



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Health and Social Services	Senior Communications Advisor	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
49-7885	Yellowknife	Communications

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Communications Advisor advises and supports in the development and implementation of internal and external communication strategies, public affairs programming, marketing strategies and activities to promote the Department's visibility and image with external and internal audiences. This position is also responsible for evaluating the success of communications plans, policies, and procedures to ensure the Department's communications are strategic, effective, and consistent across the Northwest Territories.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife, the Senior Communications Advisor (Advisor) reports to the Manager, Communications (Manager), and works within a team that includes other communications staff. The Advisor provides strategic communications planning, advice and support to all the Department's divisions and, when required, to the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority (HRHSSA) and Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA), in areas such as graphic design, content creation for the web and digital, communications messaging, speech writing, project coordination, marketing, advertising, photography, videography, media relations, public relations, proof reading and event planning. The position also liaises with the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), other GNWT Departments, Federal and Provincial health ministries, and external partners to manage joint communications activities or ongoing initiatives. The position also liaises with Cabinet and Corporate Communications to secure input into and approval of communication plans, and if required, communication products such as press releases and media statements. The position works with the Manager to manage and execute effective communication for the entire Health and Social Services System (HSS System).

The HSS System is comprised of the Department and three Health and Social Services Authorities that deliver a complex array of programs and services: NTHSSA, HRHSSA, and TCSA.



Since 2013, the NWT HSS 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 that better respects the unique contexts and strengths of the NWT's distinct 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 on a foundation of trust and cultural safety. Using a community development approach, the Department is changing the way it works 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, with the goal of implementing cost-effective programs that are more culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs and priorities that have been identified by stakeholders themselves.

The Advisor must maintain a broad understanding of these and other key initiatives, as well as program development and delivery models, Department and Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) priorities, governance models, and legislative and policy frameworks within which programs and services are provided and decisions are made, to effectively plan, develop, implement, and evaluate internal and external communication activities.

The incumbent works closely with staff, including Senior Management, to assess needs and implement their communications plans, as well as to analyze and respond to urgent situations and media requests.

This position develops innovative and creative solutions to communication challenges and opportunities and will take a proactive approach to communications and support developing solutions, both alone and in collaboration with other units. This position also supports the response to media requests which are often unexpected and unscheduled, and involve sensitive and sometimes contentious, complex issues. Requests often have tight deadlines that require coordination between senior management and front-line staff to provide accurate summaries to media outlets that do not infringe upon privacy and confidentiality of patients or clients. These requests may occur in high volume during crisis incidents, and the incumbent must be able to deliver a clear and concise message under pressure, while balancing organizational transparency and ensuring patient confidentiality.

The Senior Communications Advisor has the latitude to make independent decisions on their own initiative and provide expert advice to senior management in varying situations such as communicable disease outbreaks, opioid overdoses, system sustainability, Auditor General of Canada Audits, etc. Decision making is exercised within the broad framework of GNWT and Department strategic direction, policies, and programs. The position provides timely and sound strategic advice and problem-solving to senior management on communication



matters. The position must also be aware of emerging issues and trends at the national and territorial level and is required to identify and analyze attitudes and provide strategic advice and develop, coordinate, and revise communication strategies that address these issues by considering both short and long-term impact on public perception of Department policies and programs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide expert strategic communications advice.

- Work with the Manager to review Department established workplans to address the communication needs, goals, and priorities of the HSS System.
- Identify, monitor, and analyze public and media attitudes and issues to provide the best possible strategic advice and insights into public attitudes and likely reactions to various policy initiatives and program changes.
- Develop, analyze, implement, and advise on a variety of communication strategies, systems, approaches, and activities to advance and promote the overall vision, mission, values, and objectives of the HSS System.
- Actively participate in the analysis of emerging issues or potential crisis situations and in the development of communications responses to these situations.
- Recommend strategic communications approaches designed to complement and enhance the Department's policy and legislative initiatives.
- Provide expert advice on matters related to public relations and recommend the appropriate means for conveying messages to the public, such as news releases, public awareness campaigns, public service announcements, and any other relevant interest statements.
- Integrate key Department messages into communications plans and link individual communication initiatives with the larger Department and Government strategies to ensure more consistent and effective communications programs and products.
- Attend regular and ad hoc meetings with assigned Department client to provide expert communications advice to the Department's senior management and to identify emerging issues and potential problems and opportunities that require communications support.
- Participate in or lead Department-wide, cross HSS System, or inter-Departmental initiatives regarding communications and marketing projects.
- Use established GNWT communications tools and processes such as communication planning briefs and implementation plans to assure quality delivery.
- Assist Cabinet Communications on the development of issues management plans and messaging in response to emerging or urgent issues.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of communications strategies, advertising and marketing plans, approaches and activities and recommend alternatives or revisions as required.
- Create editorial calendars and syndication schedules.



2. Develop, design, update and edit print, digital and video marketing and communications materials (including annual reports, promotional materials, posters, brochures, social media campaigns, and application forms).

