



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority	Home Support Worker	
Position Number(s)	Community	Division/Region(s)
57-8038	Yellowknife	Home Care Services/Yellowknife

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

Provide personalized care and home management support to clients of the Home Care program by assisting with activities of daily living (ADL), respite and palliative care in accordance with the policies, procedures and standards for Home Care, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the philosophy and objectives of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) to ensure the continued health, safety, comfort and independence of clients.

## SCOPE

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) administers all regional health and social services delivered in Yellowknife, Dettah, N'Dilo, Fort Resolution and Lutsel K'e. The NTHSSA provides and supports the delivery of health care services to adults and children on an outpatient and outreach basis in order to enhance healthy communities' well-being through excellence, accountability and respect for regional diversity.

Located in Yellowknife and reporting directly to the Supervisor, Home Support Workers, the incumbent is one of ten (10) Home Support Workers who provide culturally sensitive, respite and ADL care to clients of the Home Care program in Yellowknife, Dettah and N'Dilo. The Home Support Worker visits 4-5 clients a day. In most cases, the Home Support Worker visits the client independently, working with minimal supervision.

Clients of the Home Care Program are individuals of all ages who usually require ongoing care but are not at the point where they require 24-hour complete care. These clients include but are not limited to long-term convalescent, geriatric, respite, surgical or medical patients who live within their home and community and require scheduled treatment, care and/or support.

The Home Support Worker (HSW) is a member of a multi-disciplinary team who provides direct personalized care to residents who have common well-defined nursing diagnoses. The HSW acts as a client's advocate and facilitates communication between the client, family, Home Care Nurses, and other health care professionals. This results in a holistic approach to planning, organizing, teaching, and relationship development that will best meet the needs of the residents.

The HSW ensures the safety and comfort, maintains hygiene, facilitates physical activity and promotes the independence and mental well-being of the client in a respectful and compassionate manner.

Home Support Workers within NTHSSA act as mentors for students in Aurora College's Long Term Care Aide program and as a clinical resource for other authorities home support workers (e.g. Ft. Resolution). HSWs' provide seasoned advice and guidance to the students and act as a reference for standards of practice.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Provide individualized care to clients of the Home Care Program under the direction of the Supervisor, Home Support Workers to ensure the continued health, safety, comfort and independence of clients.**

- Assess a client's change in medical condition, noting full details of the change such as but not limited to temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respirations, skin condition, location and severity of pain, and general condition (i.e. restlessness, anxious, aggressive, comatose, etc.) and report the findings to the Supervisor, Home Support Workers and/or Home Care Nurse or other health care providers as appropriate
- Record accurate signs and symptoms and history of illness or injury (where, when, how) and chart all treatments provided
- Deliver treatment, with client consent, as outlined by health care providers (i.e. including but not limited to providing exercise as identified by physiotherapist, dressing or re-dressing wounds, or supervising the administration of medication based on the nursing care plan)
- Assist clients with activities of daily living (i.e. including but not limited to mobility, cooking, cleaning, eating, grooming, skin care, dressing, washing, socialization, etc.)
- Assist in the development of a nursing care plan and revisions as changes occur in a client's condition
- Monitor condition of clients throughout the duration of their treatment, illness or program
- Assist clients to achieve their optimum level of health in situation of normal health, illness, injury, or through the process of dying
- Advocate the dignity and self-respect of clients
- Promote the autonomy of clients and help them to express their health needs and values to obtain appropriate information and services
- Handle all information as confidential

- Collaborate with all health care providers within Yellowknife, N'Dilo and Dettah to ensure a holistic approach to daily living needs
2. **Collaborate as a member of the interdisciplinary team (in accordance with agency policy and relevant legislation) in order that services are neither duplicated nor missed and that information can be shared for the benefit of the client and family.**
    - Make decisions about the most appropriate, effective and efficient mode of communication among interdisciplinary team members
    - Participate in case conferences to share pertinent information concerning client concerns or progress, and to use the team's skills and resources in the most efficient and effective manner
    - Enable client and family to have an understanding of how caregivers work together with them to reach goals set
    - Educate team members as to the services and role of the various care givers involved in care of the client
    - Participate in home care client discharge planning
  3. **Advocate practice environments that have the organization and resource allocations necessary for safe, competent and ethical nursing care.**
    - Provide 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
    - Collaborate with nurses, peers and other members of the health care team to advocate health care environments that are conducive to ethical practice and to the health and well-being of patients/clients and staff
    - Contributes to his/her own professional development and the development of the Home Care program
    - Participates in research, special projects and staff meetings to plan, implement and evaluate homecare clients' health status

