

JOB DESCRIPTION

IDENTIFICATION

<i>Position Number</i>		<i>Position Title</i>
57-6414; 3352; 95131; 95066; 95060; 7424; 3358		Home Care Nurse
<i>Authority</i>	<i>Department / Division</i>	<i>Location</i>
Yellowknife Health & Social Services Authority	Home Care Services	Yellowknife

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Home Care Nurse provides comprehensive nursing assessment, diagnostic, intervention, referral and evaluation services to residents of Yellowknife, NDilo and Dettah. The aim of this position is to protect, restore, maintain or improve the health status of clients experiencing chronic or acute disease.

SCOPE

YHSSA administers public health, home care, social services and general physician services in Yellowknife, Dettah and N'Dilo, as well as regional health and social services in Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e, totaling approximately 20,000 residents. Clients of other health boards, Provinces and Territories are also served when they temporarily relocate to Yellowknife.

Forty-eight percent of all Home care clients are between the ages of 19 and 59 years of age; 46% are over 60 yrs. of age and 6 % of Home care clients are under the age of 16. More clients living in the community are at higher risk due to earlier hospital discharges, lack of coordinated discharge planning and the higher expectations to remain at home as long as possible.

Clients encompass a broad range of cultural backgrounds, age groups, cognitive ability, illness acuity and disease processes. Their needs are physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. Care must be holistic and sensitive to these complexities, as well as incorporating the resources available to the individual within the family, YHSSA, community organizations and the

community at large.

The Home Care Nurse reports directly to the Manager, Homecare and is assigned to one or more program teams (Wound Care, Palliative Care, Chronic Care, Foot Care, and Home IV Therapy). The incumbent independently makes six to eight home visits a day, and coordinates the care of 15 - 25 clients concurrently. It is the incumbent's responsibility to set priorities, develop work plans and manage workloads, while balancing each individual client's needs complexity and acuity.

The incumbent works in a specialized area of nursing which requires additional training and experience beyond that of basic nursing training, in order to be effective. The expanded scope of practice and independent nature of work demands critical thinking and judgments outside of any set guidelines or practices. Physicians and other supportive resources are not readily available to the nurse. In some cases, (e.g. wounds/treatments) the incumbent may admit a client, assess, plan course of treatment and discharge the client without a physician's involvement.

Procedures and treatments at home are increasingly complex within a very unpredictable environment. Many palliative care clients may choose to remain at home versus going to the hospital; the nurse must have the experience, skill, knowledge and confidence to deliver all these services within the home situation and family dynamics; and without the supports in place e.g. dealing with grieving family, organizing pastoral and funeral arrangements; doctor unavailable.

Appropriate problem-solving and decision-making has a direct impact in improving a client's level of health and maintaining partnerships with the client, family and community. Decisions frequently prevent complications and allow for early intervention, which results in cost-savings of significant magnitude to the health system as a whole.

The Home Care Nurse works independently in the community, as part of a multi-disciplinary team, and is expected to communicate with a wide variety of health and social service providers within YHSSA and other health boards, community organizations, Southern acute and rehabilitation units, and the general public. Staff often is called upon to provide expert advice in their complex and specialized program areas to other health care providers. The position has the expectation for continuous expansion of the depth and breadth of knowledge and skill.

RESPONSIBILITIES/ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 85%
1. Provide comprehensive nursing care in the community setting that assists clients to achieve optimum health and quality of life in situations of chronic disease, acute illness, injury or through the process of dying. Care will be provided in one or more specialty areas, including wound care, palliative care, home intravenous therapy, or chronic illness.

Main Activities

- assess the client and family's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs

- identify supports available to the client, such as community organizations, occupational therapy, mental health workers, etc.
- determine the need for Home Care nursing services and admit or discharge the client as appropriate
- prescribe a treatment plan that incorporates the client's goals, needs, support systems, treatment and interventions, and resources required
- make referrals to other health care professionals to ensure early diagnosis and prompt intervention
- coordinate the implementation of the care plan
- facilitate communication among client, family and other health care providers
- perform nursing interventions and transferred lab or medical functions
- fabricate or select devices or tools required to maintain independence at home
- evaluate care on an ongoing basis to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness, and make changes as indicated

10% 2. Support the ongoing development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of Home Care programs and services.

Main Activities

- maintain current expertise in one or more program areas, eg. wound care, palliative care
- under the direction of the Manager, participate in interdisciplinary committees responsible for researching, developing and evaluating programs, including their associated forms, clinical policies and procedures
- research, develop, revise and evaluate educational resources necessary to support clients
- prepare and present information for in-service programs within the Homecare Department, YHSSA and other agencies in the community
- provide coaching, leadership and mentorship to peers, students and other members of the health care team
- orient new employees

5% 3. Perform administrative functions that contribute to the effective functioning of the Home Care Program.

Main Activities

- participate in meetings within the Department, YHSSA and with community organizations, as required
- enter statistical information into Health Suite in a timely manner
- maintain records related to hours worked, use of personal and office vehicles, services provided to clients without NWT Healthcare coverage, etc., as required
- Collect and document demographic and statistical information

- Act as Nurse-in-Charge during evening and weekend shifts (includes resolving staffing issues and functional supervision of Home Support Workers).

