



# Core

Health and  
Social Services  
in the  
Northwest  
Territories



Northwest  
Territories Health and Social Services

## Quality Care

Now more than ever Canadians are concerned about the quality of health care and social supports. This is especially true in the Northwest Territories (NWT), where vast distances between communities, a small population and limited transportation can make people feel isolated.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is responsible for providing a full range of health and social programs. In fact, the quality of our programs is better than in most parts of rural Canada due to the advanced model of delivery. Realizing no community can stand alone to meet the needs of its residents, the Department of Health and Social Services has developed an integrated approach to service delivery. This means that residents have access to the full range of services through a collaborative, coordinated approach between all service providers within the health and social services system.

This document is intended to inform NWT residents about the range of health and social services they have access to, either in their communities or through the system's network of providers. Called "core services", these services are intended to help all residents to be as healthy as possible and to lead long and productive lives with their families and communities.

## What are "core services"?

"Core services" are those services and programs available to all residents of the NWT throughout their lives, regardless of age, sex, race, culture or location. These services include a complete range of services for individuals and families designed to protect and promote wellness, prevent illness and trauma, and provide diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. They reflect the need to balance treatment-oriented services with prevention and promotion services in order to achieve the highest level of health and well being for all NWT residents.

*The Department of Health and Social Services' mandate is to promote, protect and provide for the health and well-being of the people of the Northwest Territories.*

## What is included in NWT core services?

Core services have been grouped into six broad categories:

### Diagnostic and Curative Services

Services that are required to diagnose and provide treatment.

Examples:



First aid



Treatment of broken bones



Access to specialists for internal medicine, general surgery, orthopedics, etc.



Neuro-surgery and organ transplants at facilities in Edmonton

### Rehabilitation Services

Services to improve and maintain the functional independence of clients with impairment from injury, chronic disorder or disability.

Examples:



Home support to assist with daily living for individuals suffering from an injury



Physiotherapy for a knee injury



Access to audiology and ear/nose/throat specialists



Referral to a specialized rehabilitation centre for individuals that have experienced a stroke, brain injury, etc.

### Protection Services

Services to safeguard the health and well being of families and communities.

Examples:



Protection for children at risk



Family violence shelters



Facilitate the adoption of children



Referral to a specialized psychiatric facility for individuals at risk of harm to themselves or to others

### Continuing Care Services

Services that maintain or improve physical, social and psychological health.

Examples:



Home support services such as foot care



Long-term care in a facility



Community



Regional



Territorial



Out-of-Territory



Training provided for palliative care



Specialized assessments to create plans of care for geriatric (elderly) patients

## Promotion and Prevention Services

Services that improve the health status and overall quality of life.

Examples:



Immunization programs to reduce the spread of preventable diseases (eg. measles, whooping cough, tetanus, chicken pox)



Healthy eating/lifestyle advice to individuals, schools and daycares



Awareness campaigns on tobacco or alcohol use



Working with Federal and Provincial partners to develop healthy public policies

## Mental Health and Addictions Services

Services that assist those with a mental illness, addiction or concurrent disorders to receive the care and support they need to live in optimal health.

Examples:



Education and prevention on mental health and addictions



Counseling for mental health issues



Psychiatric and psychological counseling services



Specialized addiction treatment services

## What factors shape the delivery of core services?

Not all core services can be provided in all communities, either here in the NWT or elsewhere in Canada. We must determine when and how these services are made available. The Department has a specific set of principles to guide the delivery of core services within the health and social services system, including:

- a patient and client-focused approach to service delivery
- ease and equitable access to services
- competent, quality care
- a single, sustainable system of services
- personal responsibility
- information driven
- shared accountability
- transparency



Community



Regional



Territorial



Out-of-Territory

## **Who is responsible for the delivery of core services?**

Health and Social Services Authorities are the primary providers of core services. The Authorities employ front-line staff to respond to residents' needs in communities located within their service delivery region. Some services are not available within a region – these services are referred to other territorial facilities and service providers. And some services are only available from specialized facilities or professionals located outside of the NWT.

## **How are core services made available to NWT residents?**

Not all core services can be provided in every community. Some core services will only be available on a scheduled basis by visiting professionals. Others will require a referral to another NWT community, or, occasionally, to a professional or facility outside of the territory. This is especially true with individuals involving treatment for relatively rare conditions or services requiring a high degree of specialized knowledge and equipment. An example of such advanced care is radiation therapy used in various cancer treatments.

Primary, or first level, care is the first and most important level of service. Every resident will have access to a team of primary care providers to supply basic clinical assessment and treatment, front-line counseling, first aid, emergency care, aftercare, and monitoring of a plan of care. Primary care providers are able to determine whether a referral is required for more specific care and treatment than what is available in the community. Support teams of professionals will provide specialized services through visitation or referral to regional or territorial facilities.

Secondary care refers to services located within regional or territorial hospitals or other facilities in the NWT that respond to advanced and/or specialized needs. It includes internal medicine and surgery, alcohol and drug treatment, psychiatry, pediatrics (children's services), obstetrics (birthing services) and more advanced diagnostic services such as laboratory or radiology services to identify disease or illness.

Tertiary care refers to highly specialized diagnostic and treatment services that normally must be accessed by referral to a specialist or facility outside the NWT.

## For More Information

This brochure provides an overview of core health and social services accessible to all NWT residents. These services are a key element of the Integrated Health and Social Services Delivery Model, a model that describes how and where services are to be provided. The model is based on the philosophy of providing the right service to the right people at the right time.

For more information about services available to you, please contact the Health and Social Services Authority in your region:

**Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority**

Telephone (867) 695-3815

**Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Authority**

Telephone (867) 777-8000

**Fort Smith Health and Social Services Authority**

Telephone (867) 872-6200

**Hay River Community Health Board**

Telephone (867) 874-7100

**Dogrib Community Services Board**

Telephone (867) 392-3000

**Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority**

Telephone (867) 873-7276

**Stanton Territorial Health Authority**

Telephone (867) 669-4111

For more information on the Integrated Service Delivery Model, contact the Department of Health and Social Services at (867) 920-6173.