

JOB DESCRIPTION

Mental Health Manager

Health Policy and Advocacy

Summary of Duties

The Mental Health Manager provides strategic and operational leadership for Nishnawbe Aski Nation's mental health policy, advocacy, planning, funding, and system coordination work. The Manager is responsible for translating community priorities, NAN leadership direction, funding requirements, and emerging mental health needs into coordinated plans, investments, partnerships, engagement, policy advice, and measurable outcomes. The position leads the Mental Health team; manages financial, human, and program resources; maintains strong relationships with NAN First Nations, Tribal Councils, Indigenous health partners, government and health-system partners; and provides leadership for the continued development and implementation of the NAN Mental Health Plan and other mental health priorities approved by NAN leadership.

- Lead the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of NAN's mental health priorities, ensuring work is aligned with community needs, leadership direction, organizational priorities, and approved funding commitments.
- Provide strategic leadership for the continued development, community validation, implementation planning, and evaluation of the NAN Mental Health Plan.
- Develop annual and multi-year workplans, establish priorities and timelines, monitor progress, identify risks and barriers, and adjust implementation approaches as required.
- Manage the Mental Health portfolio's financial, human, and program resources, including budget development, forecasting, expenditure monitoring, variance management, approvals, and year-end reconciliation.
- Ensure required financial, narrative, output, and outcome reporting is accurate, supported by records, and submitted within required timelines.
- Oversee community and partner investments, contracts, professional services, and related accountability requirements, ensuring expenditures and deliverables remain connected to approved mental health priorities.
- Lead or support funding proposals, renewal requests, business cases, and other submissions required to sustain or strengthen mental health initiatives.
- Lead mental health policy analysis, advocacy, systems planning, and government relations on issues affecting NAN First Nations.
- Prepare briefing notes, policy positions, recommendations, speaking points, reports, presentations, and other materials for the Director, Senior Management, Executive Council, NAN leadership, and external decisionmakers.
- Monitor relevant government policy, legislation, funding changes, and health-system developments and assess potential impacts, opportunities, and risks for NAN First Nations.

-
- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate engagement with NAN First Nations, Tribal Councils, community leadership and staff, youth, Elders/Knowledge Keepers, service providers, and other groups as appropriate to the work.
 - Ensure engagement approaches are respectful, relationship-based, culturally grounded, trauma-informed, and responsive to the realities of NAN communities.
 - Identify community mental health priorities, service gaps, access barriers, referral challenges, and opportunities to strengthen local and regional capacity and service pathways.
 - Ensure community and partner feedback is documented accurately, followed up on, and incorporated into policy, planning, advocacy, and implementation where appropriate.
 - Build and maintain partnerships that improve communication, service coordination, information sharing, and continuity of care across community, regional, and provincial systems.
 - Support organizational responses to emerging mental health priorities, crises, service disruptions, and other urgent issues by coordinating information, advocacy, planning, and partner communication.
 - Coordinate research, environmental scans, policy reviews, data analysis, program evaluation, and other evidence-gathering required to inform mental health planning and advocacy.
 - Develop practical performance measures and reporting approaches that demonstrate implementation, reach, outcomes, lessons learned, and remaining service gaps without creating unnecessary reporting burden.
 - Maintain accurate and confidential records of key decisions, approvals, correspondence, engagement findings, reporting, agreements, and program documentation in accordance with NAN policies.
 - Maintain strong working relationships with NAN First Nations, Tribal Councils, regional and national Indigenous organizations, government agencies, health organizations, and other external partners.
 - Work collaboratively with other NAN departments to align priorities, reduce duplication, and support coordinated organizational responses.
 - Support the NAN Chiefs-in-Assembly, leadership meetings, conferences, and other NAN activities as required.

Management Duties

Supervise Mental Health staff and manage the team in accordance with NAN policies and procedures. The Manager is responsible for building a coordinated, accountable, and supportive team environment and ensuring sufficient capacity to advance the Mental Health portfolio.

- Oversee day-to-day workflow, priorities, workload distribution, resource allocation, and task assignment.
- Set clear performance goals and expectations, provide regular supervision and feedback, and address performance or operational issues in a timely and fair manner.
- Identify staff training and professional development needs and support opportunities that strengthen policy, engagement, project management, and mental health system capacity.