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

*(Working Conditions identify the **unusual and unavoidable**, externally imposed conditions under which the work must be performed and which create hardship for the incumbent.)*

#### **Physical Demands**

Most of the incumbent's time will be spent supporting residents in activities of daily living which will involve lifting, assisting and helping residents with mobility, cleaning homes, cooking and bathing clients which can be very physically demanding.

#### **Environmental Conditions**

The incumbent will spend 85% of their day in client's home where the incumbent is often exposed to unsanitary conditions, pets, cigarette smoke and loud noises which may make the incumbent sick (i.e. allergies).

In addition, the incumbent will be exposed to all weather conditions (ranging from -40 to +30) when driving to and from client's homes. The constant changes in temperature (office - vehicle - home - vehicle - etc.) may make the incumbent sick.

For 85% of their shift an incumbent may be exposed to communicable diseases, blood and body fluid that can result in potential health risk to the incumbent.

The rest of the day will be spent on administrative duties within an office setting.

### **Sensory Demands**

85% of the incumbents day will be spent providing direct patient care where the incumbent will be required to use the combined senses of touch, sight, smell and hearing during assessment and provision of care in an uncontrolled setting (i.e. client's home). Working within the client home may be extremely distracting and make normal assessment and diagnosis more difficult as these settings may be distracting for both the incumbent and the patient (noise level, family interruptions, visual commotion, etc).

The remainder of the day will be spent on administrative duties within an office setting where the incumbent may be required to focus on a computer terminal.

### **Mental Demands**

The HSW has the opportunity to develop relationships with the clients of the Home Care Program. The HSW 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 HSW is required to support a peaceful and dignified death of those residents that may cause significant emotional stress.

There is uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work, especially in uncontrolled settings (i.e. home visits). There is legitimate concern about risk of verbal or physical assault and unknown and unpredictable situations (i.e. patients or family members under the influence of alcohol, demanding and confrontational family members).

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 HSW 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 and an ability to apply basic first aid and CPR in order to preserve life and promote healing
- Knowledge of healthy aging process
- Knowledge of traditional healing methods as well as community and cultural norms

- Knowledge of the community and its resources and ability to work in a multi-disciplinary setting
- Sensitivity to geographical and cultural diversity
- Ability to apply bandages dressings
- Ability to use medical equipment (including but not limited to mechanical lifts, palliative care bed/recliners, etc.).
- Ability to work shift work (i.e. evenings and weekends)
- Ability to problem solve independently
- An ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing
- Ability to work with minimal supervision
- An ability to speak, read and write English (this includes an ability to follow verbal and written instruction and interpret health information accurately)
- Ability to drive (operate a motor vehicle) in order to transport themselves to and from different homes as well as transport clients.
- The incumbent must be aware of the importance of confidentiality and be able to keep personal and medical information private and confidential at all times.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

This level of knowledge is commonly acquired through the successful completion of grade 12 and the successful completion of a Long Term Care Aide or Personal Care Attendant program and 3 months directly related, recent, experience in a home care setting or other health care setting as a home support worker or personal care attendant.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Yellowknife Regional Requirements**

Within the Yellowknife Region, HSW's must be able to acquire within a reasonable time frame and remain current with the following training and certifications:

- Aurora College Pharmacology Course
- Simple Wound Care (In House)
- Vital Signs (In House)
- Foot Care (In House)
- Food Safety (Environmental Health Officer)

An ability to speak the local aboriginal language is an asset.

The incumbent must maintain current certification in CPR and Standard First Aid and Non-Violent Crises Intervention.

The incumbent must have a valid class five driver's license, provide a satisfactory driver's abstract and be able to complete a satisfactory criminal records check.

**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)

- French required
- French preferred
- French not required