Territories.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Leads the development of an approach to public and Indigenous engagement to integrate the voices of Indigenous Peoples and communities in decision-making processes.

- Keep apprised of current territorial, national, and international engagement activities and manage participation on departmental, interdepartmental, regional, or national working groups and committees that focus on Indigenous engagement.
- Develop a framework to support public and Indigenous engagement in the design and delivery of HSS programs and services by researching wise practices, highlighting current inequities, showcasing factors that can promote engagement, and clearly articulating how engagement transforms systems and communities.
- Develop guidelines, protocols, and procedures for engagement for the Community, Culture and Innovation division programs, cultural safety, community wellness initiatives, and other system priorities as identified by the Deputy Minister.
- Create and maintain a toolkit, based on stakeholder feedback, for the *HSS Wise Practices for Engagement with People and Communities guidelines* (GNWT, 2020) to support knowledge translation and relationship-building with stakeholders.
- Identify engagement strategies for inclusive engagement with diverse people, and Indigenous communities, taking into account representative participation and barriers to engagement such as individual health status (including mental health), income and employment status, gender identity and sexual orientation, citizenship and immigration status, access to housing and technology, age, incarceration, community of residence, and other forms of lived experience with the social determinants of health.

2. Provides expert advice on public participation and Indigenous engagement to the HSS system.



- Guide and inform the development of approaches to public participation and Indigenous engagement by sharing wise practices for specific audiences and complex initiatives.
- Maintain expertise in community-based research methods, facilitation and engagement wise practices in a NWT Indigenous context.
- Coordinate all HSS public participation and Indigenous engagement as requested by the Deputy Minister.
- Provide public relations support, including reviewing project-specific public participation and communication, to ensure approaches and messaging align with wise practices identified in the engagement framework.
- Design, coordinate, and monitor complex public and Indigenous engagement plans at the community, regional, territorial and national level.
- Prepare and review materials related to HSS projects, including bridging materials, proposals, speaking notes, and backgrounders.

3. Leads the implementation, facilitation, and coordination of culturally appropriate public participation and Indigenous engagement activities.

- Provide advice and guidance on the development of facilitation guides, and selection of techniques and tools for engagement with Indigenous peoples and communities, in collaboration with project leadership in the HSS system, GNWT departments, and Indigenous government and organizations.
- Maintain detailed reports on public participation and Indigenous engagement results so that information on individual, family, and community health and wellness priorities can inform program planning and design.
- Compile and analyze data gathered during engagement activities.
- Create a systemic approach to informing the HSS system based on engagement activities.
- Liaise with Indigenous governments and organizations on key HSS initiatives.
- Coordinate events, gatherings, and engagements to meet CCI and HSS needs.

4. Builds and maintains networks for engaging key stakeholder groups for advice, review, data collection, and knowledge translation.

- Create a plan for long-term, ethical, reciprocal engagement with specific stakeholder groups, including community knowledge holders, Elders, clients in a clinical setting, and frontline HSS workers.
- Build trusting, respectful, reciprocal relationships using wise practices for person-centered care and relationship-building.
- Facilitate opportunities for CCI and other HSS staff to connect with these networks to seek advice, offer participation opportunities, collect input (through surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.), and share information.



- With the LHS team, seek opportunities to monitor and action priorities and evidence generated by stakeholder networks.
- 5. Develops and implements the development of communication and training materials related to community-based data collection, public participation, and Indigenous engagement.**
- Prepare and deliver employee orientation materials and sessions on an ongoing basis.
 - Develop and facilitate training sessions on wise practices for Indigenous engagement.
 - Provide timely, expert advice on complex matters to senior management and HSS staff, ensuring that innovative community-based data collection and public participation address community needs.
- 6. Contributes to the efforts of the CCI division by showcasing public service excellence, upholding values and priorities identified by Indigenous people and communities, and committing to a continuous practice of self-reflection and whole person development.**
- Implement administrative and financial processes to ensure they are meeting stated deadlines, budget requirements, and deliverables.
 - Complete correspondence, reporting and briefing notes to increase accountability and transparency.
 - Contribute expertise and represent the CCI 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.
 - Contribute to curriculum development and act as a trainer and facilitator for the promotion and delivery of cultural safety and anti-racism training.
 - Provide feedback on a variety of written documents from across the HSS system that reflect anti-Indigenous racism, social determinants of health, social justice, body sovereignty, health equity and a human-centered design approach
 - 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

Travel to communities will be required approximately 12-15 times per year for periods of 3 to 5 days per occurrence.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of the socio-political, cultural contexts of the NWT, and northern communications media and audiences.
- Knowledge and skills relating to public participation, and project management methodologies.
- Knowledge and skills relating to community-based data collection, participatory performance measure frameworks, and participatory research and evaluation methods.
- Knowledge of colonial history and contexts for understanding inequities (social determinants of health) in health outcomes and access to health and social services, including but not limited to the residential school system and systemic racism.
- Coordination, facilitation and interpersonal skills derived from cultural and community contexts, including working with Elders and community cultural resource people.
- Knowledge and understanding of internet-related technologies, web development programs, desktop publishing (including graphics), and electronic mail and communication programs.
- Analytical skills to critically analyze and suggest an appropriate means of action, often within a short timeframe.
- Oral and written communications skills, as well as the ability to adapt communication styles to accommodate different audiences and needs.
- Skills to lead, plan, organize, coordinate, and complete complex and concurrent projects independently or in teams.
- Ability to work independently on complex matters and to work effectively in teams.



- Ability to build and sustain productive working relationships and work collaboratively with peers, colleagues, media, stakeholders, department and GNWT staff by demonstrating an ethic of support, teamwork and service.
- Organizational skills and the ability to manage projects within tight timeframes and with strict deadlines which often requires prioritizing workloads and shifting priorities.
- 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 or social sciences, Indigenous studies, public/media relations, journalism, community development, or similar, and three (3) years of relevant experience.

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