- Support recruitment, onboarding, orientation, succession planning, and continuity of work during vacancies or transitions.
- Facilitate effective communication within the team and ensure staff understand current priorities, decisions, deadlines, and organizational expectations.
- Coordinate the work of consultants and external advisors where applicable and ensure their work is integrated with internal priorities and staff responsibilities.
- Participate in management and cross-departmental meetings and contribute to broader Health Policy and Advocacy and organizational planning.
- Provide management guidance and decision-making support for urgent operational matters when required.

Other

- Attend organizational meetings, training, and professional development and comply with NAN policies, procedures, protocols, and confidentiality requirements.
- Travel regularly to NAN First Nations and other locations for community engagement, partner meetings, government meetings, and organizational business. Travel may include remote aircraft travel and multi-day overnight stays.
- Represent NAN professionally and effectively in internal and external settings.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

Cross Training

The Manager may be required to provide oversight or backup support for core departmental administrative processes to maintain continuity of operations, including:

- Preparation of agendas, meeting materials, minutes, and follow-up documentation.
- Review and approval of staff and delegate travel arrangements within delegated authority.
- Review and approval of purchase orders, cheque requisitions, honoraria, vendor payments, and related administrative documentation in accordance with NAN procedures.

Competencies And Qualifications:

Candidate must possess the following skills and attributes:

Education:

A bachelor's degree in health, social work, public policy, Indigenous studies, administration, or a related field, or an equivalent combination of education and relevant experience, is required. A graduate degree is considered an asset.

Continuing education may be required to remain current in the field or maintain professional credentials.

Credentials:

Not Applicable

Experience:

A minimum of five years of progressively responsible experience in mental health, Indigenous health, health policy, program management, community engagement, or a related field is preferred, including demonstrated management or supervisory experience. Experience managing government-funded initiatives, budgets, reporting requirements, partnerships, and complex multi-stakeholder projects is strongly preferred.

Knowledge & Skills:

The Mental Health Manager requires strong knowledge of First Nations mental health and wellness, the health system, community engagement, policy and advocacy, program management, financial accountability, and professional standards relevant to the role, including:

- Strong knowledge of First Nations mental health and wellness priorities, health-system challenges, and the social, cultural, geographic, and service realities affecting NAN communities.
- Demonstrated understanding of First Nations culture, traditional practices, community protocols, and distinctions-based approaches to health and wellness.
- Strong strategic planning, policy analysis, research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.
- Demonstrated ability to manage complex budgets, financial reporting, forecasts, funding requirements, and organizational resources.
- Excellent written communication skills, including the ability to prepare concise briefing notes, reports, policy documents, funding submissions, correspondence, and executive-level materials.
- Strong facilitation, presentation, consultation, and community engagement skills.
- Ability to build and maintain respectful working relationships with First Nations leadership and staff, government representatives, health organizations, funders, consultants, and other partners.
- Strong project management and organizational skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities, deadlines, travel, and emerging issues simultaneously.
- Sound judgement, political acuity, diplomacy, discretion, and the ability to work with sensitive and confidential information.
- Demonstrated leadership, staff supervision, coaching, delegation, conflict resolution, and team-development skills.
- Strong computer skills, including proficiency with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, SharePoint, and related project, reporting, and collaboration tools.
- Ability to work independently, take initiative, and lead projects through to completion while maintaining appropriate consultation and approvals.
- Fluency in a NAN language, including Cree, Anisininew, or Ojibway, is considered an asset.

Effort:

- Work involves extended periods of computer use, writing, analysis, meetings, and document review.

- The position requires sustained attention to multiple complex priorities, deadlines, financial responsibilities, and stakeholder relationships.
- Community engagement and travel may require long days, flexibility in scheduling, and work outside regular office hours.

Working Conditions:

- Work is performed in office, virtual, meeting, and community settings.
- Regular travel within NAN territory and to other locations may be required by motor vehicle, commercial aircraft, charter aircraft, or small aircraft.
- Travel may include remote communities, variable weather conditions, day trips, and multi-day overnight travel.
- The position may be required to respond to time-sensitive organizational or community mental health matters.

Financial Authority

This position has the authority to approve expenditures up to \$15,000.00 in accordance with NAN policies and delegated financial authority.

Accountability

This position is under the day-to-day supervision of the Director of Health Policy and Advocacy, with further accountability to the Chief Administrative Officer for the effective management and performance of the Mental Health portfolio.