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

The Home Care Nurse practices in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Nursing Practice of the RNANT/NU, clinical policies of Home Care and the philosophy, objectives and policies of the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority (YHSSA). The incumbent is guided by professional knowledge and skills, the principles of primary health care and current research. To work effectively under this broad framework, the incumbent must meet the following requirements:

- must be a Registered Nurse with current registration with the RNANT/NU
- the ability to apply a deep and broad knowledge of diverse practices and physiological, emotional and behavioral scientific principles in the community setting
- the ability to use analytical, conceptual and critical thinking skills to problem-solves and influence client outcomes in an unpredictable environment
- the ability to act independently to set priorities, develop work plans and manage workload while balancing individual clients' needs, complexity and acuity
- the ability to develop novel, imaginative and creative solutions that frequently have no precedent and are conceptually new
- the ability to communicate in a caring, professional, therapeutic manner at all times with a wide variety of clients, caregivers, and health care providers
- the ability to negotiate solutions
- the skill and ability to apply learning theory in innovative ways in order to help clients understand the rationale for change, and to motivate them to do so
- current expertise in a broad range of areas, including adult education, community-based nursing, working with families, disease process, long-term care assessment, knowledge of community resources, wound care and specialized dressings, grief management and pain management
- the ability to make informed, pertinent assessments and decisions while working independently in the community
- the ability to integrate activities to avoid duplication of service and inappropriate use of resources, both for individual clients and within the nurse's current caseload
- the ability to work in a culturally diverse environment using resources, such as interpreters, appropriately

Other specific requirements include:

- the ability to operate a desktop computer for electronic mail, word processing, Internet and to input information into a client database system
- the ability to operate and/or use medical equipment (such as, but not limited to, peripheral IV pumps and lines, a variety of IV access devices, sphygmomanometer, blood glucose monitor,

pulse oximeter, wheel chair, canes, crutches, etc).

TYPICALLY, THE ABOVE QUALIFICATIONS WOULD BE ATTAINED BY:

These qualifications are commonly acquired through the successful completion of a Nursing Degree and two years of recent, acute care nursing experience in a medical surgical or home care setting.

YHSSA REQUIREMENTS:

The Home Care Nurse must:

- be registered with the RNANT/NU
- have completed a satisfactory criminal record check
- possess a Class 5 Driver's License and be able and willing to drive in inclement weather conditions and have completed a satisfactory Driver's Abstract
- possess current knowledge of community resources
- be culturally sensitive
- apply nursing theory and knowledge in a holistic manner
- be able to work shift work, including days, evenings and weekends

All Home Care Nurses must be able to acquire, within a reasonable time frame, and remain current with the following training and/or certifications:

- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention
- Flu and Pneumovax Immunization
- Internet and e-mail applications
- Fire plan for YHSSA
- WHMIS
- Certification in basic CPR
- Venipuncture
- Glucometer
- Home Intravenous Therapy Program

As directed by the supervisor, the incumbent may be required to obtain additional skills and training in areas such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Footcare
- Wound Care
- Palliative Care

WORKING CONDITIONS

Approximately 80% of each working day is spent doing home visits, independently in the community, with the following demands:

Physical Demands

- Carrying supplies and/or equipment, weighing up to 50 pounds, up and down stairs, in and out of vehicles and homes.
- Assisting clients with ambulation or transfers or providing personal care as needed. With palliative care clients this could be several hours per day and seven days a week.
- Driving, standing or performing client assessment or care while bending and standing in awkward positions or in cramped space for approximately 80% of each working day.

Environmental Conditions

- Exposure to unsanitary conditions, cigarette smoke, pets, loud noises, and extremes of heat and cold in the client's home that may cause discomfort or pose a safety risk.
- Working alone, on evenings and weekends, in a community with a rising crime rate.
- Exposure to all weather conditions including temperatures ranging from -40 to +30, wind, rain and snow, mosquitoes. The incumbent is normally walking outdoors or driving for up to two hours a day.
- Exposure to communicable diseases and infectious organisms, needle stick injuries, blood and body fluid, hazardous materials.
- The work environment and situations encountered are unpredictable and must be dealt with independently, as support from co-workers or physicians are often unavailable.

Sensory Demands

- Maintaining acute cognitive focus while using the combined senses of touch, sight, smell and hearing during assessments and provision of care in an uncontrolled setting
- Exposure to unpleasant sights, odors and noises.

Mental Demands

- Working alone in unpredictable and uncontrolled conditions.
- As a member of one or more specialist teams, the requirement to "shift gears" frequently during the day, for example being present for a death of a child at home, then administering an intravenous medication to another client shortly after..
- Intensely emotionally disturbing experiences (eg. in palliative care) during which the incumbent is expected to remain calm, controlled and professional and demonstrate compassion and teamwork.

- The incumbent must be able to think conceptually, yet maintain attention to detail, often at the same time
- Providing expert nursing care and special treatments in homes with poor lighting, frequent interruptions and constant observation by informal caregivers
- Home visits are made alone, so the incumbent must be aware of the risk of verbal or physical assault, and unknown or unpredictable situations.
- Work pace is controlled by the client and the incumbent must adapt to the client's level of readiness for interventions.
- Ongoing reprioritization and reorganization of workload during the work day in response to uncontrollable factors
- The incumbent works shift work and occasional on-call which may cause a disruption in lifestyle.
- Frequent interruptions and the requirement to perform many duties simultaneously.