Region of Waterloo Public Health Nurse Role Profile

Department: Public Health & Emergency Services
Union: ONA (15)
Reports To: Assigned Manager
Revised: August 18, 2020

Division, Job Code & Title:

Social Determinants of Health
- R01595: Social Determinants of Health (Healthy Living)
- R01509: Social Determinants of Health (Infectious Disease, Dental & Sexual Health)
- R01603: Social Determinants of Health (Child & Family Health)

Infectious Disease, Dental & Sexual Health (IDS)
- R01190/91: Vaccine Preventable Disease
- R01174/75: Sexual Health & Harm Reduction
- R01168/69: Infectious Disease & Tuberculosis Control

Healthy Living (HLV)
- R01299/1300: Tobacco Programs
- R01422/23: Chronic Disease, Injury & Substance Misuse Prevention
- R01184/85: Child & Family Health Promotion

Child & Family Health (CFH)
- R01180/81: Child & Family Health
- R01184/85: Child & Family Health Promotion
- R01170/71: Reproductive Health

This is a role profile for all Region of Waterloo Public Health Nursing jobs. Unique attributes specific to an individual job or entire Division (noted above with the exception of Social Determinants of Health as its own area) are indicated throughout the profile by job code or division/area.

General Purpose:

Provides public health nursing services with a focus on health promotion, health protection and disease and injury prevention specific to assigned program area, and in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards and the College of Nurses of Ontario standards and practices as defined by the Regulated Health Professions Act, the Nursing Act and consistent with the mission, vision, values, and strategic direction of the Department.

Duties/Responsibilities Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:

Applies nursing science and the nursing care process to all client groups. Provides case management, health counselling, consultation, and education and resources to targeted individuals, groups, and stakeholders. Completes screening and intake assessments.

Maintains client and committee records (electronic and manual). Completes documentation, reports, and statistics.
Develops and implements communication strategies to educate and encourage behaviour change at the individual, community, and policy level as it relates to improving the health status of assigned priority or universal populations.

Implements community engagement strategies to build the capacity of community groups and networks; provides support, guidance and knowledge to help groups identify and influence determinants of health.

Coordinates consultation and planning teams within the department and in the broader community, involving various agencies and staff.

Advocates for policy changes related to improved access and health status specific to assigned priority or universal populations.

Engages in collaborative, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral approaches to address health risks of priority or universal populations. Collaborates and develops effective relationships with colleagues and other community professionals and stakeholders in the development and delivery of health promotion and protection activities for assigned priority or universal populations, and to facilitate continuity of care and contribute to comprehensive client care with optimal outcomes for priority or universal populations.

Uses harm reduction principles grounded in the concepts of health equity and social justice to identify and reduce or remove risk factors in a variety of environments and settings, (e.g., homes, neighbourhoods, community sites, workplaces, and schools).

Participates in surveillance activities and analysis and uses data to identify and address health issues within a population or community. Monitors, analyzes, and interprets information (e.g., health status data, community needs assessment, current research data, and patterns/trends in epidemiological data and service delivery) as it relates to strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs and services for priority or universal populations.

Engages in research and monitors health related publications, trends and frameworks to guide program development, inform practice and improve the health of priority or universal populations. Evaluates and modifies health promotion programs as needed.

Develops and actively participates in an individual continuous professional development plan to support ongoing quality improvement and maintain professional nursing and public health standards. Furthers professional competence by participating in various programs, seminars, and workshops.

Provides nursing expertise in major departmental initiatives such as mass immunization campaigns and emergency response.

Acts as a preceptor to nursing students and volunteers.

Represents the department, division, and/or program on community initiatives, committees, and coalitions.

Keeps manager informed of pertinent day to day issues related to work assignment.
Performs other related duties, as assigned.

**Duties/Responsibilities Specific to Job(s) Identified:**

R01190/91, R01174/75, R01168/69: Performs the intake role in the provision of clinical services. Reviews records and lab results for completeness and takes action to ensure appropriate treatment referrals. Participates in the enforcement of relevant legislation.

R01190/91: Investigates, reports, and documents reports of adverse vaccine reactions and, following subsequent approval by MOH or designate, provides recommendations to individuals regarding future vaccination needs and precautions.

R01299/1300: Identifies, investigates, and eliminates health hazards associated with tobacco use and responds to complaints from citizens regarding such hazards. Provides clinical services specific to smoking cessation.

**Responsibility for Material & Financial Resources Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Maintains and safely handles a computer/tablet, cell phone, audiovisual equipment, program materials, and educational materials. Informs manager regarding equipment and repair needs.

**Responsibility for Material & Financial Resources Specific to Job(s) Identified:**

R01190/91, R01174/75, R01168/69: Maintains an inventory of clinic supplies, vaccines, and medication; compiles order for supplies for approval of manager.

R01190/91: Assists in the implementation of vaccine storage and custody standards within the Department, physician offices, and other community sites. Ensures all vaccines are maintained in cold chain as per Ontario Public Health Standards and Departmental policies..

R01174/75: Reviews documentation of appropriate OHIP billings for STD clinic for compensation of physician services. Collects fees for birth control products from clients.

R01180/81, R01184/85, R01170/71: Ensures the collection of registration fees for a variety of training sessions/workshops. Regularly distributes food vouchers. Ensures cash payment to providers of transportation and child care. Keeps records of transactions.

**Nature & Impact of Decision-making Errors Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Inability to defuse emotionally charged client situations, errors in assessing clients’ conditions or situations, inaccurate chart reviews, or incorrect intervention or counselling, could lead to increased risk of illness or injury to clients, resulting in possible individual or corporate litigation, loss of confidence in services provided by the Department and negative media attention.

Errors in communicating program initiatives to stakeholders and the media could undermine credibility and public trust and cause embarrassment to the Department and Region. Errors in negotiating and developing promotion programs could result in inefficient and costly use of personnel and resources, as well as compromising community relations and collaborative efforts.
Release of confidential or sensitive information concerning program plans and clients of other agencies without proper authority could adversely affect individuals’ health and public relations, and cause embarrassment to the Region, resulting in possible corporate litigation.

Failure to recognize and report risk management issues to the manager, related to volunteers, clients and community members’ participation, could result in liability for the Region.

Failure to follow established clinical protocols concerning medication, vaccination, client medical history or incomplete data collection could result in serious illness or injury as a result of inappropriate treatment or recommendations to client.

**Nature & Impact of Decision-making Errors Specific to Job(s) Identified:**

R01180/81, R01184/85, R01170/71: Errors in the interpretation of Federal and Provincial regulations and Municipal by-laws, particularly in relation to tobacco use and advertising, could inconvenience vendors, cause embarrassment to the Region, and result in possible litigation.

**Responsibility for Supervision of Others Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Acts as a preceptor, which includes assigning, monitoring, and coordinating learning assignments for unpaid nursing students and volunteers assigned to the program area for field practice and/or observation.

**Responsibility for Supervision of Others Specific to Job(s) Identified:**

R01180/81: Acts as case manager for families; directs and monitors family assignment with family visitors, peer health worker, and other volunteers.

**Internal Contacts Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Consults extensively with all levels of staff to carry out Ontario Public Health Standards, through implementation of program operational plans and delivery of multi-disciplinary health services. Consults with, and provides in-service training to other program, division, and Regional staff. Regularly communicates and consults with manager, as required.

**Internal Contacts Specific to Job(s) Identified:**

R01190/91, R01174/75, R01168/69: Advises manager, Medical Officer of Health (MOH) of reported cases and seeks recommendations for follow-up in complex cases.

**External Contacts Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Consults with and initiates proactive contacts with a variety of organizations (e.g., school boards, health, education, recreation, and social service professionals, community agencies, neighbourhood
associations, universities and colleges, the public, media, workplaces, unions and labour groups, support groups, area municipalities) regarding risk and needs assessments, program development and implementation, and achieving program objectives. Regularly consults with colleagues in other health units, and provincial and federal ministries to discuss programs and services. Participates in provincial planning bodies, as required. Works with external research consultants, as required.

**Mental/Sensory & Physical Effort Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Works in accordance with Regional and Departmental policies and procedures as well as the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Standards, Ontario Public Health Standards, Health Protection and Promotion Act, Health Care Consent Act, Personal Health Information Protection of Privacy Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Nursing Act, Child and Family Services Act, and other related legislation and professional guidelines and standards.

Maintains professional competence as a Registered Nurse by the College of Nurses of Ontario as defined by the Regulated Health Professions Act.

Works independently in the community and resolves day-to-day issues in work assignments without readily available consultation with manager. Refers more complex issues to manager. Provides nursing services within the scope of practice as defined by the Regulated Health Professions Act and under Medical Directives of the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and Associate Medical Officer of Health (AMOH).

Makes independent decisions in emergency situations with prompt notification to manager, director, and/or MOH/AMOH. Assists in decision-making at multi-disciplinary program meetings, in the division, department, and community. Applies the nursing process (assess, plan, implement, evaluate) in interactions with clients and makes referrals as required. Exercises professional discretion and accountability for practice.

Assists with the development of health promotion materials and messages used by professionals and community members. Conducts a variety of educational presentations.

Regularly manages and prioritizes competing demands and deals with sensitive client or community issues and information.

Concentration and attention to detail are required while planning, implementing, and evaluating program delivery. Regularly lifts audiovisual equipment, display boards or other required equipment up to 30 lbs. Operates a computer/tablet.

**Working Conditions Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Works in a standard office (on site or in a community setting) and clinic settings, subject to frequent interruptions, strict deadlines, and frustrated or upset clients. Exercises precautions when working at sites (e.g., community agencies/sites, alternative clinic sites, schools, homes, detention centres, prisons) where potentially hazardous situations and high risk clients exist.

Participates in mass immunization and emergency response activities, involving potential needle stick injury and disposal of blood and bodily fluids. Uses personal protective equipment to mitigate associated risks.
Travels to alternate locations throughout Waterloo Region and occasionally throughout the Province, as required.

Works altered hours, including occasional evening and weekend hours.

**Working Conditions Specific to Job(s) Identified:**

R01190/91, R01174/75, R01168/69: Clinical work exposes incumbent to the risk of blood borne infections from vaccine administration, venipuncture, and disposal of contaminated clinic equipment. Case, clinic work, and contact tracing occasionally involves exposure to infectious disease.

R01168/69: Provides on-call response for designated hours on weekends and holidays, as required.

R01174/75: Uses chemicals and biologics for treatment and diagnostic testing.

**Knowledge, Skills & Abilities Common to all Public Health Nurse Jobs:**

Must possess a current Certificate of Competence as a Registered Nurse with the College of Nurses of Ontario and a Baccalaureate degree that includes preparation in Public Health, or a Diploma in Public Health Nursing (per HPPA amended 1997). Current CPR certification, immunization status, and proof of immunity for Hepatitis B are required.

Knowledge of Regional and Departmental policies and procedures, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Standards, Ontario Public Health Standards, Health Protection and Promotion Act, Health Care Consent Act, Personal Health Information Protection of Privacy Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Nursing Act, Child and Family Services Act, and other related legislation and professional guidelines and standards.

Knowledge, skill and judgment in the application of nursing science and nursing process; assessment and history taking; child, adolescent and adult learning principles; life cycle/maturational stress factors; and the etiology of health factors specific to priority or universal populations.

Skill in project management, strategy development, and report writing. Critical thinking and innovative problem-solving skills.

Knowledge and application of health surveillance data as it applies to assigned area of work.

Understanding of and ability to apply health promotion and communication strategies in collaboration with others in order to raise awareness of health issues and place social justice and health equity on the public agenda.

Knowledge of how social, economic, and environmental factors affect health, health promotion strategies, and current community health developments; use of social justice concepts to improve health and wellbeing of the public; and capacity building, advocacy, and policy development for priority or universal populations.

Leadership, facilitation and team building skills. Ability to model, support, and serve as a preceptor for professional and skills development. Skill in priority setting, organization, and self-directed learning, with minimal supervision.
Skill in community organization and conducting informal and formal assessments of health needs for priority or universal populations. Creative ability and experience in providing innovative health promotion activities; engaging others and motivating productive participation of community groups, schools, individuals, and staff to meet program objectives; and building effective partnerships with community members.

Skill in health counselling, consultation, group process and facilitation, with public speaking and interpersonal skills to counsel, advise, and facilitate learning by individuals and groups of children, adults, school staff and other professionals, peer health workers, parents, caregivers, and community members. Ability to provide non-judgmental and inclusive service to all clients. Ability to refer, coordinate, and facilitate access to services in health and other community sectors.

Ability to communicate complex technical information verbally and in writing, and to educate and express ideas clearly and concisely to clients of all ages, staff, multicultural groups, and other groups to further program objectives. Ability to alter language to suit priority or universal groups and clients’ comprehension levels.

Demonstrated public speaking ability to lay and professional audiences.

Ability to write clearly using appropriate format and language for reports, memos, business letters, pamphlets, meeting minutes, and other documents. Ability to synthesize data and literature from multiple sources to write reports, documentation, and proposals.

Computer and technology skills with the ability to use software to create documents, conduct internet-based searches, and networking. Ability to use and maintain electronic documentation for various purposes.

Ability to participate as an effective team member within an interdisciplinary health setting with community members of various backgrounds and cultures.

Ability to travel to various locations within, and occasionally outside Waterloo Region.

Ability to support and project values compatible with the organization.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities Specific to Job(s) Identified:

R01190/91, R01174/75, R01168/69, R01509: Knowledge of public health issues and strategies related to the reduction in incidence of infectious disease, outbreak control, infection control, and immunization, including indications and contraindications to vaccination and management of adverse vaccine reactions, such as anaphylaxis.

R01180/81, R01184/85, R01170/71: Must possess Breastfeeding Certification or ability and willingness to complete within a reasonable period of time.

R01168/69: Knowledge of the principles of infectious diseases and tuberculosis control and immunization.

R01190/91: Knowledge of the principles of immunization and an awareness of infectious diseases.
R01174/75, R01509: Knowledge of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and sexual health and harm reduction strategies.

R01184/85: Knowledge of family and child health related issues (e.g., growth and development, breastfeeding support, healthy family dynamics, positive parenting, reproductive health, healthy eating, healthy weights, active living).

R01422/23: Knowledge of chronic disease, injury, and substance misuse (e.g., healthy eating, healthy weights, physical activity, alcohol and other substance misuse, exposure to ultraviolet radiation, work stress, cancer screening and early detection, falls across the lifespan, road and off road safety).

R01299/1300: Knowledge of tobacco prevention, cessation and protection-related issues in tobacco use prevention, behaviour and attitudinal change, and advocacy. Knowledge of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and related tobacco control legislation. Must possess TEACH-trained certification in cessation or ability and willingness to complete within a reasonable period of time.