- Plan and develop integrated communication and marketing plans, implement campaign activities from concept to completion, and analyze/evaluate effectiveness of campaigns. Liaise with local outlets and agencies as necessary (marketing and communication agencies, newspapers, radio, magazines, media, etc.).
- Ensure the Department's print, digital, social media and video are compliant with the GNWT Visual Identity Program (VIP) Standards and branding.
- Provide input into message, content, design and medium (e.g., brochures, advertising, exhibits, etc.).
- Provide design and communications advice to departmental staff in the preparation of communications products by third parties. Review public materials to ensure they conform to graphic standards and official language's requirements.
- Recommend web content to maximize effectiveness of the website as an essential communication and marketing tool.
- Capture and process images as required.
- Shoot and edit basic video content.
- Supervise and manage contractors/consultants on advertising, forms development, graphic design and video production.

3. Provide media relations advice and support to Manager, Communications, other Managers, Directors, and Assistant Deputy Ministers to ensure that information provided to media and public is accurate, appropriate, and consistent with Department messaging.

- Develop and coordinate proactive media campaigns and relations.
- Develop and implement standards for media relations in keeping with the GNWT media policies.
- Review and maintain a clipping file on northern and national media organizations (print, radio, social media, and television) coverage in the Department's programming areas for accessed by others as needed.
- Develop and maintain a network of media contacts and other key contacts to use for disseminating public health advisories.
- Monitor media for emerging issues and provide advice and recommendations to the Manager.
- Provide expertise in the development of material for media.
- Develop concepts for and support in the delivery of media events and opportunities, media messages and media backgrounders.
- Develop news releases, public service announcements, media statements, and public health advisories.
- Maintain a list of Department and Authority spokespeople and manage contract for



media training.

4. Manage the Department's Digital Communications and Online Presence (web, social media, etc.)

- Ensure the Department complies with the GNWT social media strategy.
- Lead, participate, and provide expert advice to Department staff, including senior management, and interdepartmental committees/working groups, specific to web and digital communications planning.
- Ensure Department web and digital communications follow GNWT standards and identify new and innovative web and digital solutions to Corporate Communications.
- Ensure Department web content is up to date and relevant through staff meetings and provide web and social media analytics on program areas and campaigns.
- Provide advice on best internal communications format for employee collaboration within Department and across HSS System. This includes setting up project SharePoint sites and providing SharePoint training to project administrators within the Department and Health and Social Services Authorities.
- Create and optimize Department social media pages within each platform to increase visibility of social content.
- Generate, edit, publish, and share content (Original text, images, video, or HTML) that builds meaningful connections, raises positive community awareness about programs and services, and encourages members of the public to utilize services.
- As required, collaborate with Health and Social Services Authorities and other departments to generate content for shared initiatives.
- Moderate all user-generated content in line with the public social media guidelines for each community.
- Develop and run paid social media campaigns, analyze results, and track and monitor campaign budgets.
- Continually improve content, through analyzing social data/metrics, insights, and best practices, and then act on the information. Report on social media activities to the Manager.

5. Support the delivery of Official Languages Services for the Department.

- Work with the Department's Manager, Official Languages to ensure that public communications are in accordance with the *Official Languages Act*.
- Coordinate the translation of public communications materials.
- Support assessments of Departmental communications and services to ensure French language service requirements are met in accordance with the GNWT's Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services.
- Maintain an inventory of bilingual public printed material published by the Department.



WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

No unusual demands.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of the theories, techniques, and processes of strategic communications, public relations and media relations within the government context.
- Ability to analyze opportunities, synthesize issues, interpret business context, scope out the communications project, provide expertise and guidance.
- Leadership skills to effectively participate in Department, cross-HSS System, and interdepartmental projects and committees, and to work with a diverse team of communication professionals effectively.
- Ability to find innovative ways to resolve problems and find solutions.
- Knowledge and understanding of organizational structures in a government setting to provide practical communications advice in response to emerging or crisis situations.
- Knowledge of and or the ability to acquire knowledge of northern communications media and audiences in which departmental programs and services are delivered.
- Ability to learn and apply knowledge of communications priorities and goals, as well as applicable policies and procedures governing the management of government communications programming, including the GNWT Official Languages Policy.
- Political sensitivity, tact and diplomacy skills to ensure positive relationships with stakeholders and politicians.
- Knowledge of computer design software including InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop.
- Skilled in working with internet related technologies and web development platforms, including SharePoint and Drupal.
- Computer skills include Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Microsoft Publisher, and Microsoft Outlook.
- Written communication skills and editorial skills, to write and edit materials about a wide variety of subjects for a wide variety of audiences.



- Verbal communication skills to exchange information in a variety of settings.
- Ability to learn and adapt to new technologies and trends.
- Ability to make key contacts and know when and where to share various levels of information to ensure efficiency and success.
- Ability to analyze critically and suggest an appropriate means of action, often within a short timeframe.
- 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 communications or a related discipline, such as journalism or public/media relations, marketing or a similar equivalent, and three (3) year of experience in a communications role.

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: Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred