

Towards a Representative Health and Social Service System  
in the  
Northwest Territories  
by

Arlene F. Jorgensen

B.A., University of Saskatchewan, 1991

B.S.W., University of Regina, 1992

A Master's Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

in the School of Public Administration

©Arlene F. Jorgensen, 2019 University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by  
photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

**Towards a Representative Health and Social Service System**  
**in the**  
**Northwest Territories**

Arlene Jorgensen, Master of Public Administration candidate  
School of Public Administration  
University of Victoria  
Summer 2019

**Client:** Sue Cullen, CEO  
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority

**Supervisor:** Dr. Kimberly Speers  
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

**Second Reader:** Dr. James MacGregor  
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

**Chair:** Dr. Barton Cunningham  
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of Sue Cullen, the Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) and project client. Other senior leadership in the NTHSSA who contributed to the completion of this project include: regional Chief Operating Officers, who supported the participation of regional managers and provided up to date contact lists, and the Director of Quality Improvement who was the “neutral third party” who sent out numerous e-mails on my behalf. I also would like to acknowledge the Chief Executive Officer of the Tlicho Community Services Agency (TCSA) who agreed to the participation of TCSA staff in this project. Valuable lessons were learned from the TCSA, which contributed to recommendations for the NTHSSA.

I would also like to acknowledge the interview and survey participants. The level of engagement, honesty, and passion participants displayed was encouraging, exciting, and provided a wealth of important data.

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

This intention of this project is to identify actions the Northwest Territories Health and Social Service Authority (NTHSSA) can take to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees in their organization. The rationale for increasing representation includes improved health and social service delivery to Aboriginal people, supporting the self-determination of indigenous Aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories (NWT), and meeting the policy direction of government.

## Methodology and Methods

A gap analysis was undertaken to understand the current state of indigenous Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA including assessing plans and programs available to support increased representation and the examining the views and perceptions of human resource senior leaders, NTHSSA hiring managers, and human resource officers. To identify gaps that were preventing the organization from achieving the desired future state of increased representation of indigenous Aboriginal people, these key stakeholders were also asked to identify what they believed were barriers and further, were asked to make recommendations related to increasing representation. They were also asked for their views on the government's affirmative action policy and the stated goal of a representative public service. Other data collection approaches included information gathered from an NWT organization that has had more success in achieving representation and a literature review that offered lessons about improving representation from other organizations and jurisdictions that could be applied to the NTHSSA.

## Key Findings

The primary research for this project aligned with lessons learned from other organizations and jurisdictions and gaps were found to exist within the NTHSSA in the following key areas:

- Monitoring, oversight, and strategic planning
- Leadership
- Education and training
- Merit
- Mentorship
- Workload
- Organizational culture

## Recommendations

Organizational gaps were summarized into eleven themes in the report and were the basis for a total of forty-four recommendations. The high level recommendations are the following:

- Improve planning and data collection
- Improve clear messaging from leadership
- Improve training for senior and hiring managers
- Develop and improve supports for hiring managers
- Establish supports for new staff including cultural and clinical mentoring for indigenous Aboriginal staff
- Undertake program and job description reviews
- Support active representation of indigenous aboriginal employees
- Improve career planning with indigenous Aboriginal employees



# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
Executive Summary .....	2
Introduction .....	2
Methodology and Methods.....	2
Key Findings .....	2
Recommendations .....	2
Table of Contents .....	5
List of Figures/Tables .....	8
1.0 Introduction.....	9
1.1 Project Client.....	9
1.2 Defining the Problem .....	9
1.3 Project Objectives and Research Questions .....	10
1.4 Organization of Report.....	11
2.0 Background.....	13
2.1 Introduction .....	13
2.2 Defining Affirmative Action in the Northwest Territories .....	13
2.3 Affirmative Action and Aboriginal Self-Determination in the NWT.....	15
2.4 Indigenous Aboriginal Representation in NWT Health and Social Services.....	15
2.5 Human Resource Leadership in the NTHSSA .....	16
3.0 Literature Review.....	19
3.1 Introduction .....	19
3.2 Key Terminology .....	19
3.3 The Value of Aboriginal Health and Social Service Employees .....	22
3.4 Lessons Learned From Other Jurisdictions.....	24
3.5 Literature Review Summary .....	29
4.0 Methodology and Methods .....	30
4.1 Introduction .....	30
4.2 Methodology .....	30

4.3 Methods.....	30
4.4 Data Analysis .....	33
4.5 Project Limitations and Delimitations.....	33
5.0 Findings - Current State: Document Review .....	35
5.1 Introduction .....	35
5.2 Document Review .....	35
5.3 Document Review Summary .....	39
6.0 Findings: Interview Results .....	41
6.1 Introduction .....	41
6.2 GNWT Interview Findings .....	41
6.3 TCSA Interview Findings .....	45
6.4 Summary of Interview Findings.....	46
7.0 Findings: Survey Results .....	48
7.1 Introduction .....	48
7.2 Demographic Information.....	48
7.3 Rated Questions.....	49
7.4 Open-Ended Questions: Barriers.....	57
7.5 Open-Ended Questions: Recommendations.....	60
7.6 TCSA Open-Ended Questions .....	63
7.7 Survey Findings Summary .....	64
8.0 Discussion and Analysis .....	67
8.1 Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Oversight.....	67
8.2 Leadership .....	68
8.3 Education and Training .....	70
8.4 Mentorship and Support for Employees.....	71
8.5 Workload.....	72
8.6 Merit and Required Qualifications .....	72
8.7 Organizational Culture .....	73
8.8 Summary .....	75
9.0 Recommendations.....	76
9.1 Introduction .....	76



9.2 Implementation.....	81
10.0 Conclusion .....	85
References.....	86
Appendices.....	94
Appendix “A”.....	94
Appendix “B” .....	95
Appendix “C” .....	98
Appendix “D”.....	100
Appendix “E” .....	101
Appendix “F” .....	104
Appendix “G” .....	106
Appendix “H”.....	108
Appendix “I” .....	110
Appendix “J”.....	111
Appendix “K” .....	113

## **List of Figures/Tables**

Table 1 - Average Employment Income .....	14
Table 2 – Response Rate.....	32
Table 3 – Demographic Information.....	48
Table 4 - Weighted Responses.....	49
Table 5 – Better Service.....	50
Table 6 - Following Affirmative Action All.....	51
Table 7 - HRO Views of NTHSSA Managers.....	53
Table 8 - Best Candidate.....	53
Table 9 - Screening.....	55
Table 10 - Interview.....	56
Table 11 - Recommendations .....	76
Figure 1 - Better Service.....	49
Figure 2 - Following Affirmative Action All .....	51
Figure 3 - HRO Views of NTHSSA Managers .....	52
Figure 4 - Best Candidate .....	53
Figure 5 - Screening.....	55
Figure 6 - Interview .....	56

## **1.0 Introduction**

This report reviews existing literature related to indigenous representation in the public service, examines Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) representative public service documents, and collects data from key stakeholders to develop recommendations for the Northwest Territories Health and Social Service Authority (NTHSSA) with the goal to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees within the organization.

Affirmative action policies are one of the methods the GNWT has used to overcome its colonial past and strive towards self-determination and ideally, create a public service that is representative of the largely Aboriginal population it serves. Despite a longstanding GNWT commitment to a representative public service and having an affirmative action policy that gives preference to the Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories (NWT), the health and social service system has not been able to increase its rate of Aboriginal employees over the last nineteen years.

Different from other parts of Canada, the NWT Affirmative Action Policy uses the word indigenous to refer both to persons who are descendants of the Aboriginal people of the NWT as well as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons who have lived more than half of their lives in the NWT (GNWT, 2006, pp. 2, 3). For the purposes of this paper “indigenous Aboriginal” is used to denote Aboriginal people who are indigenous to the NWT as defined in the NWT Affirmative Action Policy. “Aboriginal” is used to denote people who are original inhabitants of a region or country.

### **1.1 Project Client**

The project client is the Chief Executive Officer of the NTHSSA. The NTHSSA is an agency established on August 1, 2016 through an amalgamation of six previously separate regional health and social service authorities. The GNWT, through the Department of Health and Social Services, funds the NTHSSA. The Department is responsible for ministry functions related to health and social services, which include setting standards and policies, developing strategic and business plans, allocating resources, and monitoring and evaluation. The NTHSSA is responsible for the design and delivery of territorial health and social service planning across the NWT. It is responsible for delivering health and social services in all communities in the NWT except for the community of Hay River and the four communities included under the Tlicho self-government agreement (NTHSSA, n.d.).

### **1.2 Defining the Problem**

The GNWT made a commitment to have a “competent Public Service that is representative of the population it serves” (GNWT, Finance 2018; GNWT, 2006, p. 1) and has a long history of targeted recruitment, training programs, and preferential hiring for indigenous Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal population in the NWT has remained consistently between 50 and 52% since the division with Nunavut in 1999 (calculation based on data tables in NWT

Bureau of Statistics, n.d., and Community Populations by Ethnicity; GNWT, 1998, p. 5). While the size of government and the actual number of indigenous Aboriginal employees has grown, the rate of representation in the public services was 33% at division (GNWT, 1999, p. 36) and has remained between 30 and 32% since (data from GNWT Public Service Reports 1998-2019 summarized in Appendix “A”). In the health and social service agencies that now comprise the NTHSSA the combined rate of representation has been consistently lower than the rest of government, ranging between 27% and 24% since the Northwest Territories and Nunavut were divided (Appendix “A”). The government has not clearly stated what percentage of representation it considers adequate but continued support for the Affirmative Action Policy indicates a rate of 32% for the public service as a whole is not sufficiently representative. As such, the NTHSSA’s current rate of 24% is clearly not meeting the policy goal.

In addition to not meeting the policy goal of government, the NTHSSA has been struggling to meet the health and social needs of Aboriginal people. In the NWT, Aboriginal people have poorer health status (GNWT, 2016, p. 4) and a much higher percentage of children involved with the child protection system (GNWT, 2018, p. 19) than non-Aboriginal residents. There is evidence that having health care and social services delivered to Aboriginal people by Aboriginal people improves service delivery and access (Conference Board of Canada, 2015; Cross, Day, Gogliotti, and Pung, 2013; Van Herek, Smith, and Andrew, 2011; Stuart and Neilson, 2011). In order to meet the policy goal of government by being representative of the people being served and provide the best health care and social services to Aboriginal people, it is deemed that the NTHSSA needs to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees within the organization. Additional pressure has been placed on the NTHSSA to increase the number of Aboriginal professionals based on the Truth and Reconciliation’s Committee’s Calls to Action and growing public criticism of a system that is struggling to meet the needs of a majority of the population (Weber, 2017; Blake, 2018).

### **1.3 Project Objectives and Research Questions**

The primary research question that was explored in this project was: What evidence-based actions can the NTHSSA take to increase the number of indigenous Aboriginal people within its workforce?

Secondary questions that were explored to help answer the primary question are:

- What is the current state of indigenous Aboriginal representation within the NTHSSA?
- What are the existing government initiatives to support recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees in NWT health and social service agencies?
- What is the uptake of these recruitment and retention initiatives by indigenous Aboriginal persons?

- What are the perceived internal and external barriers to increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA?
- Do key stakeholders hold opinions or misperceptions about the NWT Affirmative Action Policy and hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees that creates barriers to increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA?
- What are the lessons learned from jurisdictions outside of the NWT that can be applied the NTHSSA?
- Are there successes and lessons learned within the NWT that can be applied to the NTHSSA?

**Research Objective:** To analyze the barriers to increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA; to undertake a review of health and social service recruitment and retention initiatives and uptake by indigenous Aboriginal candidates/employees; and to learn from the experiences of other jurisdictions within and outside of the NWT; in order to make recommendations to improve indigenous Aboriginal representation across the NTHSSA.

The deliverables of the report are:

- Evidence-based rationale for increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation within the organization
- Summary of surveys completed by NTHSSA hiring managers, Tlicho Community Services Agency hiring managers, and Finance, Human Resources, Human Resource Officers
- Summary of lessons learned and recommendations from other jurisdictions relevant to increasing representation of the target group
- Summary of interviews with key health and social service, Tlicho Community Services Agency, and human resource leaders
- Summary of existing health and social service recruitment and retention programs
- Recommendations for increasing the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees within the NTHSSA

#### **1.4 Organization of Report**

The report will begin by providing background information key to understanding representative bureaucracy within the NWT, and the context of the NTHSSA. This includes a brief history of affirmative action efforts in the NWT, issues related to indigenous Aboriginal representation in NWT health and social service delivery, and an overview of the NTHSSA human resource division operating environment.

A literature review will follow, providing a summary of relevant scholarly discourse on representative bureaucracy, affirmative action, and diversity and inclusion. The literature review will also provide evidence to support increasing the number of Aboriginal employees providing

health care and social services to Aboriginal people. Finally, a review of scholarly literature relevant to the goal of increasing representation of Aboriginal representation in a health and social service agency will be explored with a summary of lessons learned that can be applied to an NTHSSA context.

Following the literature review, an overview of methodology and methods, data analysis, and findings from original research completed for this project will be presented. The research component for this project included surveys and interviews with key stakeholders. NTHSSA hiring managers, Tlicho Community Services Agency (TCSA) health and social service hiring managers, and GNWT Human Resources Officers (HROs) were asked questions through an anonymous survey to understand the views of individuals directly involved in the hiring process and get to their recommendations for overcoming barriers. Senior human resource managers were also interviewed and asked for their insights. The methodology and an analysis of the data collected through the surveys and interviews will be presented. A summary of the findings will then be presented, including findings from the literature review, the surveys and interviews, and jurisdictional scan. A discussion and analysis will follow the summary of findings, synthesizing the data collected.

A key deliverable for this project is to provide recommendations to the NTHSSA to support an increase in indigenous Aboriginal representation within the organization. Recommendations to achieve this goal based on scholarly literature, lessons learned from other organizations and jurisdictions, findings, and analysis, will be presented.

## 2.0 Background

### 2.1 Introduction

To develop a comprehensive understanding of the rest of the report, it is important to understand how affirmative action and representative bureaucracy fit into the fabric of the NWT public service and why representation of Aboriginal people within health care and social service delivery matters in an NWT context. It is also useful to understand the NTHSSA human resource management operating environment to provide context to existing barriers and gaps.

### 2.2 Defining Affirmative Action in the Northwest Territories

Affirmative action in the NWT is different than the way affirmative action is implemented under the federal Employment Equity Act, although this federal Act is often a reference point for Canadians when they think about targeted employment or preferential hiring. The federal Employment Equity Act has four designated groups: women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities (Government of Canada, 2019, Section 2). It requires several actions of employers including conducting an analysis of their workforce and the development of concrete plans to address under-representation in each of the targeted areas (Government of Canada, 2019, section 9, 10, 11).

The Employment Equity Act's approach to determining representation differs from traditional representative bureaucracy. Representation under the Employment Equity Act is based on the existing labour force available within a region (Government of Canada, 2019, section 5) versus a census of the general population (Nachmias and Rosenbloom, 1973, p. 42).

The GNWT does not specify how it determines what constitutes a representative public service although the Affirmative Action Policy states a commitment to being representative "of the people it serves" (GNWT, 2006, p. 1) suggesting it views representation as reflective of general population versus being representative of existing labour force availability. The NWT Affirmative Action Policy was last updated in 2006 and identifies under-represented groups within the public service as:

- Indigenous Aboriginal Persons
- Indigenous Non-Aboriginal Persons
- Resident Disabled Persons
- Resident Women (in management and non-traditional jobs) (GNWT, 2006, p. 6)

Indigenous Aboriginal persons receive first priority in hiring (GNWT, 2006, p.6) and are defined as follows:

Indigenous Aboriginal persons (a)re descendants of the Dene, Inuit or Metis people, indigenous to the present boundaries of the Northwest Territories and includes any Aboriginal persons resident at birth pursuant to Section 7.1 of the

Vital Statistics Act and any Canadian Aboriginal persons who have lived more than half of their life in the Northwest Territories. GNWT, 2006, p. 2

Indigenous non-Aboriginal persons are defined as “those non-Aboriginal persons born in the Northwest Territories, or who have lived more than half their lives in the Northwest Territories” (GNWT, 2006, p. 2). Visible minorities comprise 9.6% of the NWT population, many of whom have immigrated to the NWT within the last 15 years (Statistics Canada, 2019, Focus on Geography). The NWT Bureau of Statistics reports average employment incomes for Aboriginal people and visible minorities and this information can be used to extrapolate the average employment income of white NWT residents as shown in Table 1. This data shows there is a 62% difference between average employment income of white people in the NWT and Aboriginal people and a 45% difference between white people and visible minorities.

**TABLE 1 - AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME**

Aboriginal	Visible Minority	White	Overall Average
\$46,761	\$56,583	\$89,016	\$62,120

In Canada, affirmative action policies are allowed under the Canadian Charter of Freedom and Rights if the objective of the program is to ameliorate the “conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups” (Government of Canada, 1982, Article 15, para. 2). Given both the lower employment income and poorer health status of aboriginal people compared to the rest of the NWT population, it is reasonable to identify Aboriginal people in the NWT as a disadvantaged group. Contrarily, the identification of indigenous non-Aboriginal persons as a disadvantaged group is more difficult to argue as their health status is comparatively better than Aboriginal people and economic status, based on employment income (assuming the majority of indigenous non-Aboriginal people are white), is significantly better than both Aboriginal people and visible minorities. Although the inclusion of indigenous-non-aboriginal people as a target population has likely served to moderate “fairness” criticisms often directed at affirmative action policies.

The Affirmative Action Policy specifies that the merit principle applies to target groups but priority is given first to qualified indigenous Aboriginal persons and then to other target populations (GNWT, 2006, p.6). Following Kernigan’s (2011) definition of merit, hiring based on the merit principle is hiring based on an employee’s “fitness to do the job” (p. 3). The NWT public service has struggled to apply the merit principle in a way that does not create systematic discrimination. For example, White’s 1994 Royal Commission Report on The Adoption of Non-Aboriginal Institutions of Government, speaks to historical cultural bias in the application of merit in NWT public service hiring practices:

Subtle yet powerful cultural barriers impede the participation of Aboriginal people in the territorial public service. The preference given to formal education



and official credentials over experience in hiring and promotion clearly works against Aboriginal people. Similarly, in the GNWT the “merit principle” – a fundamental precept of bureaucracies throughout Canada – by which public service jobs go to those most qualified to perform them- emphasizes southern standards to the disadvantage of Aboriginal people. White, 1994, p 24

There has been an attempt to address cultural bias through the application of equivalencies when screening candidates (GNWT, 2014, Section 100); however, the process of establishing equivalencies is focused on translating relevant work experience to an equivalency of formal education. The knowledge acquired through lived experience within a particular culture, community, or geographical location are not typically included as desired knowledge skills or abilities or considered an equivalency to formal education, despite the potential effect of not having this type of knowledge can have on the ability to provide effective and culturally appropriate services.

### **2.3 Affirmative Action and Aboriginal Self-Determination in the NWT**

Self-determination has been identified as a key driver in the desire by Aboriginal people to be represented through affirmative action programs (Abella, 1984, p. 33; Spitzer, 2015, pp. 73, 74). In the NWT, affirmative action has its roots in indigenous Aboriginal people’s efforts to overcome paternalistic governance models and become self -determining. The NWT has a long history of non-Aboriginal civil servants from southern Canada controlling government and service delivery. From 1905 to 1967, the NWT was governed by federally appointed civil servants based in Ottawa. This governance structure changed when elected Metis, Dene and Inuit members formed the NWT government in the 1970s (Legislative Assembly of the NWT).

When this shift in governance happened, affirmative action policies were put in place in an effort to have a public service that was as representative of the population as the new government council was (GNWT, 1998, p. 2; White, 1994, p.24). An influx of non-Aboriginal civil servants from the south flooded into Yellowknife at the same time as the federal government was transferring power. Aboriginal people gained more legislative control but a largely white, southern born bureaucracy continued to dominate government policy, programs, and service delivery (Laing, Puxley, Sutton, and Bean, as quoted in Spitzer, 2015, p. 74). This continues to be the case as the majority of public servants are non-Aboriginal settlers in the NWT and the majority indigenous Aboriginal elected Members of the NWT Legislative Assembly maintain a commitment to the goal of a representative public service (McLeod, 2017,GNWT Hansards, 2017, GNWT Hansards, 2018).

### **2.4 Indigenous Aboriginal Representation in NWT Health and Social Services**

Self-determination is important to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people (Auger and Gomes, 2016, 394; Chandler and Dunlop, 2018, p. 158). In the NWT, the health status of Aboriginal residents is significantly lower than that of non-Aboriginal residents

(GNWT, 2016, p. 4). The Annual Report of the Director of Child and Family Services reveals that in 2017/18 98% to 99% of the children involved in the Child and Family Services system in the NWT were Aboriginal (GNWT, 2018, p. 19). While Aboriginal people make up half of the population of the NWT, the disparities in health and child and family service involvement mean they comprise a much larger percentage of the population requiring and receiving health care and social services.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action includes a call to increase the numbers of “Aboriginal professionals working in the health care field” and “ensure the retention of Aboriginal Health Care providers in Aboriginal Communities” (Truth and Reconciliation Committee, 2015, p.3). A Critical Incident Review commissioned by the NWT Minister of Health and Social Services, after an allegation that racism led to the death of an Inuvialuk elder, reinforced the importance of improving culturally safe care. This Review also made reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, recommending the GNWT increase the number of indigenous health care workers (Weber, 2017). In the GNWT’s official response to the Calls to Action, the Minister of Health and Social Services committed to “recruiting Northern residents and graduates through (ministry strategic human resource) programs and ensuring the NWT’s Affirmative Action Policy is applied (GNWT, 2015, p. 14).

In order to improve health and social service delivery and outcomes for Aboriginal people, to respond to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the critical incident review, and to follow the GNWT’s policy direction, it is deemed that the NTHSSA needs to increase the number of Aboriginal employees within the organization. Despite the many reasons to increase the number of Aboriginal employees, the rate of representation in the NTHSSA remains in the 24% range.

Yet this is not the case for all NWT health and social service agencies. In 2018, indigenous Aboriginal employees comprised 64% of the health and social service employees at the TSCA, an agency operated by the Tlicho government as part of their land claim and self-government agreement, (GNWT, 2019, Public Service Report, p. 30). The employees of the TSCA are also GNWT employees. They follow the same collective agreement, Affirmative Action Policy, and provide the same kinds of services as the NTHSSA.

## **2.5 Human Resource Leadership in the NTHSSA**

At the time of establishment, outside of the pre-existing regional Chief Operating Officers (formerly Chief Executive Officers) less than five executive positions were filled within the newly formed NTHSSA. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has remained consistent over the last three years but outside of this position, there has been significant turnover and change across the NTHSSA and in senior leadership positions, with eight of ten senior management positions experiencing turnover in the same three year time frame. Reporting to the CEO, the Director of Talent and Organizational Development leads human resource initiatives for the

NTHSSA. The job description and organizational chart for this division was not finalized when the NTHSSA was established and the roles and responsibilities for this division versus those of the ministry were not clearly defined. Establishing a Physicians Affairs Office and implementing physician bylaws for a single authority versus six independent authorities became a priority for this division, which affected the completion of other human resource strategic priorities. In addition, there was a change in leadership in this division between August 2016 and present and the division remains under development.



## **3.0 Literature Review**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Several scholarly topics are relevant to the subject of increasing the representation of Aboriginal employees in a northern Canadian health and social services organization. Using the University of Victoria's online library databases and Google Scholar as primary search engines, a literature review was conducted to understand relevant terminology, to present an evidence-based rationale for employing Aboriginal people in health and social service agencies, and to learn from the experience of others. Several grey literature reports are also cited as the data contained is current and directly related to the subject matter.

The literature review is divided into three parts. The first section focuses on better understanding key terminology that is used in this report and provides an overview of scholarly thought in the following areas; representative bureaucracy, affirmative action, diversity and inclusion. These terms were also used as search topics.

The second section provides an evidenced-based rationale for employing Aboriginal people in agencies that provide health care and social services to Aboriginal populations. Search terms for this section were: Aboriginal/indigenous health care workers, Aboriginal/Indigenous social workers Canada, Aboriginal/ indigenous health care workers Canada, Aboriginal/Indigenous Nursing, and Aboriginal/Indigenous social work.

The final section provides a summary of lessons learned from other jurisdictions related to the implementation of affirmative action policies and programs, targeted hiring of Aboriginal employees in health and social services and other sectors, and the experience of Aboriginal employees in health and services agencies. Search terms for this final section included: affirmative action outcomes, lessons, and success.

### **3.2 Key Terminology**

#### *Representative Bureaucracy*

Dolan and Rosenbloom (2003) define representative bureaucracy as “the body of thought and research examining the potential for government agencies to act as representative political institutions if their personnel are drawn from all sectors of society” (p. xi). Sectors of society can include ethnic, racial, class, age, gender, and economic groups. The most common measurement of representation has been to compare the proportion of a group within the general population, to the proportion of that group within the relevant organization (Nachmias and Rosenbloom, 1973, p. 42).

The theory of representative bureaucracy argues, supported by a body of evidence, that having a public service that is representative “enhances citizens trust in government and fosters the achievement of democratic goals,” and can “influence the extent to which clients and citizens

cooperate and comply with government, thus coproducing important policy outcomes” (Ricucci and Van Ryzin, 2016, p. 21). J. Donald Kingsley coined the term representative bureaucracy in his seminal 1944 book, *Representative Bureaucracy: An Interpretation of the British Civil Service* (O’Connor, 2014, p. 1). Much of Kingsley’s work in 1944 Britain was concerned with the lack of representation in the civil service by social classes without the same access to educational opportunities as middle and upper class Britain’s, as well as the lack of representation by women. It was Kingsley’s view that “the democratic State cannot afford to exclude any considerable body of its citizens from full participation in its affairs” (Kingsley, 1944 p. 185). Kingsley also claimed a public service that is not representative, contributes to maintaining the status quo and power over disenfranchised groups (Kingsley, 1944 p. 281).

In the literature, it was found that there are two important concepts in representative bureaucracy: passive representation, and active representation. Passive representation refers to the “extent to which a particular group’s representation within society is represented within the composition of the bureaucracy” (O’Connor, 2014 p. 2). As such, passive representation refers to simple presence within the organization, not necessarily influence. The value of passive representation is that the public who sees themselves in the bureaucracy is more inclined to believe the bureaucrat understands them, and therefore is more inclined to trust the bureaucracy. It also sends the message that the organization fairly hires and represents all people (Ricucci and Van Ryzin, 2016, p. 23).

Active representation refers to “the extent to which the individual bureaucrat acts upon (their) identity” (O’Connor, 2014, p. 2). This means the bureaucrat uses their knowledge, values, and experience to influence policy and practice in ways that will improve service delivery to the population they represent. Active representation is required if the goal is improved service delivery through changes in policy and practice to better meet the needs of target groups. The freedom of the bureaucrat to act and to have a voice is critical in achieving active representation (Selden, 2011, p, 2288). In order for active representation to occur, the organizational culture/environment must support it (Naff, Capers, and Juree, 2014, p. 519), and the public servant must have “sufficient discretion” in their decision making (Marvel and Resh, 2013, p 282).

While critics of representative bureaucracy point to the importance of the neutrality of public service and suggest representative bureaucracy theory contradicts this important principle, as O’Connor (2014) states “the belief that identity guides behavior” is generally accepted amongst public administration scholars (p. 4). Eckhard postulates that while increasing a target group’s representation in a public service improves service delivery to that target group, the inverse is also true. The absence of a target group within an organization will result in programs and services that best serve the group represented by the majority of public servants (p. 603). Eckhard (2014) also suggests the majority group may hold biases against the target group, which impacts affirmative action efforts (p. 602).

## *Affirmative Action*

Affirmative action policies and programs, according to Ratuva (2013), are “designed and implemented to address the socio economic and political situations of those considered historically “disadvantaged” (p. 1). In other words, if representative bureaucracy is a goal, affirmative action is a tool to achieve it. Kravtiz (2008) identifies four categories of affirmative action programs each with varying levels of strength: elimination of discrimination; targeted recruitment; selection of targeted candidates when qualifications are equal (tiebreaker); and strong preference and/or quota, where targeted individuals are selected even when there are more qualified candidates (p. 175). In Canada, the rationale for affirmative action programs differs for targeted groups. The rationale for Aboriginal peoples is often based on rights associated with overcoming an oppressive colonial history, and pursuing self-determination (Abella, 1984, p. 33, 34), while the rationale for affirmative action for visible minorities is rooted in the experience of racism and not being fairly considered for work when they were equally qualified (Abella, 1984, p.39).

Affirmative action, particularly those programs that give strong preferential treatment to a target group, is controversial, and as Ratuva (2013) points out, “is bound to generate feelings of hostility from others who feel deserving but have been left out” (p. 243). When Justice Abella was drafting the employment equity report that was the foundation for Canada’s Employment Equity Act she specifically chose not to use the term “affirmative action” because of the negative connotations and public misunderstanding associated with it (Abella, 1984, p. 6). Proponents suggest the opposition to affirmative action lies in a resistance of traditional power holders to give up power, status, and wealth (Premdas, 2016, p. 253).

Much of the criticism against affirmative action in the literature is based on the principle of fairness suggesting it constitutes reverse racism, that everyone should be treated “the same” and that it promotes division and judging people according to race or other affirmative action category (Sowel, 2004, p.140; Kravitz, 1995, p. 2213; Kravitz, 2017, p. 34 ). Yet as Daniels and Schultz (2006) point out, “the focus on universal, race-blind standards within a context in which race still matters is a strategy that reinforces and privileges Whiteness” (p. 7). Ignoring the impact of historical and existing barriers for certain segments of the population is unfair, and affirmative action attempts to level this unfair playing field (Van Deer and Crosby, 2000, p. 6).

Critics also allege affirmative action has a negative impact on performance and productivity because the best candidates are not selected for employment or education (Sowel, 2004, p. 140). Whether or not affirmative action policies negatively impact performance is a complex question. Many environmental factors can influence performance, and methods of measuring bureaucratic performance are not perfect (Bhavnani and Lee, 2018, p. 7). Research on this topic has provided mixed results but in general suggest negative impacts of affirmative action on performance do not outweigh benefits. Leslie, Mayer, and Kravitz (2014) found that negative stereotypes and “low warmth” by other employees towards affirmative action hires had

some impact on performance but suggest ways to ameliorate such impacts such as stressing ways in which affirmative action hires are qualified and can improve organizational performance, thus benefiting all members of the organization (p. 982, 983). Bracha, Cohen, and Conell-Price (2019) found differences in performance between high ability and low ability female affirmative action hires, although found the overall effect of affirmative action on women was positive (p. 178). Bhavnani and Lee's 2018 research with the Indian public service found individuals recruited under affirmative action performed "no worse than other employees" and make the claim that "(e)quity does not come at the cost of efficiency" (Abstract).

### *Diversity and Inclusion*

Diversity refers to the "demographic composition of groups or organizations" (Roberson, 2006, p. 227-228), while inclusion definitions typically focus "on employee involvement and the integration of diversity into organizational systems and processes" (Roberson, 2006, p. 228-29). Diversity and inclusion programs therefore can be important in ensuring active representation, and all employees having a sense of belonging within an organization. Ng and Sears (2014) reported organizational "commitment to social responsibility, (and) commitment to diversity" as a factor in Aboriginal people's interest in federal public service jobs (p. 380); however there is evidence that diversity and inclusion programs are not always effective in addressing racism in organizations, and in some instances perpetuate division and stereotypes (Kalev, Dobbin, and Kelly, 2006, p. 611).

A prominent criticism of the diversity and inclusion discourse is that it tends to approach diversity and inclusion from the perspective of a white/western norm and fails to consider the power the white/western norm historically and currently holds over other ways of knowing and being (Puzan, 2003, p. 197). Puzan further notes that an effective diversity and inclusion program should address these kinds of issues and acknowledge that the organization operates from a cultural viewpoint that is often a white worldview. Allan and Smilie (2015) recommend diversity and inclusion programs in a health system need to address the "impact and influence of racism, colonialism, and our historical and contemporary contexts" (p. 29).

Using Allen's marble analogy, diversity is akin to recognizing there is a mix of marbles within an organizational bowl, inclusion strives to ensure all of the marbles feel a sense of belonging and are able to contribute from their particular perspective; but what the diversity and inclusion discourse often fails to recognize is that in most cases "the bowl within which the marbles sit is white. Whiteness is not just one marble among others, it is the defining one" (Allen, 2006, p. 68).

### **3.3 The Value of Aboriginal Health and Social Service Employees**



Increasing awareness of the health disparities of Aboriginal people has created a discussion about the importance of employing Aboriginal staff within organizations serving Aboriginal populations. Amongst the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, health care was the only area that received a recommendation specific to increasing number of Aboriginal employees (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015, p. 3). Research has shown that health care and social services delivered by non-Aboriginal providers is problematic for Aboriginal people who are often uncomfortable accessing services from health care institutions that are "symbolic of colonization" (Macdonald and Steenbeek, 2015, pp. 38, 39). The Conference Board of Canada (2015) report identify reasons why Aboriginal people are more comfortable when accessing care from Aboriginal professionals including "comfort in discussing personal issues, familiarity with values and language, and not feeling judged" (p. 22). Stuart and Neilson (2011), Australian researchers, make similar claims stating, "Aboriginal nurses possess an inherent knowledge of Aboriginal society which undoubtedly sets them apart from non-Aboriginal nurses in their interactions with Aboriginal patients" (p. 98). The same principle of comfort applies to Aboriginal staff across health and social service professions and aligns with the theory of increased citizen trust in a representative bureaucracy. Having Aboriginal health care and social service providers helps build trust and improves access for Aboriginal people.

A Conference Board of Canada (2015) report also identifies that there is a risk of harm when services are provided by "non-Aboriginal professionals who lack of cultural knowledge" (p. i). There is evidence that health and social service providers who lack cultural knowledge sometimes make assumptions that are harmful to the people they are attempting to serve. As an example, Van Herek, Smith, and Andrew's (2010) study of the experience of Aboriginal mothers accessing health care found a common presumption that western approaches to mothering (from birth to parenting practices) were superior. The resulting harm included undermining traditional parenting and Aboriginal ways of being, causing Aboriginal participants to feel "less than", reducing trust in self and the health and social service system, poorer outcomes for parents and children, and a barrier to Aboriginal people accessing care (p.63). These experiences are not unusual; the Conference Board of Canada (2015) states that for Aboriginal people, "access to mainstream health care ... is frequently characterized by interactions that reinforce colonial power dynamics and devalue Aboriginal beliefs, knowledge, and ways of life" (p. 22).

A common assumption of non-Aboriginal health and social service providers is that their typically white/western knowledge, experience, and ways of knowing are value neutral, the expected norm, and the "right way" to act. Likewise, Cross, Day, Gogliotti, and Pung (2013) identify the value of Aboriginal child protection workers working within Aboriginal communities suggesting their presence in the workforce can contribute to reducing the number of Aboriginal children coming into care. They assert an Aboriginal child protection worker is "more likely to possess basic knowledge of native cultures and family life, grounded in historical and contemporary factors that, when not understood, increase the likelihood of (Aboriginal) children entering the child welfare system" (p. 49).

In addition to the advantages directly to individual patients and clients, having Aboriginal people in professional roles in communities contributes to empowering communities for long-term change (Conference Board of Canada, 2015, p. i). As explained by Exner-Pirot and Butler, authors of the Conference Board of Canada report (2015), “When positions of power in Aboriginal communities are occupied by non-local professionals, they reaffirm existing colonial power dynamics”, but when roles in sectors such as health care are held by community members they can empower the community (p. 24). The Conference Board of Canada, (2015;2019), report that the hiring of Aboriginal staff allows those employees to act as role models to others in their communities (p. 24; p. 8). Cross, Day Gogliotti, and Pung (2013) also recognize Aboriginal child protection workers as being in a better position to go beyond “mere compliance” with Child and Family Service legislation, and “extend professional practice to include cultural perspectives on parenting and the role of children in tribal communities” (p. 49).

Another notable advantage in hiring Aboriginal employees as noted in the literature is the potential for continuity of care. For example, high turnover rates of professional staff are often reported in remote Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal professionals are considered more likely to remain long term in the communities they serve (Conference Board of Canada , 2015, p. 24; Conference Board of Canada 2019).

### **3.4 Lessons Learned From Other Jurisdictions**

Lessons learned relevant to increasing Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA can be found by reviewing scholarly literature in the following areas: efforts to increase representation using of affirmative action programs and policies; targeted hiring of Aboriginal people; and the experiences of Aboriginal employees within health and social service agencies.

Examples of affirmative action can be found around the world, with each jurisdiction having their own approach and socio/political context affecting outcomes. Lessons learned, therefore, must be considered within each particular social, political, and cultural environment (Ratuva, 2013, p. 241). Affirmative action policies that apply to a majority population that has been disenfranchised, as is the case in the NWT, are rare. South Africa, Malaysia, and Fiji are examples, and of these Malaysia is most noted for its successes. Malaysia was used as a model for both Fiji and South Africa (Ratuva, 2013, p.195), and was able to achieve a significant increase of Malays (the target population) in the public service, enrolled in University, and within professions such as architects, accountants, dentists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, surveyors, veterinarians. The increase within the noted professions rose from 4.9% in 1970 to 38.8% in 2008 (Ratuva, 2013, p. 217). Other jurisdictions where affirmative action policies and practices were reviewed include the United States, India, Kosovo, and the United Kingdom (UK).

Alaska’s Southcentral Foundation is an example of a health care organization that has succeeded in recruiting and retaining Aboriginal staff within a jurisdiction that has had challenges in achieving the same goal. At Southcentral Foundation over 60% of the

organization's managers including the CEO are Aboriginal (Gottlieb, 2013, p. 6). The overall workforce of Southcentral Foundation is approximately 53% Alaska Native/American Indian (Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, p. 4). Southcentral Foundation has a staff retention rate of 83%, marking a significant increase from a historically high turnover rates (Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, p. 8). In comparison, the State of Alaska, which follows Equal Employment Opportunity legislation and an affirmative action policy, continues to see Aboriginal people as the most underrepresented group in their public service, comprising only 14.7 % of their labor force (State of Alaska, 2019, p. 13). There are also important lessons to be learned in the failure of affirmative action policies in Kosovo, where a public service that retained anti minority sentiments and a lack of oversight resulted in affirmative action policies not being fully or meaningfully implemented (Eckhard, 2014).

Research that focused on the experience of Aboriginal employees in health care and social service agencies was drawn from Australia and other regions in Canada. Australia is a country with a similar colonial background and able to offer lessons with some relevance to the NWT. Canadian research focusing on recruiting and retaining Aboriginal employees, and the experience of Aboriginal health care and social service providers was also reviewed. Lessons learned from the literature are summarized into seven key themes.

### *Lesson 1 - Monitoring, Oversight, and Strategic Planning are Important in Successful Affirmative Action Programs*

Lack of monitoring and oversight has been identified as reasons for poor outcomes in several jurisdictions, including Canada. Agocs and Osbourne (2009) state weaknesses in auditing and policy enforcement undermine the impact of Canada's Employment Equity Act (p. 246). Ratuva (2016) having studied affirmative action in South Africa, Malaysia, and Fiji, advises that policies such as affirmative action "require an appropriate monitoring system which ensures short term targets, timelines, and long-term outcomes are achieved" (para., 7). Shahnaz, Burns, and Grant (2013) claim that "the lack of strategic focus" in UK National Health Service affirmative action programs undermined its success (p. 196). American researchers Kalev, Dobbin, and Kelly (2006) advise that "structures that embed accountability, authority, and expertise ...are the most effective means of increasing representation" (p. 611). Because the majority of the public servants are from an ethnic group that is not being targeted under affirmative action, their interests do not necessarily coincide with the interests of the leadership that put the affirmative action policy in place, which can be a barrier to implementing affirmative action policies. Eckhard (2014), postulates that this was a key factor in the failure of affirmative action programs in Kosovo (p. 601). Effective oversight and monitoring are ways to overcome such challenges. According to Eckardt (2014) the degree to which a shift can occur from policy intent "depends on the level of autonomy and control measures the (originator of the policy) puts in place" (p. 602).

## *Lesson 2 - Leadership Matters*

The gap between the rhetoric of leaders and plans developed by the provincial ministry that made commitments to Aboriginal people and issues, and what happened on the front line, was identified as problematic for aboriginal child protection workers in British Columbia, Canada (Rousseau, 2014, p. 236). Aboriginal employees in both Canada and Australia identify the lack of “culturally competent and committed management support for Aboriginal service delivery” and “firm direction from leadership” as well as a general lack of support from management as negatively impacting the experience and retention of Aboriginal employees (Rousseau, 2014, p. 236; Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018, p. 12). Contrarily, Southcentral Foundation identifies strong and visible leadership as one of the reasons for their success (Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, pp. 11, 12).

## *Lesson 3 - Education and Training are Inextricably Tied to Successful Affirmative Action Programs*

In service areas that require specific technical training, like most health and allied health professions, an alignment between education and affirmative action is critical. A lack of higher education amongst a target population is frequently identified as a challenge in achieving representation (Ratuva, 2013, p. 239; Lee, 2015, p. 629; Conference Board of Canada, 2019, p. 59). Southcentral Foundation’s success is attributed in large part to supporting training, professional development, and mentorship of current and prospective employees (Gottlieb, 2013, p. 6; Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, p. 1). In Malaysia, specific attention was paid to ensuring both access, and a cultural shift towards Malay’s, in their postsecondary education system through changing the language of instruction from English to Malay, centralizing admissions, and creating quota’s and easier routes to education for Malay people (Lee, 2015, p. 620).

## *Lesson 4 - There is a Need to Rethink Merit*

The application of merit and the need to reconsider how it is applied in the recruitment process is a common theme in the literature. As C.E.S Frank states, “merit is not an objective neutral term but is highly influenced by cultural and social factors” (as quoted in White, 1994, p. 24). Ganter’s (2016) work on Aboriginal representation in the Australian public service identifies three areas of merit that Aboriginal Australians bring to the public service, but are not recognized within typical bureaucratic, white/western definitions of merit. These include: “Grounded”, being connected to aboriginal lives and therefore having unique ability to implement government policies (p. 129); “Local”, to have “situation knowledge” and connections (p, 129, 130), and “Aboriginal Territorian”, being an Aboriginal person originating from the Northern Territory enabling the candidate to act as a role model to other Northern Territory Aboriginal people (p. 131).

### *Lesson 5 –Mentorship is Valuable*

Mentorship, both clinical and cultural, for Aboriginal employees in general, and specific to health and social services professionals, is a common recommendation in advancing the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees. Mentorship is frequently identified as a means to support Aboriginal health and social services professionals in navigating the challenges of working within white/western systems (Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018; Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, p. 3). The Canadian Nurses Association (2014) document on Aboriginal Health Nursing and Aboriginal Health, cite a survey respondent who states:

As an Aboriginal nurse I find it very difficult (at times) to practice in the Western medical system that exists. It would be beneficial to have mentorship programs so that Aboriginal nurses feel supported and understood. Ideally other Aboriginal nurses could support students and new grads so that there was retention in the workforce – Survey respondent. (p. 23)

Aboriginal child protection workers also identified the challenge of struggling with “dual accountabilities”, tensions between community and organizational responsibilities which are often not understood by non-Aboriginal colleagues (Rousseau, 2018, p. 657). Cultural mentorship by Aboriginal mentors would better support these employees.

### *Lesson 6 – Workload has an impact*

Aboriginal health and social service employees identified the importance of a manageable workload to allow time for providing care in a manner that Aboriginal staff felt most appropriate for their clients, for mentorship (both for mentor and mentee), and for attending training and educational programs (Rousseau, 2018 p. 650). Southcentral Foundation overfills by 20% to ensure employees are able to participate in these types of activities without impacting workload or service delivery (Gottlieb, Sylvester, and Eby, 2008).

### *Lesson 7 -Organizational culture impacts success*

The organizational environment plays an important role in attracting and retaining Aboriginal employees. Racism within organizations is frequently identified as factor negatively impacting recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees (Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018; Canadian Nurses Association, 2014, p. 47; Rousseau, 2014, p. 171; Conference Board of Canada, 2019, p. 51). It is notable that organizations surveyed in Canada’s north did not recognize their own bias and minimized the role bias might play in recruitment and retention practices (Conference Board of Canada, 2019 p. 51).

Aboriginal health and social service employees identified several factors contributing to a positive and supportive work environment, including team and colleagues who share values and approaches similar to their own (Rousseau, 2014 p. 191). A culturally respectful workplace that

includes respect for Aboriginal cultures by non- Aboriginal leaders and hiring employees with attitudes and behaviors that aligned with a culturally safe worksite, were seen to be important (Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018, p.10; Rousseau, 2018, p. 649; Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, pp. 11, 12). Having a “high level support within the organization for autonomous decision-making” (Rousseau, 2014, p. 191) was another factor, and aligns with the principle of active representation.

An important reason for Malaysia’s success was the decision to make Malay the language of instruction in schools, which Ratuva(2013) reports, “entrenched cultural and communal dominance of Malay students” within educational institutions (p. 203), effectively turning on its head the experience of many disenfranchised groups within traditional educational institutions. In contrast, South Africa’s efforts to give preference to black Africans entering traditionally white schools without addressing the overall culture of the schools, had limited success (Lee, 2015, p. 620).

A key approach at Southcentral Foundation has been to create an organization built on the values, wants, and needs of Alaska Native people (Gottleib, Sylvester, and Eby, 2008, p. 33), and is led by a majority Aboriginal management team. Like Malaysia, Southcentral Foundation created an Aboriginal organization that is inclusive of non-Aboriginal employees, versus a white/western organization that attempts to be inclusive of Aboriginal or other employees without acknowledging their own white/western world view. Malaysia and Southcentral Foundation managed to change the color of their organizational bowl.

In many jurisdictions Aboriginal health and social service professionals report challenges working within white/western organizations. The NWT health care system, like the rest of Canada and other colonized countries, can be described as Neilson, Stuart and Gorman describe Australia’s; “predominately westernized” and “permeated by the social norms and expectations defined by white culture” (2014, p. 192). As an example, aboriginal nurses in Australia report feeling they have to “tread the tightrope between upholding their nursing commitments within a white environment whilst attempting to nurture their Aboriginal self and delivering “good medicine” to their Aboriginal patients “ (Neilson, Stuart, and Gorman, 2014, p. 195). The experience of these Aboriginal nurses reflects the difficulty of being expected to fit within institutions where white/western values, knowledge, ways of behaving, and ways of knowing are the expected norm, and seen as value neutral and the “right way” to work and behave. There is a body of literature specific to nursing, but relevant to health care in general that calls out many approaches to knowledge and care that are rooted white/western values such as: belief in science as the highest authority, and diagnosis and treatment of individuals versus collective or community wellbeing (Puzan, 2003; Allen, 2006; Neilson, Stuart, and Gorman, 2014). When health care and social service delivery is rooted in white/western values employees with other world views are put at a disadvantage as they must constantly work to fit in and be judged against a different set of cultural values presented as the “norm”.

### **3.5 Literature Review Summary**

The literature review provided information on representative bureaucracy, including why a representative bureaucracy is important in providing effective public services, and how both passive and active representation contribute to improved service delivery and coproduction of government policy. Affirmative action, though controversial, is a tool to support representation and to address historical and existing barriers for target populations. The move towards diversity and inclusion within organizations was recognized as having some value if done well, however often did not fully address issues of organizational worldview, or existing and historical oppression and barriers that continue to impact Aboriginal employees.

The value of Aboriginal employees within health and social service organizations was well documented in the literature. This included both the risk of harm, and impact on access of having non-Aboriginal health and social services providers, as well as the added value to patient/client care and service delivery when Aboriginal employees were providing care and services. The advantages of Aboriginal health and social service employees extended beyond individual care to, being role models in communities, increasing continuity of care, and increasing access for Aboriginal patients/clients.

The literature review also provided a number of lessons that are applicable to the NTHSSA. These lessons identified the importance of monitoring, oversight, and strategic planning; leadership; education and training; rethinking merit; mentorship; workload; and organizational culture.

The literature review provided a foundation for developing research questions and understanding how responses fit within existing scholarly thought. As such, questions related to views on the GNWT's goal of a representative public service, Affirmative Action Policy, and diversity and inclusion were developed. These questions, as well as a question related to whether or not respondents felt following the Affirmative Action Policy resulted in the best candidate being hired, helped determine whether or not respondents recognized added value in employing indigenous Aboriginal candidates.

## **4.0 Methodology and Methods**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this project is to develop evidence-based recommendations for the NTHSSA to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees within the organization. In order to develop recommendations, it is important to understand the current state of representation in the NTHSSA, to know what tools and supports are available, and to gain insights from experienced stakeholders, and agencies that have had more success in this area than the NTHSSA.

The research proposal was approved by the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board (Ethics Protocol Number 18-1058), and the Aurora Research Institute (Scientific Research License number 16417). An overview of the methods and methodology used in the research is described in this section.

### **4.2 Methodology**

A Gap analysis consists of identifying the present state, the desired or 'target' state and then determining the gap between them" (Institute of Manufacturing, n.d). A gap analysis was conducted to understand the current state of the NTHSSA specific to indigenous Aboriginal representation, and the gaps that are preventing the organization from achieving the desired future state of increased indigenous Aboriginal representation.

A review of smart practices related to recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees was conducted with another northern health and social service agency that has had greater success in these areas than the NTHSSA. As Bardoch states in the title of his chapter on smart practice research; Smart practices research involves "understanding and making use of what look like good ideas from somewhere else" (n.d., p. 1), but unlike "best practice" research, does not assume the practice is necessarily the "best", or that the practice will fully apply in the NTHSSA context, and instead looks at what ideas and approaches from another situation, might be of use in the other context being explored. The smart practice review helped create a clearer picture of what kind of organizational attributes might support the desired future state for the NTHSSA, and created a benchmark for NTHSSA to consider in the future.

### **4.3 Methods**

Data was gathered through surveys and semi-structured interviews using a mixed methods approach, which involves the integration of quantitative and qualitative data within a single study (McBride, MacMillan, and Steiner, 2019, p. 696). Data collection focused on the views of key stakeholders towards affirmative action, the value of increasing the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees, barriers to and recommendations for increasing retention and recruitment of indigenous Aboriginal employees.



Key stakeholders in this study included individuals who have knowledge of and influence on organizational human resource planning, as well as those directly involved in the recruitment and supervision of employees. Data was also collected from the TCSA with the aim of identifying practices that support recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees that might be applied to the NTHSSA.

Key stakeholders targeted for data collection included TCSA health and social service hiring managers, NTHSSA hiring managers, and Department of Finance, Human Resources Officers (HROs). These employees play an important role in recruiting and retaining staff. The other key stakeholder group targeted for data collection was senior government of the NWT and TCSA human resources managers who have expertise in recruitment and retention, firsthand knowledge of the NWT and NTHSSA efforts, successes, and challenges in recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees. Senior managers also have significant influence over the development of organizational Human Resource strategies. Understanding the perspective of these senior leaders provided critical insight into existing recruitment and retention strategies as well as knowledgeable recommendations about what approaches might work to achieve the desired future state.

Requests to participate in a semi-structured interview were sent to the ten individuals holding relevant management or senior management roles outlined below:

- NTHSSA Director of Talent and Organizational Development
- NWT Department of Health and Social Services Senior Advisor for Human Resource Strategy
- NWT Department of Finance, Human Resource Division Client Service Manager for the NTHSSA
- Two Senior Leaders (Chair/CEO, Director of Health and Social Services) Tlicheo Community Service Agency
- Chair or member of the GNWT Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- GNWT Deputy Secretary Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Three GNWT Finance, Human Resources senior managers

Requests to participate in research interviews were sent via e-mail to the government e-mail addresses of potential participants by a neutral third party. The e-mail request included an introduction to the research, as well as a letter of information and consent (Appendix “B”). The letter of consent was reviewed with all interview participants prior to the start of their interview. Interviews proceeded after the letter of consent was reviewed and interviewees provided verbal consent to participate. The same interview questions were used for all GNWT senior managers (Appendix “C”) with a modified version of these questions used for the TCSA interview (Appendix “D”). Interviews provided data from these human resource leaders on perspectives on the NWT Affirmative Action Policy and focused on the value and best approach to increasing the number of Indigenous Aboriginal employees, what the barriers are to achieving this goal,

examples of successes, and how their division is responding to this challenge. Four senior managers were interviewed, five declined, one did not respond.

On January 22, 2019, an e-mail was sent to NTHSSA Regional Chief Operating Officers (COO’s), Department of Finance Regional Superintendents, and the CEO of the TCSA. The e-mail was sent to their government e-mail addresses by a neutral third party and a copy of the Letter of Informed Consent for Survey Participants (Appendix “E”) was included, as was a list of their hiring managers/HROs that was drawn from the GNWT online phone directory. The e-mail requested the COO/Superintendent/CEO support in having their hiring managers/HROs participate in this research project and to verify or update the list of hiring managers/HROs to ensure an accurate list of potential respondents. All COOs responded in person or via email with support for the survey, four COOs provided a corrected listing of hiring managers, one identified the names of hiring managers who agreed to participate, another verbally agreed to participate but did not provide updated list. Four Superintendents responded supporting their staff participation. The CEO of the TCSA provided verbal consent to TCSA staff participation.

An introductory email with the relevant Informed Consent letter attached, and a link to the survey for their respondent group, was then sent via a neutral third party to NTHSSA hiring managers, HROs, and TCSA hiring managers. The e-mail list for potential survey respondents was from the list verified by their senior leaders, or in cases where senior leaders did not verify hiring managers/HROs, to the managers the GNWT on-line e-mail listing. The surveys sent to NTHSSA hiring managers (Appendix “F”), HROs (Appendix “G”) and TCSA hiring manager (Appendix “H”) were similar, but not identical. The response rate is shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2 – RESPONSE RATE**

Surveys sent to:	Response Rate # (%)
40 NTHSSA Hiring Managers	20 (50%)
16 Human Resource Officers	12 (75%)
4 TCSA Health and Social Services Hiring Managers	3 (75%)

A document review was conducted to understand the current state of NTHSSA indigenous Aboriginal representation, existing plans and programs designed to support increased representation; and the uptake of such programs by the NTHSSA and indigenous Aboriginal employees/candidates. There are several data sources available online, which were drawn upon for the document review. Documents included GNWT annual Public Service reports; Finance, Human Resource Division’s Human Resource Strategic plan, GNWT training calendar, and the Health and Social Services Human Resources strategic plan. Upon request, a health and social services Senior Human Resources manager provided a summary of current GNWT health and social services recruitment, retention, and training initiatives. Reports related to the uptake of GNWT health and social service initiatives by indigenous Aboriginal employees were requested, but not provided. Reports related to the uptake of Department of Finance, Human Resources

programs by and for NTHSSA indigenous Aboriginal staff were requested, but not provided. A report identifying the number of NTHSSA nursing and social service staff by priority status was provided by a NTHSSA senior leader.

#### **4.4 Data Analysis**

The document review, interviews, and surveys were analyzed using several methods. Documents were reviewed using content analysis, a process whereby a researcher interprets the meaning of written or visual data (Leung and Chung, 2019, p. 828). In order to complete the content analysis respondent data was searched using the following criteria: indigenous Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA; government programs available in the NWT that would support the recruitment, retention, training, and development of health and social services employees; plans, strategies, goals, objectives and background information specific to the Affirmative Action Policy and the indigenous Aboriginal target groups, and application of affirmative action to recruitment processes.

The interviews were coded using a deductive content analysis approach, whereby the data collected is compared to existing theories or themes and used as a basis for coding the content (Leung and Chung, 2019, p. 829). For this study, coding was completed using the following themes; gaps and barriers, recommendations, opinions, and lessons. Subthemes were identified in some areas. A comparative analysis was also completed between the TCSA interview and GNWT interviews.

For the survey, calculation of median and mean for each respondent group was completed for rated survey questions in order to support a comparative analysis between respondent groups. Comments and written responses were coded similarly to the interviews, using a deductive content analysis with gaps and barriers, recommendations, opinions, and lessons as themes. A comparative analysis was conducted between respondent groups within each organization to determine if individuals from the same organization had different opinions and views towards hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees. If there were differences it would be reasonable to assume the differences were based on opinion, worldview, and values associated with the cultural group rather than an organizational norm or truth. The views and experience of the HROs were compared to the NTHSSA hiring managers in order to provide insight into bias that NTHSSA hiring managers may exhibit but be unaware of or be uncomfortable self-reporting. TCSA responses were compared to NTHSSA managers to determine if there were differing views or opinions which could impact the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees.

#### **4.5 Project Limitations and Delimitations**

This project focused on current state strategic plans and recruitment and retention strategies. Past recruitment and retention strategies were not explored.

It is recognized that there are factors outside of the NTHSSA's control or mandate that influence recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees. External factors, both present and future will not be explored in depth, and recommendations will focus on those areas within the mandate and control of the NTHSSA.

## **5.0 Findings - Current State: Document Review**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The document review provides data on the current state of indigenous Aboriginal employment in the NTHSSA. It also provides data on GNWT Department of Finance, Human Resources, and Health and Social Services strategic plans, recruitment, training, development and education programs. The following publicly available documents and websites were reviewed; GNWT Human Resources annual report and strategic plan, GNWT Finance Human Resources staffing guidelines, recruitment programs, training and development programs, Health and Social Services recruitment and training programs, and Health and Social Services Human Resources Strategic Plan.

A request was made to the Department of Health and Social Services, the NTHSSA, and Department of Finance, Human Resources to provide data on the number of NTHSSA indigenous Aboriginal employees that were supported through any of its recruitment or development initiatives; however, information on indigenous Aboriginal participation in recruitment and retention programs was not provided. It was reported that some health and social services initiatives did not track indigenous Aboriginal participation. A listing of programs that support the recruitment of indigenous Aboriginal employees in the NTHSSA and data on the number of Aboriginal nursing and social service employees was provided by NTHSSA senior management. A senior manager in health and social services was asked if the NTHSSA or Department of Health and Social Services had an affirmative action plan as identified in the Affirmative Action Policy; the manager stated they were not aware of a Department of Health and Social Services affirmative action plan, and they were unaware of other government departments developing such plans. Documents reviewed are listed in Appendix “I”.

### **5.2 Document Review**

The NWT Affirmative Action Policy states all departments and agencies within the public service will plan and implement affirmative action measures. Planning will identify the actions to be taken, provide reasons for the actions, detail how the plan will be implemented, outline the time frame, assign responsibility, and establish monitoring and evaluation requirements (GNWT, 2006, pp. 5, 6).

The 2018 Annual Public Service Report indicates that in 2017/18 the NTHSSA had a total of 1282 employees (GNWT, 2019, Public Service Report, p. 30). Of these 303 (24%) were indigenous Aboriginal (p. 30). Indigenous Aboriginal employees in senior management positions are also reported; the NTHSSA had 17 senior management positions of these employees 1 (6%) identified as indigenous Aboriginal (p. 33). An NTHSSA senior manager provided data on the number of indigenous Aboriginal employees in social service and nursing professions in 2018 (Appendix “J”). The data provided shows 29% of social service employees, including child protection workers, counsellors, and early childhood intervention workers, are Aboriginal with

27% being indigenous Aboriginal. 10% of the nurses in the NTHSSA are reported to be Aboriginal with 8% being indigenous Aboriginal. Nurses make up the largest employee group in the NTHSSA comprising 35% of the workforce (derived from data provided in Appendix “J” and the 2018 Public Service Report, p. 30).

The Affirmative Action Policy is applied in all NWT public service competitions. The policy states the GNWT will “give preference in employing, training, and promoting eligible target group persons” (GNWT, 2006, p. 6). The GNWT Human Resource Manual provides guidance to managers and HRO’s on hiring processes. Section 100 of the GNWT Human Resource Manual speaks to the GNWT’s recruitment process and the application of the Affirmative Action Policy (GNWT, 2014). In practice, screening criteria including equivalencies are determined prior to screening candidates. An equivalency is a combination of education and experience that would be considered equivalent to education and experiences outlined in the job description (Section 104.12). Any bona fide occupational requirements for a position are included in the screening criteria (Section 115.2). Once screening criteria is determined resumes are reviewed with priority applicants being reviewed first. If any priority candidates are screened in, the resumes of candidates without priority status are set aside and the priority candidates are dealt with first. Priority candidates must pass the interview (minimum score of 60%). If they pass the interview and their references are acceptable, they are offered the position. If two priority candidates pass the interview, the position is offered to the highest priority candidate with the highest score. If no priority candidate applies or are screened in all other resumes are reviewed.

The GNWT released a ten-year Human Resources strategic plan in 2009 titled: 2020: A Brilliant North NWT Public Service Strategic Plan: Public Service, Public Focus. This strategic plan identifies “the need to build a home-grown workforce and reduce the need to import a professional staff from outside the NWT.” The Affirmative Action Policy is referenced in supporting objectives under two of five goals in this Strategic plan. Promoting affirmative action and diversity fall under the second goal, “Engage: Magnetic Attraction”, as the first of three objectives: “To promote the Affirmative Action Policy to create a public service which reflects the diverse cultures of the NWT and promotes the development and enhancement of designated groups” (p. 18). Strategic Goal four, “Inspire: Expanding Horizons”, also refers to the Affirmative Action Policy with “Supporting Objective One: Leadership” reading: “To develop a sustainable group of core middle managers and senior managers in the GNWT, with a targeted approach to ensure that affirmative action designated groups develop the skills to advance and proceed in leadership roles” (p. 22). The document reports that feedback, which contributed to the development of the strategic plan, indicated indigenous Aboriginal employees need additional support that included mentoring (p. 8) and recommended developing and implementing a formal mentorship and coaching program (p. 10). The document also reports feedback from GNWT employees that “The responsibility for training, development, coaching

and mentorship has fallen to departments/or managers who lack the time, resources, and support from HR to handle it” (p. 9).

The GNWT Department of Finance, Human Resources offers training and development for government employees that can be found on their website (GNWT, My HR, 2018). Aboriginal Cultural Awareness, Diversity and Inclusion training are provided via on-line modules. The Diversity and Inclusion module is new, having just been released in March of 2019. A half day LGBTQ2S+ was also introduced in March 2019. The Indigenous Management Development and Training Program is a GNWT retention and development program targeted to indigenous Aboriginal employees. It offers two thirds of funding (the home department is required to provide one third) up to \$10,000 annually to support the professional development of indigenous Aboriginal employees in order to support their career advancement. The Indigenous Career Gateway Program and the Regional Recruitment Program are GNWT recruitment programs that support hiring indigenous Aboriginal candidates. Under the Indigenous Career Gateway Program GNWT departments are eligible to receive up to \$40,000.00 per year to support the development of new indigenous Aboriginal employees; this can be used towards salary costs, training costs, and a trainer allowance of up to \$6000.00 per year. The Indigenous Career Gateway Program is available to candidates that meet the stated qualifications of the job, or for a trainee position (up to two years) to assist candidates in acquiring required training and experience for a GNWT position. The Regional Recruitment Program is a training and development program that provides up to \$15,000.00 a year towards the training costs of an individual hired as a trainee. While the Regional Recruitment Program is not targeted specifically to indigenous Aboriginal candidates, it is targeted to local applicants. The trainee is hired through a locally advertised expression of interest, and the Affirmative Action Policy applies when reviewing applications.

Other GNWT programs that are not specific to indigenous Aboriginal employees but follow the Affirmative Action Policy include Summer Student and Graduate Internship Programs. NWT students enrolled in post-secondary programs can register with government of the NWT as a summer student. Government departments interested in hiring a summer student are given access the student data base and are expected to follow priority hiring when selecting students. Students are given priority hiring for all casual employment positions through the summer student period, April 15 to August 15. The Graduate Internship program funds paid internship positions lasting up to two years. Under this program the Department of Finance provides up to \$40,000 to departments that hire a northern graduate who has completed a post-secondary program within one year of beginning the internship position. Guidelines were not available on the website, but candidates are advised to identify their affirmative action status (GNWT My HR (2018)).

The Leadership Development Program is a management training and development program offered bi-annually in Yellowknife in partnership with the University of Alberta School

of business. The intent of the program is to support existing government employees develop as emerging managers, managers, and executive and senior managers. Individual departments pay associated travel costs and tuition and are expected to follow the Affirmative Action Policy when selecting candidates to attend (GNWT My HR, 2018).

A five-year Human Resource Strategy was released by the Department of Health and Social Services in 2015. This Strategic plan identified that prior funding had focused on recruitment rather than on retention or developing the skills of existing employees. It also noted most of the HR initiatives had been “provided to individuals wanting to become doctors and nurses to the exclusion of other professions” (Department of Health and Social Services, 2015, p. 9). A past nurse mentorship program is referenced in the strategic plan noting a wide variation in training provided by nurse educators as problematic (p.10). This mentorship program was discontinued and there are no references to mentorship programs under the new 2015 strategies. The three goals are identified in the Health and Social Services Human Resources strategic plan are:

**Goal 1:** Strengthen Health and Social Services Labour Market information. This goal is intended to increase data collection related to the health and social services to improve decision-making (p. 11).

**Goal 2:** Recruitment in hard to fill positions. Specific recruitment initiatives identified in the strategic plan include the Research and Explore Awesome Careers in Health and Social Services (REACH) program, aimed at promoting health and social service careers to school aged children in partnership with Departments of Human Resources, and Education. Initiatives also included a medical residency program, health and social services graduate internship program, a central medical affairs unit to focus on territorial recruitment, and a rural and remote nursing program (p. 13, 14).

**Goal 3:** Supporting and developing capacity. The intention of this goal is to improve retention rates by providing career development opportunities. Programs identified in the strategic plan include: Targeted Academic Support Program, Targeted Placement Support, and Health and Social Services Executive Leadership Support (p. 16).

The Health and Social Services Human Resources strategic plan does not make any reference to a representative public service, the Affirmative Action Policy, or any of the designated target groups including indigenous Aboriginal employees. Several initiatives from this strategic plan can be found on the Practice NWT website, which is a recruitment website promoting GNWT health and social service career opportunities. GNWT health and social services training and development initiatives include the Targeted Academic Support Program, which provides financial support of up to \$50,000 to front line health and social services practitioners employed in indeterminate health and social services professions within the NWT health and social services system. It is intended for employees seeking to expand their scope of



practice by attaining academic or technical training offered through accredited post-secondary academic institutions. Guidelines state the Affirmative Action Policy will be applied (GNWT, n.d.).

The Post Graduate Certificate in Remote Nursing offered in collaboration with Aurora College is designed to provide new nursing graduates and Registered Nurses without remote nursing experience, an opportunity to develop the skills necessary to work in a community health centre. Much of the program is on-line although three weeks are required on site in Yellowknife. The Aurora College program description states RN's registered in the NWT will receive priority. Application of the Affirmative Action Policy is not identified in NTHSSA or Aurora College guidelines or program descriptions (GNWT, n.d.; Aurora College, 2019). Guidelines for the Health and Social Services Graduate Entry Level Internship Program are not yet posted on the Practice NWT website, but were provided by an NTHSSA senior manager (Appendix "K"). This program provides up to \$75,000 to GNWT health and social service departments and agencies to develop supernumerary entry-level internship positions in the areas of nursing, social work and allied health.

The Executive Leadership Development Program is a senior leadership development program designed to develop senior health services leadership and management competencies, support succession planning, and develop "northern leadership capacity" (GNWT, n.d.). This program provides funding for academic support, as well as coaching and a competency assessment. It requires candidates identify their affirmative action status and applies the Affirmative Action Policy in selecting participants.

Health and Social Services Professional Development Initiative is not identified in the strategic plan but is a retention program that provides financial support to health and allied health professionals for professional development (GNWT, n.d.). NTHSSA human resource staff advised that Affirmative Action Policy is not applied to applications under the Professional Development Initiative.

### **5.3 Document Review Summary**

The document review revealed a NWT Affirmative Action Policy that gives strong preference to indigenous Aboriginal candidates in recruitment, training, and development programs. There are clear steps in place for applying this preference in recruitment processes. The GNWT Human Resource Strategic plan identifies indigenous Aboriginal employees as a target population, and identifies objectives for supporting the recruitment, development, and promotion of these employees. There are three GNWT wide recruitment, training and development programs directly targeted to the recruitment and development of indigenous Aboriginal employees. In addition, two programs support hiring northern students and new post-secondary graduates with the expectation the Affirmative Action Policy be applied when hiring. A final program supports the development of GNWT employees as leaders and managers with the expectation the Affirmative Action Policy be applied in selecting participants.

Within the NTHSSA the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees was found to have significant gaps in nursing, the largest employee group, as well as senior management. The Health and Services Strategic plan did not address any affirmative action target groups. Five GNWT health and social services training and development programs were identified. Any of these programs can be utilized to support indigenous Aboriginal employees, but none appear to be aimed at specifically towards indigenous Aboriginal candidates or other affirmative action target groups. The Affirmative Action Policy is applied when determining which applicants will be supported in most health and social services training and development initiatives, as is required under the Affirmative Action Policy. The Rural and Remote Nursing program and Professional Development Initiative are the exceptions.

## 6.0 Findings: Interview Results

### 6.1 Introduction

A total of four government senior managers were interviewed. The interview findings are broken into two sections - GNWT interview findings and TSCA interview findings. While TSCA employees are considered GNWT employees, the TSCA senior manager was asked different questions with the intention of identifying lessons from the TSCA that might be applied to the NTHSSA and therefore, the TSCA data is reported separately.

### 6.2 GNWT Interview Findings

Three GNWT senior managers were interviewed. Identified gaps, barriers, and recommendations, and opinions and perceptions that might influence recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees are presented and organized by key themes from the interviews.

#### *Gaps, Barriers, and Recommendations*

##### ***Theme 1: Education***

A lack of candidates with the required education was the most commonly identified barrier based on a search of key words education and academic, which were mentioned a total of thirty-two times. All interviewees noted technical requirements and national standards primarily in health careers were such that there was really no flexibility in the educational requirements needed for many positions.

Barriers to accessing post-secondary education was an education subtheme identified by all three interviewees. This included youth not graduating with the necessary prerequisites, and the challenge of navigating the application process for the post-secondary education system especially for families without prior experience with post-secondary education. The length of the educational programs, particularly for professionals like rehabilitation and physicians, and the proximity of educational institutions were also seen as barriers. Having to relocate outside of the NWT to attend lengthy post-secondary programs created cultural barriers, impacted support systems, led to homesickness, and created financial strain. These factors negatively impact the desire to attend, and the successful completion of programs. The students who successfully complete their education outside of the NWT were noted to be less likely to return to the NWT because they have adapted to life, and have established long term relationships, outside of the NWT.

It was noted that the demographic typically interested in health and social service jobs are young women who often have children, a group that face additional barriers such as increased financial needs, need for childcare, and increased challenges associated with relocating a family.

While the GNWT provides Student Financial Assistance to indigenous Aboriginal students, interviewees still identified financial barriers associated with accessing education.

Youth was an important sub theme of education. The most common recommendation in all interviews, to engage and support youth, was directly linked to the lack of academically qualified candidates. Key words: youth, kids, young people/women/students, and high school were mentioned a total of fifty-four times. Recommendations related to youth included fostering an interest in health and social careers, ensuring youth understood what kinds of careers were available, what those careers were like, knowing what high school courses they needed to take, and achieving good grades. Methods of achieving these recommendations included participation in events like “Bring Your Kid to Work Day” (mentioned by two interviewees), having health and social service professionals go into schools to talk about their professions, identifying indigenous Aboriginal health and social service role models, and exposure to post-secondary educational events as offered by some universities in southern Canada. Providing opportunities to youth to do job shadowing and offering mentorship and tutoring to youth were also recommended.

Other recommendations to address access to education barriers included providing employees with paid education leave, targeted training programs for specific difficult to fill positions, and collaborating with the department of Education, Culture and Employment, which provides funding to students, to offer additional financial support. More online or distance education were also recommended.

### ***Theme 2: Qualifications and Equivalencies***

Qualifications and equivalency/ies were mentioned twenty-five times. Two interviewees spoke to this issue, with one using the key words a total of twenty-three times, making it a significant area of focus for their interview. The theme associated with these key words was that qualifications asked for in some job descriptions were unnecessarily high, created systematic barriers for indigenous Aboriginal candidates and often resulted in poorer service delivery to Aboriginal people. The two interviewees who identified this barrier acknowledged that while some health and social service positions require specific technical training, other positions were likely more flexible in their requirements. They reflected that in their experience having a master’s degree did not always translate in being the best employee in a position. It was also suggested that requirements for some positions have increased over time, increasing barriers to indigenous Aboriginal employees who often do not meet these educational requirements. The way programs are developed was identified as a contributing factor with a program being envisioned and then job descriptions drafted based on what academic criteria might be relevant to achieving the desired outcome, versus considering how local knowledge or skills could be leveraged to achieve the desired outcomes of the program.

Recommendations followed two themes. One theme was to complete a review of existing job descriptions to ensure qualifications being asked for were in fact required for a position, and that a broader application of equivalencies should be considered. The other theme was to review program design to consider what outcomes a program was trying to achieve and consider if there were alternative ways of achieving those outcomes that leveraged strengths that already exist in communities. This approach would make positions more accessible to indigenous Aboriginal candidates who have local and cultural knowledge but less formal education. It was suggested that changing programs in this way would also be more in line with what communities wanted, and more effective in terms of service delivery and achieving outcomes particularly in areas such as addictions and mental health because it aligned with an approach to care that was based on solutions coming from within.

### ***Theme 3: Experience***

Experience was a key word, mentioned ten times by interviewees in reference to the experience candidates were expected to have in order to be hired by the NTHSSA. The experience requirement posed a barrier to hiring indigenous Aboriginal candidates who had the required education but lacked work experience. The importance of an employee having experience and the potential risks both to an inexperienced employee and to client/patients if a new grad is put in a situation beyond their skills set was acknowledged; but not being able to hire new grads who had overcome the barriers of completing a post-secondary education was seen as problematic. A further barrier was that internship programs designed to overcome this issue did not have enough funding to meet the need. This was summed up by one interviewee who said “We certainly hear stories of our grads getting hired down south, but we’re not hiring them. We’ve run out of internship money and they don’t qualify for any of our other jobs”.

Recommendations for addressing this gap included hiring students pursuing health and social service careers as summer students to build up their experience and hiring new graduates under internship programs.

### ***Theme 4: Planning***

All three interviewees made comments in some way related to planning. Key words strategy/ies, was used six times by one interviewee, and plan, by another interviewee used once. While key words had limited use, gaps were identified in planning, communication, completion and implementation of plans, and knowledge and data related to the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees. This included a void in plans targeted to indigenous Aboriginal people, and the bulk of existing funding being spent on retention versus recruitment, thus going predominately to NTHSSA’s largely non-Aboriginal employees. A program designed to engage youth (REACH) and a career guidebook for youth had been started and a large amount of work put into developing but was not completed or fully implemented. Gaps in monitoring, measuring, and collecting data that could contribute to effective planning included not knowing

why indigenous Aboriginal employees might be leaving, whether they are leaving more than other groups, and not knowing why past recruitment programs were discontinued. Inconsistent application of the Affirmative Action Policy to health and social service training and development programs was also reported due to a lack of understanding of the scope of the Affirmative Action Policy, although it was noted this had changed in the last few years.

Recommendations to address gaps in planning included, doing analysis and planning, understanding where the barriers exist in different areas, and to developing strategies to achieve desired outcomes.

### ***Theme 5: Organizational Culture/Cultural Fit***

All three interviewees identified cultural barriers that they believed impacted the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees. This included language barriers and the format of job interviews. However, the primary focus was that organizational culture and service delivery were based on western medicine and western models of care with an absence of Aboriginal culture, values, world views, and practices such as traditional healing. The resulting barriers included; jobs that require formal academic training rather than ones that require know-how gained through Aboriginal experience, culture, and knowledge sharing; and inadequate care and services for Aboriginal people and therefore a less desirable organization for an indigenous Aboriginal person to work for. Possible “biases in the workplace” and feeling unheard were also identified as barriers that would impact the retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees, with one interviewee suggesting that perhaps indigenous Aboriginal employees “don’t feel like they have a voice”.

Recommendations included the organization changing its culture to more appropriately serve the needs of Aboriginal people. It was also suggested that upcoming cultural safety training, a new initiative focusing heavily on indigenous Aboriginal people, may make a difference.

### ***Theme 6: Competition for Employees***

Competition with other employers for educated indigenous Aboriginal staff was identified as a barrier to recruitment and retention of this target group. It was noted that indigenous Aboriginal candidates with a formal education have many opportunities to work for other government departments, and there are an increasing number of opportunities within Aboriginal governments. The workload/work life associated with many NTHSSA jobs such as shift work, on-call and overtime was seen to make them less attractive, as was the challenge of working in one’s home community. As a result, the NTHSSA competes with departments and organizations that offer potentially better work life balance, and/or the ability to work for one’s “own people”. As one interviewee stated, “We’re not necessarily the employer of choice as much as maybe we used to be.”

## *Opinions and Perceptions*

The interviewees presented a range of opinions related to the goal of representative NWT public service and the Affirmative Action Policy. All three stated they supported the idea of a representative public service and felt it was achievable. One interviewee felt it was “essential” to have a representative public service. There was some question as to how representation was defined. One interviewee stated they felt representation was achievable only if the definition was based on those that are eligible to work and not based on population percentages. Two respondents noted the importance of having indigenous Aboriginal employees at all levels within the organization.

Support for the Affirmative Action Policy was more divided. The philosophical statement the policy made was noted by one interviewee, stating; “Philosophically the Affirmative Action Policy is a very strong statement on the part of government, which is really important”, but noted a policy did not stand alone and needed supports around it. Another interviewee acknowledged they “had problems” with the Affirmative Action Policy, was not sure it was best tool for achieving a representative bureaucracy and believed the NWT Affirmative Action Policy violated Human Rights legislation.

Two interviewees did not have strong opinions in response to the question on diversity and inclusion, the other interviewee responded strongly. The question “hit a button” for them as they felt the GNWT’s focus was on indigenous Aboriginal people to the exclusion of other groups, which they characterized as “very, very short sighted”; noting many people in the NWT are from other countries but the organization “does nothing for them, nothing”.

All three interviewees identified ways the NWT Affirmative Action Policy differs from the Employment Equity Act. Differences identified ranged from noting the Employment Equity is a more targeted approach, in which areas of underrepresentation are identified and then ways to improve that situation are established. The other two interviewees focused on differences they believed existed between who was identified as a target group under the Affirmative Action Policy (ours) versus who was included as target groups under Employment Equity or in other jurisdictions, stating “ours just deals with northerners” and “ours doesn’t have visible minorities or sexual orientation”. In describing Employment Equity, statements included “it identifies five key groups that are disadvantaged to give them advantage”, and “it’s based on human rights legislation”. The implication being the Affirmative Action Policy is not as inclusive as it should be; is not based on human rights legislation; and the Employment Equity Act is the model that should be followed.

### **6.3 TCSA Interview Findings**

One senior health social services manager at the TCSA was interviewed. Interview questions focused on reasons the interviewee believed the TCSA has had success in recruiting

and retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees where the NTHSSA has struggled, and recommendations for the NTHSSA.

The interviewee stated their strongest recommendation was to make training programs more accessible by bringing training to the communities. Two examples were provided of training programs that were delivered in the Tlicho region that resulted in an increase in skilled Tlicho employees. Having the social work diploma program offered in nearby Yellowknife was also recognized as having contributed to the training and recruitment of Tlicho social workers. It was stated the TCSA has struggled with nurse recruitment and nursing leadership, which was attributed to a limited number of indigenous Aboriginal nurses available to hire. Reaching out to youth, particularly to encourage nursing as a career, through job shadowing, promoting health careers, and bringing students to the workplace were recommended.

The TCSA was described as a “generously supportive” employer in areas such as providing personal leave for employees. It was also described as “always” providing opportunities for employees to grow and develop beyond the support provided to all government health and social service professionals. This included mentorship, orientation, and sometimes support through the hiring process by providing practice job interviews. Limiting competitions to the Tlicho region or community was identified as a strategy. Accessing GNWT training and development programs such as the Indigenous Gateway Program, described by the interviewee as a “great GNWT program”, was another identified strategy.

Appreciating Tlicho employees and recognizing the added value they bring to the organization in terms of knowledge and better service delivery was a theme through-out the interview. Being located within the Tlicho region and having the Tlicho language spoken in day to day work contributed to an organization that was comfortable for Tlicho employees. The organization was also described as focused on being culturally sensitive and providing good care to Aboriginal people, with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees working together towards a common goal for the community.

#### **6.4 Summary of Interview Findings**

Gaps and barriers identified by GNWT senior managers included a lack of indigenous Aboriginal candidates that had the required technical training for health and social service jobs. Barriers to accessing post-secondary education were recognized as a significant contributing factor. Job requirements that were set unnecessarily high, not applying equivalencies broadly enough, and requiring experience that new graduates did not have were identified as barriers for candidates who either did not have requested qualifications or did not have the requested experience. Program development that only considered the academic qualifications a service provider might need, rather than considering how to leverage the skills and knowledge of indigenous Aboriginal employees was also considered problematic. Being an organization centered on white/western medicine and ways of delivering service and an absence of Aboriginal culture, values, world views, and methods of healing creates several barriers to recruiting and



retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees. These include; focusing on formal education versus aboriginal knowledge and skills; inadequate service delivery to Aboriginal people making a less desirable working environment for Aboriginal employees; and a dearth of culturally relevant positions, such as elders, that do not fit into white/western service delivery modes.

Gaps in planning that negatively impact recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees included; knowledge gaps, challenges with completion and implementation of initiatives, and an absence of planning targeted to the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees.

Recommendations included reaching out to youth to interest them in pursuing health and social service careers, ensure they knew the courses required for health careers, and the need for good grades. Reviewing job description to ensure expected qualifications were not excessive, applying equivalencies, and reviewing programs to determine if they could be re-envisioned in a way that leveraged indigenous Aboriginal people's skills and knowledge were also recommended. Changing the organizational culture so that Aboriginal values, worldview, and healing practices were incorporated would provide better service for Aboriginal people creating an organization more indigenous Aboriginal people would want to work for. Strategic planning was also recommended, understanding what the goals and challenges are, and developing specific plans to overcome barriers and meet goals.

Opinions of senior managers ranged from strong support for the goal of a representative public service and the very important policy message the Affirmative Action Policy sent, to seeing the Affirmative Action Policy as problematic and illegitimate. Concerns about fairness were raised in relation to a focus on indigenous Aboriginal populations versus visible minorities and other marginalized groups. Comparisons with the Employment Equity Act by some GNWT respondents suggested the Affirmative Action Policy was not adequately or appropriately inclusive.

A key lesson from the TCSA included the importance of community-based training and investing in indigenous Aboriginal people. Having a supportive organizational culture where Tliche culture, language, and people were appreciated and recognized for the added value they brought to the organization and service delivery were also lessons learned from TCSA.

## 7.0 Findings: Survey Results

### 7.1 Introduction

Surveys were completed by TSCA health and social services hiring managers, NTHSSA hiring managers, and Department of Finance, Human Resources, Human Resource Officers (HROs). Questions were designed to draw out opinions and perceptions of NTHSSA hiring managers that might influence the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees, as well as identify barriers and recommendations from individuals within the system that had direct experience with recruitment and retention.

For rated questions, median and mean were calculated to determine if there were differences in opinions across respondent groups. A content analysis was also completed on comments to better understand perception and opinion across survey groups as well as identified gaps, barriers, and recommendations. If a survey group is not identified in the findings summary, it is because no one from that group commented on the survey question or the comment did not provide substantive information.

### 7.2 Demographic Information

Survey respondents were asked if they identified as indigenous Aboriginal (yes or no) or if they would rather “Not Say”. The three TSCA respondents did not identify as indigenous Aboriginal (Not IA). Of the twelve HRO respondents, nine identified as indigenous Aboriginal (IA), two did not identify indigenous Aboriginal one chose to “Not Say”. Of the twenty NTHSSA managers, five identified as indigenous Aboriginal, thirteen did not identify as indigenous Aboriginal and two chose to “Not Say”. Distribution of responses is shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 3 – DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Distribution of responses								
TSCA	HROs	HRO IA	HRO Not IA	HRO Not Say	NTHSSA	NTHSSA IA	NTHSSA Not IA	NTHSSA Not Say
3	12	9	2	1	20	5	13	2
9%	34%	25%	6%	3%	57%	14%	37%	6%

Rating scale questions were weighted as shown in Table 4. Responses were tallied according to the weighting, allowing for a weighted mean and median.

TABLE 4 - WEIGHTED RESPONSES

Yes, Definitely 1 point	Most of the time 2 points	Sometimes 3 points	Seldom 4 points	Not at all 5 points
Very Positive 1 point	Somewhat Positive 2 points	Neutral 3 points	Somewhat Negative 4 points	Very Negative 5 points
Always 1 point	Usually 2 points	Sometimes 3 points	Rarely 4 points	Never 5 points
Many times 1 point	Sometimes 2 points	Can't recall 0 points	Rarely 3 points	Never 4 points

A graph showing the overall percentage of responses in each category is shown in figures 1 through 6. The weighted mean and median for each respondent group is also reported and shown in Tables 5 through 10. In general, lower numbers indicate a more positive response.

### 7.3 Rated Questions

Rated questions were intended to draw out opinions of individuals involved in the hiring process and to ascertain possible bias in the screening or interview process.

HROs, TCSA and NTHSSA hiring managers were asked: *Do you believe hiring more indigenous Aboriginal staff will result in the NTHSSA/TCSA providing better services?*

All respondents indicated they believed hiring more indigenous aboriginal staff would result in the NTHSSA/TCSA providing better services “Sometimes”, “Most of the Time”, or “Yes, definitely”, with an overall weighted mean of 1.9 and median of 2. NTHSSA IA had the lowest median and mean, followed by IA and Not IA HROs, indicating the most positive responses to this question. TCSA, NTHSSA Not IA, and Not Say HROs had similar median and means, with NTHSSA Not Say providing the least positive responses.

FIGURE 1 - BETTER SERVICE

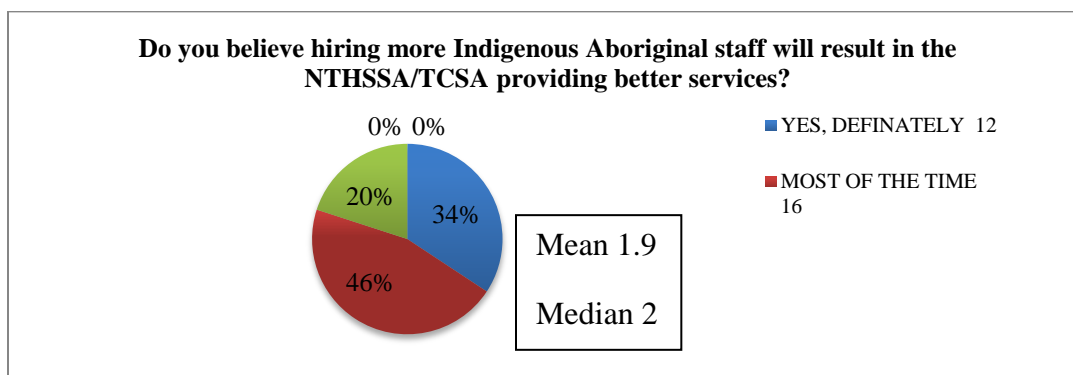


TABLE 5 – BETTER SERVICE

Mean per survey group								
TSCA	HRO	HRO IA	HRO Not IA	HRO Not Say	NTHSSA	NTHSSA IA	NTHSSA Not IA	NTHSSA Not Say
2	1.6	1.6	1.5	2	2	1.6	2	3
Median per survey group								
2	2	2	1.5	2	2	1	2	3

*TCSA*: Two (67%) managers commented. Comments reflected the added value to the organization of indigenous Aboriginal staff. Knowledge of the local language and ability to providing culturally sensitive care were noted attributes. Having these attributes coupled with experience and skill was seen to be most beneficial.

*NTHSSA IA*: Three (60%) managers commented. The importance of indigenous Aboriginal candidates meeting the qualifications for the position was identified by two respondents. Developing cultural knowledge positions for which formal education is not a factor (e.g. elder in residence, indigenous health liaison) was recommended noting these types of positions do not currently exist in the system but would enhance services. The value of indigenous Aboriginal employees was also identified because their knowledge of the history, the people, the family connections, and the culture, and because “northern people are more comfortable when dealing with their own people”.

*NTHSSA Not IA*: Six (46%) managers commented. The importance of the candidate being trained/educated/meeting the job requirements of the position was identified by five respondents. Concerns that “downgrading” in order to hire indigenous Aboriginal staff will not result in best care, or that the “best qualified individuals should be employed to ensure the “best quality of care” were also reported. The concern that having indigenous Aboriginal employees in health and social service positions created the potential for situations of conflict of interest when providing services to relatives, particularly in the provision of mental health or counseling services, was expressed by one manager. Of the managers who commented, only one did not reference the importance of qualifications or raise concerns about hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees. This manager spoke to the added value of having indigenous Aboriginal employees and provided outcome data from Southcentral Foundation to support their response.

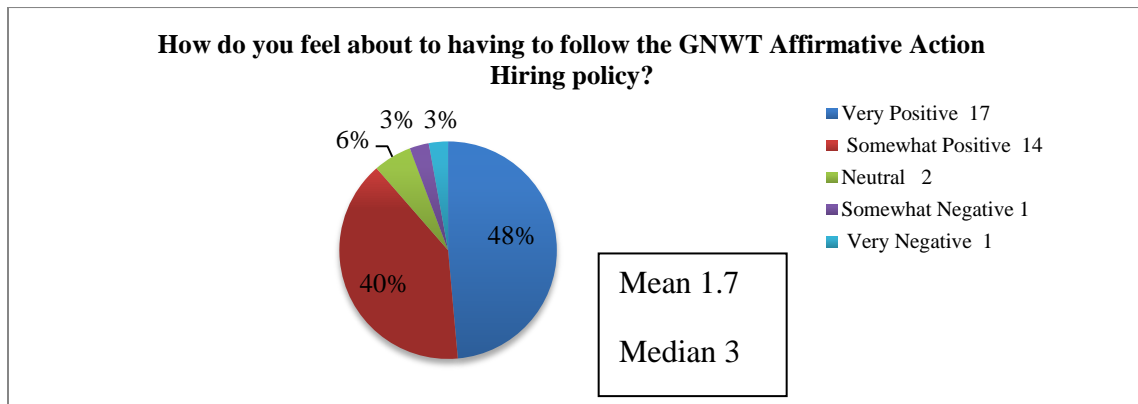
*HRO IA*: Three (33%) HROs commented. The added value of having indigenous Aboriginal health and social service employees was the theme in all comments. This included bringing comfort to patients through their presence, reducing staff turnover rates, assisting in providing better services, and improving relationships because they (indigenous Aboriginal staff) know the people and cultures.

*HRO Not IA*: One (50%) HRO commented that their positive response was based an assumption that candidates hired met the requirements of the position.

HROs, TSCA and NTHSSA hiring managers were asked: ***How do you feel about to having to follow the GNWT Affirmative Action Hiring policy?***

Most (88%) respondents reported being “Very Positive” (48%) or “Somewhat Positive” (40%) about having to follow the GNWT Affirmative Action Policy, however many NTHSSA Not IA comments reflected a less positive view. HROs Not Say had the lowest median and mean, followed by NTHSSA IA, HRO IA, and HRO Not IA reflecting the most positive responses to this question. NTHSSA Not IA and TCSA had similar median and mean, with NTHSSA Not Say providing the least positive responses.

**FIGURE 2 - FOLLOWING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ALL**



**TABLE 6 - FOLLOWING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION ALL**

Mean per survey group								
TSCA	HRO	HRO IA	HRO Not IA	HRO Not Say	NTHSSA	NTHSSA IA	NTHSSA NIA	NTHSSA Not Say
2	1.33	1.33	1.5	1	1.9	1.2	1.92	3.5
Median per survey group								
2	1	1	1.5	1	2	1	2	3.5

*NTHSSA IA*: Three (60%) managers commented. Ensuring candidates are “equal in qualifications” was identified as important by one respondent. All other comments identified support for following the Affirmative Action Policy

*NTHSSA Not IA*: Seven (54%) of managers commented. A concern that the policy did not result in the best or most qualified candidate getting the job was expressed by four managers, a related concern was that the policy can result in positions being “downgraded” to ensure a hire with negative consequences. Two respondents felt the policy could be seen as discriminatory.

The effectiveness of the policy was questioned by a respondent because it does not help the indigenous aboriginal candidates who do not have the required education or training. This respondent recommended more work be done “encouraging/supporting NWT residents to attend higher levels of education”. Of the seven managers who commented, only one respondent did not identify a concern or problem with the Affirmative Action Policy, stating “I think it is very important. In order to strengthen communities, I believe a P1 (indigenous Aboriginal) should always be hired into the position, when screened in.”

*HRO IA:* Four (44%) HROs commented. The value of hiring locally and creating a representative public service was stated. The importance of a candidate being qualified was also identified. The opinion of the hiring manager was identified by the one HRO as problematic, as the hiring manager has the final decision on a hire, do not always follow the recommendation of the HRO, and sometimes show bias. An HRO stated, “We see sometimes, who's their favorite person.”

*HRO Not IA:* One (50%) HRO commented that “it is important to hire local indigenous be it aboriginal or those raised or who have established themselves in the NWT” reflecting support for the NWT Affirmative Action Policy and indigenous non-Aboriginal, as well as indigenous Aboriginal target groups.

HROs were asked: ***Based on your experience over the past year, how do you think NTHSSA hiring managers feel about following the GNWT Affirmative Action policy?***

HROs reported NTHSSA hiring managers as being less positive about the Affirmative Action Policy than the NTHSSA hiring managers rated themselves, resulting in a mean 1.1 points higher and a median 1 point higher than the NTHSSA hiring managers overall. There was a .5-point difference between median and mean of HRO IA and HRO Not IA. HRO Not Say, rated the opinions of the NTHSSA hiring manager most positively with the lowest with a median and mean of 2, “somewhat positive”.

**FIGURE 3 - HRO VIEWS OF NTHSSA MANAGERS**

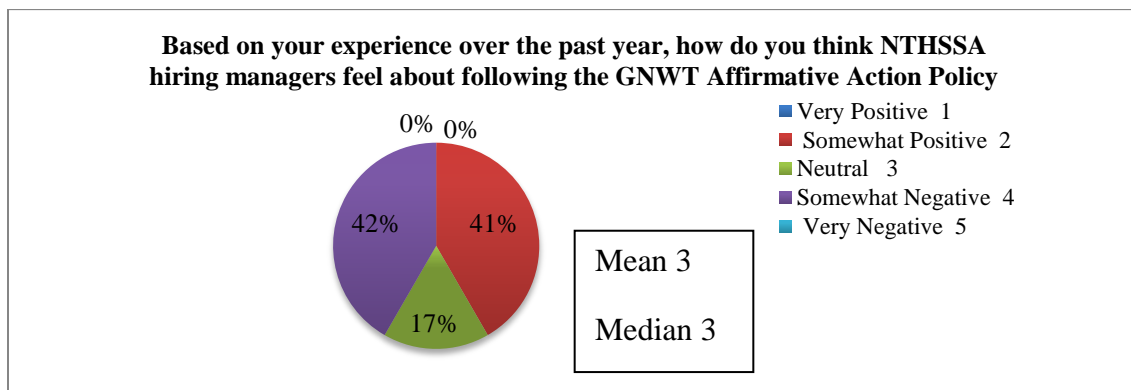


TABLE 7 - HRO VIEWS OF NTHSSA MANAGERS

Mean per survey group			
HRO	HRO IA	HRO Not IA	HRO Not Say
3	3	3.5	2
Median per survey group			
3	3	3.5	2

*HRO IA:* Three (33%) of HROs commented. Respondents reported some managers do not agree with the policy, do not fully understand the reasons for it, and see it as a roadblock. Some managers were reported to push back on the policy believing that the family members of their most recent hires should receive a higher staffing priority over target groups to increase the likelihood of retention for those hires.

HROs, TSCA HSS hiring managers, and NTHSSA hiring managers were asked: *Do you believe applying the GWNT Affirmative Action hiring policy results in the best candidate getting the job?*

Usually (46%) and sometimes (34%) were the most common responses. HRO IA had the most positive responses based on mean and median. NTHSSA IA had the second most positive responses. NTHSSA Not IA and NTHSSA Not Say had the least positive responses, reflecting a belief that the Affirmative Action Policy does not result in the best candidate getting the job.

FIGURE 4 - BEST CANDIDATE

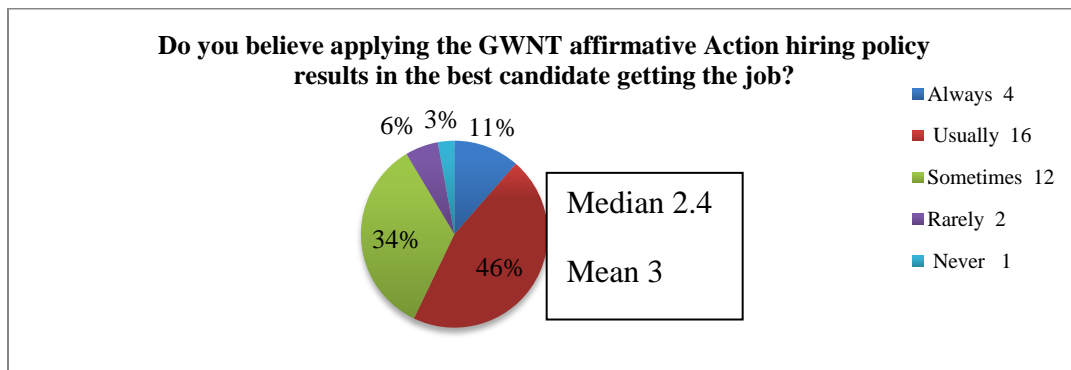


TABLE 8 - BEST CANDIDATE

Mean per survey group								
TSCA	HRO	HRO IA	HRO Not IA	HRO Not Say	NTHSSA	NTHSSA IA	NTHSSA Not IA	NTHSSA Not Say
2.33	1.92	1.78	2.5	2	2.75	2	2.85	4
Median per survey group								
2	2	2	2.5	2	3	2	3	4

*NTHSSA IA:* Two (40%) of managers commented. The added value of indigenous Aboriginal hires was identified, including their investment in the community, local people, and the region, the increased likelihood of retention, and the potential to build local capacity. The importance of following the hiring process in order to get the best candidate was also identified.

*NTHSSA Not IA:* Three (25%) managers commented. The value of hiring a qualified indigenous Aboriginal candidate was recognized as being able to best serve the local population and providing opportunity for entry level positions. It was acknowledged that the policy contributed the creation of local employment, reduced turnover, and improved cultural awareness; however, this manager also stated they felt the current process did not result in the best or most qualified candidate being selected. It was suggested that some positions should have a different set of affirmative action criteria, particularly those that required “safe care, such as “RT or nursing”, and that in those situations the tie breaker approach to affirmative action should apply.

*HRO IA:* Three (33%) of HROs commented, all stated they believed the policy resulted in the best candidate getting the job. One HRO identified hiring managers as a barrier to best candidates being hired stating that if the hiring managers followed HRO recommendations the best candidate would be hired.

*HRO Not IA:* One (50%) HRO commented that there were some situations where a non-priority candidate may be more suitable, and more beneficial than an affirmative action applicant.

HROs, TSCA and NTHSSA hiring managers were asked: ***During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting to a position and an indigenous Aboriginal candidate was not screened in, but you felt they could have done the job?***

If candidates are screened out yet the hiring manager or HRO believe the candidate could have done the job, it is an indication there is a barrier in the screening process that may be a result of screening criteria or hiring manager opinion. HROs reported this occurring most often, although the survey question did not specify health and social service positions, therefore competitions from other government departments may have influenced their responses. Based on calculations of median and mean, TSCA managers reported this occurring most often after HROs, followed by NTHSSA IA managers. NTHSSA Not IA and Not Say manager reported this occurring the least.



FIGURE 5 - SCREENING

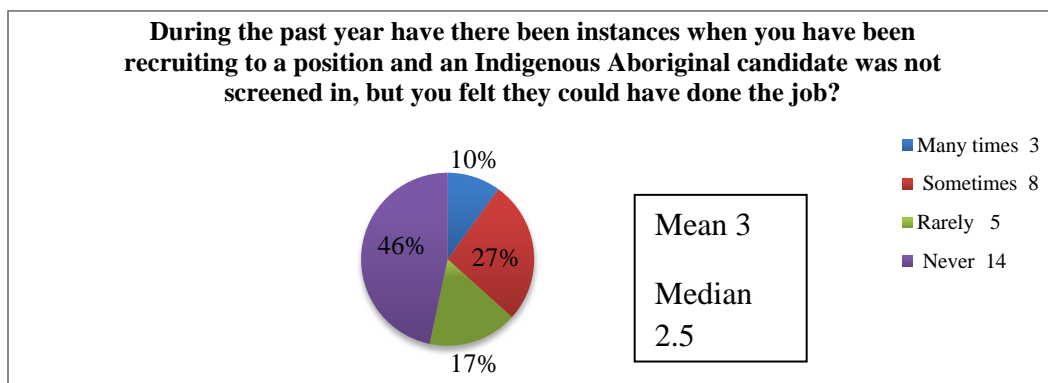


TABLE 9 - SCREENING

Mean per survey group								
TSCA	HRO	HRO IA	HRO NI	HRO Not Say	NTHSSA	NTHSSA IA	NTHSSA NIA	NTHSSA Not Say
3	2.11	2.13	2	n/a	3.44	3.2	3.55	3.5
Median per survey group								
3	2.5	2.5	2	n/a	2.5	3	3	3.5

*NTHSSA IA:* Two (40%) managers commented. An example was provided in which a candidate was screened out because they did not have the directly related experience, but they had the required education.

*NTHSSA Not IA:* Three (23%) managers commented. One manager identified that not all qualifications listed are absolutely necessary, which could lead to individuals being screened out despite being able to do a job. The potential risk of hiring someone who didn't meet screening criteria was identified as a reason why equivalencies might not be applied. "We sometimes get resumes from individuals who could offer wellness activities but do not have any skills to offer supportive counseling to a vulnerable population. It would not be ethical to put them in the position as it is now defined".

*HRO IA:* Three (33%) HROs commented. One indicating they did not experience this, another stated "absolutely" it had occurred. The opinion of the hiring manager was seen as a barrier by one of the HROs, "there seems to be persuasion that needs to occur during the screening process around equivalencies".

*HRO Not IA:* One (50%) HRO commented, reflecting that there were employees in communities hired as casuals who were doing the work, but don't meet the education and experience criteria outlined in the job descriptions.

HROs, TSCA and NTHSSA hiring managers were asked: *During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting and you believed an indigenous Aboriginal candidate could have done the job but failed the interview?*

If an indigenous Aboriginal candidate failed the interview yet the recruiter felt they could have done the job it may indicate the interview format or process is a barrier, or the opinion or perceptions of a member of a hiring committee member is creating a barrier. The most common response with 31% of responses was “never”, 17% could not recall, indicating that 52% of the respondents were likely to have had an experience where an indigenous Aboriginal candidate failed the interview, but the respondent felt they could do the job. HROs reported this occurring most often, although the survey question was not specific to health and social service positions, therefore competitions from other government program areas may have influenced their responses. Based on calculations of median and mean, TCSA and NTHSSA IA respondents reported this occurring most often after all HRO respondent groups. NTHSSA Not IA and NTHSSA Not Say reported this occurring the least.

FIGURE 6 - INTERVIEW



TABLE 10 - INTERVIEW

Weighted mean per survey group								
TSCA	HRO	HRO IA	HRO NIA	HRO Not Say	NTHSSA	NTHSSA IA	NTHSSA NIA	NTHSSA Not Say
3	1.4	1.43	1	2	3.29	3	3.33	4
Weighted median per survey group								
3	2.5	1	1	2	2.5	3	3	4

*TCSA*: One (33%) TCSA manager commented that despite encouraging candidates to participate in a practice interview many do not. Some candidates are “totally unprepared” and provide limited answers.

*NTHSSA Not IA*: Five (38%) managers commented. Three stated they did not have this experience as any indigenous Aboriginal candidates had either gotten the job or had been

screened out before reaching the interview stage. “Credentialism” was identified as a barrier for indigenous Aboriginal candidates by one manager. The competency-based interview model promoted by HROs was also identified as problematic, with a manager stating they had quit using this type of interview as they felt it did not do a good job of assessing if a candidate could do the work required.

*Not Say:* One (50%) manager commented recommending more promotions and taking the time to speak with applicants who bring in resumes “Promoting more, having to be more opening and transparent when applicants bring resume to the Dept and ask questions (find some time aside for them)”.

*HRO IA:* Five (56%) HROs commented, three stating that they have had this experience. One HRO commented “there are so many of them”. Reasons why a candidate may fail a job interview included candidates being nervous and cultural barriers that required indigenous Aboriginal people to “brag about themselves, which is contradictory to their values. Recommendations to address this problem included promoting mock interviews, providing information to the general public on what to expect in an interview, and using competency-based questions, or questions based on the information that is available to the public.

*HRO Not IA:* One (50%) HRO commented, focusing on cultural barriers that may exist in the interview process. This HRO raised the concern that some Aboriginal people do not like to “brag” about themselves, making the interview process uncomfortable for them, and identified possible language barriers for indigenous Aboriginal candidates

#### **7.4 Open-Ended Questions: Barriers**

Open-ended questions focusing on barriers provided insight into what barriers exist in hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees as well as the opinions and perceptions of hiring managers.

HROs and NTHSSA Hiring Managers were asked: ***What barriers prevent indigenous Aboriginal candidates from getting hired by the NTHSSA?***

*NTHSSA IA:* Four (80%) managers commented, and all identified education as a barrier. They also identified not promoting health and social service careers with youth as a barrier. Recommendations to overcome this barrier included having health and social service professionals involved with career planning in the high schools or to allow youth to volunteer in health and social service professions, as well as partnering with schools to offer health and social service career streams. Investing in indigenous Aboriginal job candidates who do not have the qualifications was also recommended. Barriers identified related to hiring manager actions included not following the Affirmative Action Policy when hiring summer students, hiring from the south, and “already having someone in mind”.

*NTHSSA Not IA:* Thirteen (100%) of managers commented. The lack of indigenous Aboriginal applicants, and qualified candidates in general was identified as problematic, with one respondent stating, “We just don't have enough credentialed health care providers applying regardless of ethnicity”. Qualifications/education of the candidates was a barrier identified by six respondents, with access to education, including proximity to educational institutions, access to childcare, and financial supports also identified as barriers by five respondents. A lack of mentorship for new grads and new hires was identified as a barrier, linking this to workload issues and not having enough time or staff in place to mentor less experienced candidates or new grads. Having inadequate support in navigating training and development programs was identified as problematic for managers who might utilize such a program to support recruitment and employee development. One manager stated, “You're just handed papers and no one seems to know how candidates can be accessed or how to navigate through the steps of the process”.

The requirements outlined in existing health and social service job descriptions were seen as problematic by two managers suggesting the qualifications asked for are higher than necessary creating systematic barriers against indigenous Aboriginal candidates who have less access to post-secondary education. Additional recommendations for overcoming barriers included having more entry-level positions for indigenous Aboriginal people and ensuring indigenous Aboriginal people “are aware of scholarships or financial opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills or pursue training”.

*NTHSA Not Say:* Two (100%) managers commented, identifying a lack of formal education and experience and “sometimes poor interviewing skills” as barriers.

*HRO IA:* Nine (100%) HROs commented. Not having necessary qualifications or education was identified as a barrier by one HRO. Two HROs indicated the years of experience required for nurses created a barrier for new graduates. Recommendations included reducing the amount experience required or offering job shadowing or practicum opportunities to build experience.

Barriers attributed to the opinion or actions of hiring managers were reported by five HROs. This included the way interview questions were developed due to some managers not seeing the value of competency-based interview questions, and developing questions very specific to the job duties, but not necessarily reflected in the job description or job posting. Hiring manager’s lack of knowledge of the recruitment process was also seen as problematic. Four HROs commented on issues fairness, stating NTHSSA hiring managers do not treat all candidates the same, bring personal biases to the recruitment process as result of listening to hearsay, and conduct unauthorized pre-reference checking, or “chatting” which influences them in the recruitment process. Managers not wanting to consider equivalencies, being difficult in marking Aboriginal candidate’s interviews, arguing to fail the Aboriginal candidates, and not utilizing GNWT recruitment programs even when they are a good fit were also reported. One HRO offered their view of what NTHSSA managers think about indigenous Aboriginal

candidates; “they say that we suck in the interviews. We do not give enough information. We might be hard worker, but the interview gets in the way because we did not pass the interview stage”. Managers stating, they are unable to provide support to a less experienced employee was also noted as a barrier.

*HRO Not IA:* Two (100%) HROs commented, one identifying education as a barrier, the other identifying hiring managers attitude towards the Affirmative Action Policy as a barrier, and that hiring managers present as feeling like they are being forced to follow the policy but do not want to.

*HRO Not Say:* One (%) HRO commented that hiring managers do not know about the Affirmative Action Policy so HROs need to promote it on a frequent basis.

HROs and NTHSSA hiring managers were asked: ***In your opinion, what is the biggest barrier to the NTHSSA retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees?***

*NTHSSA IA:* Five (100%) managers commented. Lack of retention bonuses for all employees regardless of aboriginal status was identified as a barrier. Not enough Aboriginal people at higher level of management was seen as a barrier, as was a lack of opportunities for advancement related to not having required education, and a lack of jobs in smaller communities. Prejudice was also identified as a barrier with a manager providing the following example: “I have observed a situation where management made disrespectful comments essentially by comparing their non-Indigenous staff to Indigenous staff based on their 'aura' which led to hiring preferences (in my opinion) given to non-Indigenous staff”.

*NTHSSA Not IA:* Eleven (85%) managers commented. Three managers indicated they did not know what the biggest barrier was in retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees. One manager identified the challenge for an indigenous Aboriginal employee hired into a position they are “marginally qualified” for resulting in poor attendance and performance, and disciplinary action which is difficult for the employee as well as the manager. Competition from other organizations for indigenous Aboriginal employees was also identified as “there are better job opportunities and training elsewhere”. One manager provided an example of an indigenous employee who left NTHSSA and now works for an organization fully staffed by indigenous people. “She told me that she loves being surrounded by her own people - that she feels valued and does not have to deal with “southerners” who believe they know what is best for local people”. Issues with NTHSSA organizational culture, which created barriers, were identified by four respondents. These included the organization not valuing the” culture, perspectives and worldview of indigenous Aboriginal employees when creating policies, designing programs, positions and job descriptions. “Institutional racism”, “mind-set”, and expecting indigenous Aboriginal employees to fit into an environment “mostly defined by southern ideology and people” were also identified as well as a general lack of support by the NTHSSA and unclear

expectations. Personal barriers such as difficulty dealing with family, pressures from community, low self-esteem, lack of education, feeling "less than" were also identified as barriers.

*NTHSSA Not Say:* Both (100%) managers commented stating addictions and a lack of employee commitment were barriers.

*HRO IA:* Eight (89%) HROs commented. Not marketing the health field to youth, lack of succession planning, and lack of housing were reported as barriers. NTHSSA management opinions and/or actions were the most commonly identified barrier. Five HROs identified concerns about NTHSSA management with comments such as the "NTHSSA cannot retain aboriginal employees if the NTHSSA does not hire aboriginal employees" and "the person hired not knowing what their rights are". Employees not being trained/mentored properly, and not given clear direction were identified as problematic for retention. The culture of a particular worksite was also identified as a longstanding barrier with a respondent noting, "The clique that the non-aboriginal employees form at the (facility). This makes it tough on aboriginal employees to fit in or belong to a group that would then allow them to succeed at a job. This has been happening for years and will continue to happen if this is not addressed."

*HRO Not IA:* Both HROs commented, one identified education level, the other identified the approach of the NTHSSA as a whole as a barrier stating:

The NTHSSA appears to have an overall distrust of the rest of the GNWT and particularly those they see as opposing them (e.g. the Affirmative Action Policy is seen as a barrier). An overarching recognition that they are part of a bigger organization that provides a variety of services to the residents of the NWT may be helpful.

*HRO Not Say:* This HRO commented that hiring managers sometimes feel the candidate can't do the scope of work.

TCSA hiring managers were asked: ***What barriers prevent Indigenous Aboriginal candidates from getting hired by the TCSA?***

All three managers (100%) commented. Respondents identified some screening criteria including education, limited job experience, poor interviewing skills, and low literacy levels as barriers.

## **7.5 Open-Ended Questions: Recommendations**

Unrated recommendation questions provided an opportunity for respondents to offer their views, based on personal experience and perception, regarding what can be done to increase recruitment and retention rates of indigenous Aboriginal employees.

NTHSSA Hiring Managers were asked: ***In your opinion, what is the most important thing the NTHSSA can do to retain indigenous Aboriginal employees?***

*NTHSSA IA:* Five (100%) managers commented. Training and education programs were identified by three managers, one recommending training programs be advertised in places other than on the website as “not everyone has computers”. Another recommended ensuring indigenous Aboriginal employees have the same level of support and opportunities for education initiatives as non-Indigenous employees. Opportunities for career advancement and development through job-shadowing, transfer assignments, and promotions were identified by three managers, one noting having indigenous Aboriginal people advancing allows them to be role models for younger people moving into the workforce. Two managers identified the need for education leave with pay. One manager identified the need for more recognition of the important work that is being done by all employees. Signing bonus, subsidized housing, and having a travel allowance were also identified as methods of retention.

*NTHSSA Not IA:* Thirteen (92%) of managers commented. A lack of knowledge or the need to treat all employees the same were reflected in statements such as, “I’m not sure, you’d have to ask them” and “the same as any other employees”. One manager suggested that coaching and supporting all employees is an improvement needed across the NTHSSA. Other comments focused on ways to retain indigenous Aboriginal employees including the importance of a positive work environment and the need to address cultural sensitivity and institutionalized racism. Mentorship/mentoring/mentor was identified by five of the managers. Support groups, more support, coaching, guidance, respect, and appreciation were also identified. One manager recommended valuing indigenous Aboriginal employees “their culture, their viewpoint, their expertise as indigenous members of the community”. Three managers recommended encouraging and ensuring access to education and training programs. Another advised “help them achieve their goals and along the way build self-esteem”. One manager cautioned not setting indigenous Aboriginal candidates up for failure by “creating jobs beyond their scope and ability to do just because it makes NTHSSA look good to have an indigenous person in the position”.

*NTHSSA Not Say:* Both managers responded. One advised, “encourage education in youth and improve addictions support”, the other recommending “some kind of incentive for ALL employees”.

HROs and NTHSSA Hiring Managers were asked: ***What do you think the NTHSSA can do to increase the number of indigenous Aboriginal employees within their organization?***

*NTHSSA IA:* Five (100%) managers commented. Youth was a common theme with recommendations to engage youth through collaborating with education councils to promote the importance of school, linking high school work experience with health and social service careers, and having health and social service professionals visiting schools to promote their professions.

Recommendations included hiring summer students as a way to link students to health and social service career paths and incentives for new grads. Improving access to education in general by providing training and education in different communities in the north, increasing subsidized housing for students, childcare programs, and increasing student financial assistance were also recommended. Recommendations to support existing employees included supporting succession planning through actions such as giving indigenous Aboriginal employee's priority for Professional Development Initiative funding, offering frontline indigenous Aboriginal employee's educational opportunities, supporting transfer assignments with other government departments to develop skills, and paid education leave. Creating positions targeted to indigenous Aboriginal candidates included creating health liaison officers, social services liaison officers, elder in residence as well as entry level and ladder positions.

*NTHSSA Not IA:* Thirteen (100%) managers commented. Three managers spoke to the need to connect to youth to ensure they know what kinds of jobs are available, what courses they need to take, and the importance of good grades and the self-discipline needed to study. Four managers made general statements about supporting and/or encouraging education. Building future employees through supporting students through their schooling, student training positions, and improving access to education was recommended. This included suggesting collaborating with the NWT's postsecondary institution, Arctic College, to offer particular programs locally or online. Creating access to NTHSSA positions included a recommendation by two managers to review the education and experience required job descriptions to address systematic barriers for indigenous Aboriginal candidates, although one manager advised against lowering standards or changing "the integrity of the service you want to provide". Two managers suggested current hiring practices are problematic, taking up to 12 weeks to fill a position, and being unable to sustain the current workforce needs "let alone ensure we have a fair representation of the ethnic diversity of this region".

The need to supporting new employees through mentorship was identified by four managers. This included providing incentives and mentorship programs to encourage NWT students to get their higher education, to encourage them to come back to the territories to practice and having longer mentorship periods. The need to find ways to increase mentorship "without taxing already over-burdened supervisors" and supernumerary hiring were suggested. It was recommended that the GWNT's indigenous Aboriginal training and recruitment programs be made easier to navigate and have a singular contact person or navigator to help managers work through the process. Supporting existing employees and building capacity by offering childcare, training, and management/supervisor mentoring for indigenous Aboriginal employees, as well as more in-house career days and training was recommended. Increasing staff supports and on the job training were identified as things the organization can do to ensure employees feel valued and want to stay. The need for "strong cultural sensitivity program for leadership and colleges" was also recommended.



*NTHSSA Not Say:* Two (100%) managers commented recommending on the job training, supporting formal education and encouraging “excellence in secondary and post-secondary education”.

*HRO IA:* Nine (100%) commented. Building future candidates through job shadowing and taking practicum students at local hospitals or health centers was recommended. One HRO suggested recruiting students prior to graduation for hard to recruit positions, then supporting them through their post-secondary education. Creating access was identified in several ways. Two HROs focused on the issue of equivalences, reviewing job descriptions to determine what might be able to be learned on the job, and suggesting managers be flexible in screening and considering equivalencies. One HRO stated, “It makes no sense to NOT invest in aboriginal candidates that have completed their education but cannot get hired (it's quite embarrassing).” Another suggested addressing issues with the interview process by creating hands on interviews. Three HROs suggested training programs for prospective indigenous Aboriginal employees, two made reference to existing GNWT job entry programs, another referred to a past program that created trainee positions, suggesting it be for indigenous Aboriginal only. The need to address NTHSSA manager knowledge and opinions was identified by four HROs who focused on the approach, knowledge level, or opinions of NTHSSA Managers. One suggesting “Mandatory staffing training for Hiring Supervisors/Managers”, another, in reference to existing programs aimed at hiring indigenous Aboriginal candidates, stated; “the managers do not want to consider (these programs)”. One HRO recommended “better management and no judgment”.

*HRO Not IA:* Both HROs commented, both suggesting targeted recruitment. One suggested focusing on targeted recruitment for entry level and hard to fill positions for affirmative action target groups only. The other suggested identifying positions that may be more likely to be staffed by indigenous Aboriginal candidates and then having developmental programs and further educational leave if required. Both HROs also identified the need for training for managers and supervisors, one identifying the Affirmative Action Policy and staffing, the other suggesting building a mandatory training tool that “clearly demonstrates the impact that even second generation residential school trauma has on the trust required by indigenous Aboriginal employees to take chances in advancing their careers”.

*HRO Not Say:* One (50%) HRO commented with the recommendation for managers to put aside time to answer questions when approached by individuals who are interested in positions.

## **7.6 TCSA Open-Ended Questions**

TCSA hiring managers were asked: *The TCSA has been more successful in hiring Indigenous Aboriginal employees (66% of the TCSA HSS employees are Indigenous Aboriginal) than the NTHSSA (23% of the NTHSSA employees are indigenous Aboriginal). Why do you think the TCSA has been so much more successful in this area than the NTHSSA?*

All three (100%) TCSA managers commented. Organizational culture was identified as an important factor in hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees. One manager stated, “The unique cultural setting is a comfortable match for local Tlicho people and “Tlicho fluency is pertinent in day to day work”. A manager advised that the TCSA also provides a generously supportive work environment for things like leave for personal issues. Training and development of indigenous Aboriginal people, and proximity to educational opportunities were also identified as important factors as was “Continuously hiring summer students who are hired into full time positions when they finish their education was part of supporting education and training”.

TCSA hiring managers were asked: ***In your opinion, what is the greatest barrier to the TCSA retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees?***

Two (67%) TCSA managers commented. A respondent noted that the TCSA currently has a high retention rate. Job loss was attributed to losing staff to the larger nearby community of Yellowknife where there were more opportunities, and that health care in general is a challenging environment with a high turnover rate.

TCSA hiring managers were asked: ***In your opinion, what is the most important thing the TCSA can do to retain indigenous Aboriginal employees?***

Three (100%) TCSA managers commented. Their recommendations were to support continued education for indigenous aboriginal staff noting this included hiring summer students and interns as much as possible and by having practicum students. Two managers recommended having appropriate supports for employees and mentorship in place, one stated; “ensure there are enough managers in place to provide a positive work environment, and mentorship for employees who may require additional support to be successful in their positions”.

## **7.7 Survey Findings Summary**

The calculated median and mean of rated questions show NTHSSA managers who identified as indigenous Aboriginal consistently reporting more positive views on hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees and applying the Affirmative Action Policy than other NTHSSA respondent groups. HRO respondent groups were more homogeneous and there was not a consistent difference between indigenous Aboriginal and Not indigenous Aboriginal respondents. As a group HROs reported the most positive views in all areas. NTHSSA Not Say had the most negative views with TCSA responses tending to be in line with NTHSSA Not IA.

The most frequently identified barrier by all respondents was candidates not having the necessary education and qualifications for a position. While all NTHSSA respondent groups identified this as problematic, it was the primary issue for NTHSSA Not IA respondents. This respondent group identified lack of qualified candidates regardless of ethnicity as an issue and identified several concerns including risks to safety and service delivery if employees did not

meet the job requirements or positions were “downgraded” in order to hire indigenous Aboriginal employees.

The importance of reaching out to youth was a theme across all respondent groups. Recommended actions included recruiting youth out of high school for hard to recruit positions and supporting them through post-secondary, going to high schools to promote health and social service professions, and creating volunteer and job shadowing opportunities. Actions were designed to interest and engage youth in pursuing HSS careers. Ensuring youth had the right information about what jobs are available, what courses they need to take, and the importance of good grades were also recommended. All NTHSSA respondent groups identified barriers to accessing post-secondary education for indigenous Aboriginal candidates as a barrier. The importance of supporting students through hiring summers students and having practicum students as well as improving access to education, through more distance education or education closer to home were themes.

NTHSSA IA, NTHSS Not IA, and HRO respondent groups all identified ways to improve access to NTHSSA positions. Recommendations included addressing problems with the interview format and questions. Creating positions targeted to indigenous aboriginal candidates such as elders and health and/or social services liaison officers and creating entry level and laddering positions. Indigenous Aboriginal managers did not identify problems with the interview process however had experienced a problem with the screening process related to a candidate that was screened out due to lack of experience despite having the necessary education.

Some NTHSSA Not IA respondents felt qualifications set unnecessarily high were a barrier, although the risks of “downgrading” positions was also seen as problematic by this respondent group. HROs and NTHSSA respondents saw years of experience required as a barrier impacting the hiring of post-secondary graduates and linked this to a lack of mentorship available to support for new grads and new employees in general. NTHSSA respondents often linked this gap to a need for additional resources and manager workload issues impacting the ability to support less experienced employees.

The importance of mentorship for new employees, and a related theme of supporting managers so they had the time to mentor and coach new staff was identified by NTHSSA Not IA respondents. These respondent groups also recommended an investment in building the capacity of existing employees through training and development and succession planning although NTHSSA Not IA respondents identified needing support navigating these programs.

NTHSSA IA respondents were supportive of the Affirmative Action Policy and identified the added value indigenous Aboriginal employees bring to the organization. HRO IA respondents also provided several examples of the added value of hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees. Only one NTHSSA Not IA respondent spoke to the value of hiring Aboriginal staff

and provided unqualified support for the Affirmative Action Policy. 46% of NTHSSA Not IA respondents made comments that reflected a negative feeling toward the Affirmative Action Policy such as; it could be seen as discriminatory, did not result in the best candidate being hired, and was not effective in addressing root issues such as education levels.

While NTHSSA IA respondents identified some hiring manager actions and opinion as barriers, this was a primary theme for HRO respondent groups. Problematic actions and opinions by NTHSSA hiring managers included not knowing about the Affirmative Action Policy, not liking the policy, seeing the policy as a barrier to hiring who they wanted to hire, bringing personal bias into the interviews, and not following HRO recommendations. Other barriers attributed to hiring managers included not following the Affirmative Action Policy when hiring summer students, and prejudice.

NTHSSA organizational culture was identified as problematic by some NTHSSA Not IA respondents. This included systematic racism, and not valuing indigenous Aboriginal employee's culture, knowledge, and worldview when creating policies, designing programs, and writing job descriptions. Expecting indigenous Aboriginal employees to fit into an organization described as "mostly defined by southern ideology and people" was pointed to as well. Some HRO comments were also highly critical of the NTHSSA organizational culture, suggesting the organization seemed to have an "overall mistrust" of other government departments, and identifying a "clique of non-aboriginal employees" at a worksite as a long-standing problem. HROs made several recommendations targeted to NTHSSA managers including mandatory training on hiring processes, the Affirmative Action Policy and cultural awareness training focusing on residential school trauma and the impact on indigenous Aboriginal candidates. Some NTHSSA Not IA respondents also recommended training and mentoring for managers including a "strong cultural sensitivity program for leadership".

TCSA managers provided examples of the added value of hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees. They also spoke to the challenges with the interview process, including candidates not being prepared and providing limited answers.

## **8.0 Discussion and Analysis**

In this chapter, gaps, barriers, and recommendations from the research findings are analyzed with consideration of the information found in the literature review and lessons learned from other organizations and jurisdictions. Findings aligned with lessons learned in the literature and are organized according to those themes.

### **8.1 Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Oversight**

The research findings show a gap in strategic planning, monitoring and oversight in the NTHSSA related to the goal of increasing the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees. The NWT Affirmative Action Policy requires government departments to develop affirmative action plans; however, a senior manager reported that neither the Department of Health and Social Services nor the NTHSSA had an affirmative action plan; and GNWT departments in general are not known to complete such plans. Formal monitoring of the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy by individual departments appears to consist of the Department of Finance, Human Resources publishing in their annual report the number and rate of target groups employed within individual government departments. The GNWT does not offer a clear statement on how representation is determined, or what the targets are for indigenous Aboriginal representation. As a result, there is little external accountability for individual departments to develop strategies, plans, and programs, or to show progress in increasing representation of target groups. The Department of Health and Social Services 2015-2020 Health and Social Services Human Resource strategic plan makes no reference to indigenous Aboriginal employees or other affirmative action target groups. The NTHSSA does not have an internal human resources strategic plan, follows the plan developed by the Department of Health and Social Services, and did not report having any human resource related operational or implementation plans.

Within the health and social service system knowledge gaps impact the ability of organizations to develop plans or strategies to improve representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees. Incomplete program development and implementation was reported for the few programs such as REACH that may have supported future indigenous Aboriginal recruitment. Probable reasons for knowledge gaps and incomplete implementation include significant staffing and organizational changes in human resource management between the Department of Health and Social Services and the NTHSSA, as well as a lack of focus on, therefore a lack of monitoring and analysis related to, indigenous Aboriginal employees.

Strategic planning, monitoring, and oversight are identified in the literature as key to the success of affirmative action programs. In order to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees the NTHSSA requires strategies, plans, accurate data to inform planning, and mechanisms for monitoring and oversight specific to this goal. As Eckhard (2014) states, failing to prioritize (affirmative action) policies or constantly deciding to focus on something

else has “the same effect as actively sabotaging policy implementation and service delivery” (p. 613).

## **8.2 Leadership**

In an environment with limited external monitoring, organizational leadership is critical to ensuring policy implementation. Rousseau (2014) identified issues with the disconnect between ministry plans related to Aboriginal people and implementation at the front lines as an example of how shortcomings in leadership can negatively impact the job satisfaction of Aboriginal employees (p. 236). There was no evidence in the findings of NTHSSA senior leadership action or messaging related to increasing representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees. While all senior managers interviewed stated they supported representative bureaucracy, there were differences in how they believed representation should be calculated and differing views on the Affirmative Action Policy. One senior manager supported the “important policy statement by government” the Affirmative Action Policy made and saw a representative public service as “essential”. Another didn’t like the Affirmative Action Policy because the inclusion of indigenous non-Aboriginal persons was not likely to meet the requirements of the Human Rights legislation. Two senior managers who compared the Affirmative Action Policy to the federal Employment Equity Act focused on who the target groups are, implying shortcomings with the NWT Affirmative Action Policy. These senior managers did not note how the Affirmative Action Policy aligns with the Employment Equity Act in the requirement to develop plans to address underrepresentation of target groups.

A senior leader also raised the issue of how representation was calculated, stating that representation was only achievable if it was calculated based on the available labor force, as the Employment Equity Act requires. This approach creates no expectations to support the development of a workforce or in addressing barriers outside of a hiring process. A senior leader also raised the issue of fairness in the government’s approach to diversity inclusion stating the focus is on indigenous Aboriginal people to the exclusion of all others. These concerns were raised weeks prior to the release of online training tools for all government employees on Diversity and Inclusion, LGBTQ2S+, and Gender-Based Analysis training (GNWT, Finance, 2018). It seems the GNWT is attempting to address an identified gap in their diversity and inclusion training; however, it is unclear if the added training will address fairness issues for respondents.

Being a diverse and inclusive organization that is representative of all citizens is important, but not the only reason for increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation in the NTHSSA. Providing better service and improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people, as well as supporting self-determination in an Aboriginal homeland are also compelling reasons to work towards this goal. When organizational leaders focus on the shortcomings of the Affirmative Action Policy, issues of fairness versus the value of hiring more indigenous Aboriginal employees, and believe representation targets should be limited to existing

workforce, they are less likely to make the development and implementation of recruitment and retention plans targeted to indigenous Aboriginal employees a priority, or to ensure Affirmative Action Policy is applied to programs beyond the minimum required in the hiring process.

NTHSSA hiring managers are the next line of leadership in the NTHSSA. The use of programs to increase indigenous Aboriginal representation is dependent on the interest, ability, and knowledge of individual hiring managers. As a result, it falls to NTHSSA managers to be the leaders in implementing the Affirmative Action Policy and working towards increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation in the system. The views of front-line managers towards the Affirmative Action Policy and indigenous Aboriginal employees, workload issues, and the lack of formalized supports for new employees, all impact the willingness of managers to apply equivalencies in the recruitment process, utilize available recruitment programs, and support, mentor, or create a positive work experience for indigenous Aboriginal employees.

In the findings, HRO's, TCSA managers, and indigenous Aboriginal NTHSSA managers were most supportive of Affirmative Action Policy and most likely to identify ways in which indigenous Aboriginal employees add value to the organization. Added value identified by survey respondents included indigenous Aboriginal employee's knowledge of the history, the people, the family connections, and the culture of Aboriginal people; the comfort Aboriginal people have when dealing with their own people; increased employee retention rates; better service provision; improved relationships; investment in the community, local people, and the region; and the potential to build local capacity. These align with what the literature states are advantages of hiring Aboriginal employees and having Aboriginal health care and social service providers in Aboriginal communities (Conference Board of Canada, 2015, pp. i, 22, 24 ; Conference Board of Canada, 2019, p.8 ;Cross, Day, Gogliotti, and Pung, 2013, p.49; Stuart and Neilson, 2011, p.98 ).

Recognizing the added value that indigenous Aboriginal employees bring to the organization was the most significant difference between TCSA, HROs, indigenous Aboriginal NTHSSA managers, and Not indigenous Aboriginal and Not Say NTHSSA managers, many of whom who focused on problems associated with hiring indigenous Aboriginal staff versus identifying value added. The TCSA managers identified as Not indigenous Aboriginal, showing that the ability to recognize the value Aboriginal employees bring to the organization is not an inherently Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal viewpoint. Some NTHSSA Not indigenous Aboriginal managers also clearly articulated the value of hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees and the systematic barriers that existed. The negative comments by NTHSSA Not indigenous Aboriginal and Not Say managers are reflective of the criticisms of affirmative policies found in the literature and focus on issues of fairness and performance (Sowel, 2004, p.140 ; Kravitz, 1995, p. 2213; Kravitz, 2017, p. 34). All managers recognized some systematic barriers for Aboriginal people such as access to education, yet most did not make the link to how the Affirmative Action Policy was a way to level the playing field for individuals who faced such systematic barriers. The hypothesis that the views of hiring managers impacted the hiring of indigenous Aboriginal

employees and the application of the Affirmative Action Policy was validated by the responses of HRO's and some indigenous Aboriginal managers who identified the opinions NTHSSA hiring managers as the greatest barrier to the hiring of indigenous Aboriginal employees.

One of the NTHSSA Not indigenous Aboriginal managers who supported the Affirmative Action Policy and identified that value of hiring Aboriginal employees cited positive outcome data from another jurisdiction which had increased the representation of Aboriginal health staff. This aligns with Leslie, Mayer, and Kravitz's recommendation to address negative views of affirmative action hires by emphasizing their added value to organizational performance (2014, p. 982). It also reflects what the literature says about white ways of knowing being based on science as the ultimate truth (Puzan, 2003, p. 197; Neilson, Stuart, and Gorman, 2014, p. 192) and a focus on measurement versus observation (Little Bear, 2000, p. 82). Without the lived experience of the NTHSSA indigenous Aboriginal managers or being exposed to evidence that aligns with managers typically white/western world views, NTHSSA Not indigenous Aboriginal managers and senior managers are less likely to recognize the value of hiring Aboriginal employees and are more likely to focus on what they see as valuable; formal education and work experience. The perceived efficiency of an employee who has the most formal education and experience and delivers care in a way that aligns with the managers worldview and western training versus the perceived inefficiency of additional time spent supporting an indigenous Aboriginal employee who may have a different approach, ways of learning and doing, and less formal experience, creates a barrier for indigenous Aboriginal candidates. Managers are also likely to value western models of care over Aboriginal models delivered by Aboriginal employees with knowledge and experience gained outside of formal academic settings.

### **8.3 Education and Training**

The lack of indigenous aboriginal candidates with the required education and qualifications was identified by all respondents as a barrier to recruitment. This aligns with the lessons from other jurisdictions that training and education are inextricably linked to successful affirmative action programs (Ratuva, 2013, p. 239; Lee, 2015, p. 629; Conference Board of Canada, 2019, p. 59). The lack of qualified applicants overall, and not specific to indigenous Aboriginal candidates, was also identified in the research findings, adding additional challenges for managers who are more likely to be working short staffed, but creating more reason to invest in the development of indigenous Aboriginal employees. All NTHSSA and senior management respondent groups made comments that reflected an understanding of the numerous challenges a northern Aboriginal population faced in accessing educational opportunities. These challenges typically focused on the proximity to post-secondary educational institutions and the emotional, cultural, social, and financial impact of having to move far from one's community or region to access educational opportunities. More on-line learning increased financial support, and increased partnerships with Aurora College were recommended to address the proximity of education challenges.



The need for a trained workforce undoubtedly contributed to the importance all respondent groups placed on reaching out to youth with a goal of having youth develop an interest in health and social service careers, choose, and perform well, in the high school courses that would enable them to enter health and social services post-secondary programs.

There was recognition by some respondents that the potential existed to increase representation through on the job training, locally offered training, and supporting existing employees in advancing their skills. This included accessing the recruitment programs available through the Department of Finance, Human Resources. A senior manager felt existing health and social service training and development programs weren't well communicated and an NTHSSA indigenous Aboriginal manager suggested indigenous Aboriginal employees should have the same access to educational opportunities as non-aboriginal, implying they felt this was not the case. It was recommended that methods other than websites should be used to share program information. These responses suggest indigenous Aboriginal employees may be experiencing barriers in accessing existing programs. An HRO's recommendation that managers receive training to understand "the impact that even second generation residential school trauma has on the trust required by indigenous Aboriginal employees to take chances in advancing their careers" suggests indigenous Aboriginal employees may need a more proactive approach to participate in training and development programs that will support them in advancing within the organization. Having an extensive training and professional development program, including individualized career planning, was identified as a key reason for Southcentral Foundation's success in recruiting and retaining Aboriginal staff (Gottlieb, 2013, p.6; Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, p. 1). TCSA also identified supporting local training and development of staff as a key factor in its success in recruiting and retaining Aboriginal employees.

#### **8.4 Mentorship and Support for Employees**

The lack of mentorship and general supports for new employees and managers was identified as a gap by NTHSSA managers and some HRO's. Many managers also identified that new NTHSSA employees in general did not receive enough support or mentorship, contributing to managers being hesitant to hire less experienced employees. Inexperienced employees require additional supervision and mentoring in order to ensure neither the employee nor clients/patients are placed in a situation of risk. The gap in mentorship directly impacts indigenous Aboriginal postsecondary graduates who have overcome significant barriers to complete the required education but are screened out of NTHSSA positions because they do not have the necessary work experience. Ensuring new graduates who have completed an educational program are hired with the right supports to be successful aligns with recommendations made by HRO's, NTHSSA managers, and lessons from the TCSA who recommended hiring health and social services students as summer students and then employing them immediately after graduation.

Respondent comments appear to focus on clinical mentorship related to professional skill development; however the literature identified the value of cultural mentorship for Aboriginal

employees as a way to support them in navigating the challenge of working within white/western systems (Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018,p.12 ; Blash, Dower, and Chapmen, 2012, p. 3). Existing mentorship of new employees typically falls to NTHSSA managers, educators, or clinical coordinators, a largely non-Aboriginal group. Several of NTHSSA managers stated the support indigenous Aboriginal employees needed was “no different” than the support needed by other employees reflecting a lack of understanding of the challenges an indigenous Aboriginal employee might face working in the NTHSSA. Given this knowledge gap by Not indigenous Aboriginal managers, cultural mentorship for indigenous Aboriginal employees and cultural awareness training for managers would be valuable.

### **8.5 Workload**

Workload and capacity issues impact the ability of managers to support new employees who do not have the education, experience, and or general knowledge to fit in easily to existing program and service areas. The NWT Public Service Strategic Human Resource Plan identified a concern in 2009 that the “responsibility for training, development, coaching and mentorship has fallen to departments/or managers who lack the time, resources, and support from HR to handle it” (GNWT, 2009, p. 9). Survey findings suggest this situation continues to exist within the NTHSSA and is further complicated by difficulties recruiting qualified candidates “regardless of ethnic background”.

Workload and capacity of managers impacts their ability to provide the support to new employees contributing to a resistance to hire indigenous Aboriginal employees through a training program, as a new graduate, or with less experience or education. In order to implement training and development programs, workload, capacity, and resources issues for managers need to be addressed. The TCSA identifies the need to have sufficient managers in place to support mentorship, and the SCF overfills by 20% to ensure staff have sufficient time to participate in training and development, thereby allowing managers to support training without creating additional strain on themselves and other staff to provide coverage.

### **8.6 Merit and Required Qualifications**

There was recognition by all respondent groups many health jobs in particular required specific education and training in order to meet national accreditation standards. However, several Not indigenous Aboriginal managers, HRO’s, and senior managers felt there were job descriptions that asked for qualifications that exceeded what was necessary to do the job. This created a systematic barrier for indigenous Aboriginal candidates who often did not have advanced education or training. Manager workload, absence of mentorship programs, lack of knowledge of programs available to support new employees, and a limited desire to invest in an indigenous Aboriginal employee who requires training rather than hiring candidates who come with a full set of skills, are barriers to realizing this potential.

The cultural bias of the NTHSSA towards white/western models of care was also found to be a barrier, as it results in programs and jobs that focus on formal educational requirements rather than Aboriginal or local knowledge. It was suggested that this approach also resulted in service delivery that was less effective and potentially damaging as it reinforced the message that community members were not good enough to provide a service or help their own people. This issue is also raised by the Conference Board of Canada report (2015), noting when positions of power in Aboriginal communities like social workers, counsellors, and nurses, are held by non-local professionals it reaffirms “existing colonial power dynamics” (p. 24).

A respondent challenged the NTHSSA to consider the intent of each program with a view of capitalizing on local talent and knowledge. This approach is supported by an indigenous Aboriginal survey respondent who suggested some positions should be designed for and staffed by indigenous Aboriginal people such as elder or health system navigators. The respondent believed that this approach would improve service delivery, however, noted that these kinds of positions do not exist in our current system. It was also suggested that this kind of approach would result in better outcomes, was “more in line with what the communities were asking for”, linking it to self-determination for Aboriginal people and communities. Justice Abella recognized self-determination as a reason Aboriginal people had an interest in affirmative action (Abella, 1984, p. 33, 34) and self-determination is recognized as a factor in improved health outcomes for Aboriginal people (Auger and Gomes, 2016, p.394; Chandler and Dunlop, 2018, p. 158).

The kinds of merit identified by Ganter, grounded, local, and originating from the place (2016, p.127-131) are also relevant in an NWT context and reflect the value of hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees. Including these types of merits in job descriptions would acknowledge the importance of these employee attributes just as formal education or work experience are recognized.

## **8.7 Organizational Culture**

According to research respondents, the NTHSSA operates from a white/western model of care, does not provide culturally appropriate care, and is not meeting the health and social service needs of Aboriginal people. Because of this, respondents suggested there was likely a lack of fit for Aboriginal employees causing them to feel uncomfortable within the organization and be less interested in working for an organization that is not meeting the needs of their community. These reflections are in line with what the literature says about health care and social service systems and Aboriginal people working in them. Several authors spoke to the white/western bias that exists within health care and social service systems (Neilson, Stuart, and Gorman, 2014; Puzan, 2003; Allen, 2006) and challenges Aboriginal employees faced working within them (Neilson, Stuart, and Gorman, 2014, p. 195). A senior manager stated that a possible reason for not retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees maybe that “they feel they don’t have a voice”. No other respondents spoke to the influence Aboriginal employees might have on policy or service delivery, suggesting a significant gap within the NTHSSA. Freedom to

act was identified in the literature as important to job satisfaction for Aboriginal employees (Rousseau, 2014, p. 191) and aligns with the theory of active representation (Marvel and Resh, 2013, p. 282). The lack of indigenous Aboriginal culture within the organization indicates the influence of Aboriginal employees on programs and services has been limited. This suggests the NTHSSA has not created an environment where indigenous Aboriginal employees are able to be active representatives, have discretion to influence how services are delivered to Aboriginal people, or improve service delivery to this population. Because the majority of the NTHSSA workforce is non-Aboriginal, the views of this majority will have the greatest influence in the NTHSSA programs and services. The lack of representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees is more pronounced at the senior management level resulting in a greater imbalance in organizational policy and program development.

Having a work environment that is culturally safe, where colleagues share similar values, and aboriginal culture is appreciated and respected, contributes to aboriginal employee retention (Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018, p.10; Rousseau, 2014, p. 191; Blash, Dower, and Chapman, 2012, pp. 11, 12). Survey findings indicate there are a number of ways the NTHSSA organizational culture creates barriers to the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees. This includes systematic racism, prejudice, and having a generalized distrust of all departments outside of themselves. Some respondents identified cultural bias in the interview process and disagreement with HROs over the effectiveness of competency-based interview questions.

The view of TCSA towards programs designed to recruit indigenous Aboriginal employees was very positive and markedly different from NTHSSA managers, who didn't mention the programs, did not know about them, or felt they did not have the time or assistance required to implement them. The TCSA identified their organizational culture as "very comfortable for Tlicho citizens" and an important reason for their recruitment and retention success. TCSA described themselves as an organization in Tlicho territory where the Tlicho language is spoken daily and makes every effort to provide culturally safe care. This aligns with success of other jurisdictions such as Southcentral Foundation and the educational system in Malaysia which made an intentional effort to ensure the organization reflected values, beliefs, and world views of the aboriginal target groups in their jurisdictions. It is notable that language was identified as a factor for both the TCSA and Malaysia in creating an environment conducive to an organizational culture that was comfortable for targeted employees.

Cultural safety training for NTHSSA employees currently under development was identified by a senior manager as potentially making a difference in recruitment and retention, implying an existing gap in this area. HROs recommended training in several areas for NTHSSA managers, including "a strong cultural sensitivity program for leadership". This aligns with recommendations from Aboriginal health and social service employees in British Columbia and Australia (Rousseau, 2014, p. 236; Lai, Taylor, and Thompson, 2018, p. 12).

## **8.8 Summary**

Lessons from other jurisdictions have relevance within the NTHSSA system. Many recommendations from respondents are in line with what the literature recommends. Many respondents, although not all, recognize the value of increasing the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees. Addressing workload issues for managers, creating mentorship opportunities for new employees both clinical and cultural, addressing issues with organizational culture, and views of managers that create barriers, are all important. Clear direction and messaging from senior leadership stating that increasing the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees is a strategic priority, and following through with planning, monitoring, and oversight to achieve that goal is key. Continuing to leave the responsibility for increasing the representation to front line managers without support, training, or information is unlikely to result in meaningful change. To paraphrase Eckhard (2014), failing to prioritize the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees or constantly deciding to focus on something else will have the same effect as actively sabotaging the policy direction (p.613).

## 9.0 Recommendations

### 9.1 Introduction

A key deliverable for this project is the development of recommendations to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees within the NTHSSA. A project limitation is that the recommendations are only those that are within the purview of the NTHSSA. Table 11 outlines organizational gaps that impact the ability to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees within the NTHSSA, and recommended actions to address those gaps based on evidence from the literature review, lessons learned from other jurisdictions and organizations, and recommendations from survey and interview respondents.

**TABLE 11 - RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>Gap</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1. Strategic planning, monitoring, and oversight	<p>1.1 Identify increasing representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees as a strategic priority during strategic human resource planning stakeholder meetings with the Department of Health and Social Services</p> <p>1.2 Develop operational human resources plans designed to increase the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees</p> <p>1.3 Collect data on indigenous Aboriginal uptake and outcomes of recruitment, retention, and training programs to assess effectiveness with the indigenous Aboriginal target group</p> <p>1.4 Ensure information regarding recruitment, retention, and training programs is retained to inform future program decisions</p>
2. Organization leadership	<p>2.1 Ensure there are clear messages from senior organizational leaders that the organization believes increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation will bring added value to the organization</p> <p>2.2 Ensure enough supports are in place to allow new managers the time to participate in training and orientation, and to support new employees</p> <p>2.3 Create a standardized orientation and development program for new managers and senior leadership that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cultural safety training</li> </ul>

	<p>b. Management training as identified in recommendations 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.3 b, 10.5</p>
<p>3. Many NTHSSA hiring managers see hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees as problematic as opposed to value added</p>	<p>3.1 Screen for competencies when hiring managers that would support an openness to targeted recruitment, training, and mentoring for Aboriginal employees, as well as insight into white privilege and best practices in service delivery to aboriginal people</p> <p>3.2 Mandatory cultural safety training for managers should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Measurable evidence that hiring Aboriginal employees adds value to the organization and improves service delivery</li> <li>b. The link between hiring Aboriginal employees, self-determination for Aboriginal people, and improved health and social outcomes</li> </ul> <p>3.3 Support for managers should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Easily available advice on the tools available to support the recruitment of indigenous Aboriginal employees</li> <li>b. Assistance in developing training plans for employees hired under recruitment programs</li> <li>c. Easily available advice on retention and development programs for existing employees</li> <li>d. Assistance in developing associated training and development plans for existing employees</li> <li>e. Access to cultural mentorship in order to understand how to best support Aboriginal employees. This may be provided by the same cultural mentor that is supporting the employee as recommended in 5.2.</li> <li>f. Creation of clinical educator/mentor positions in key clinical areas and areas of high work volume</li> <li>g. Creation of standardized general orientation for all NTHSSA employees delivered by dedicated staff educators</li> <li>h. Manageable workloads for managers to ensure they have the time to invest in supporting employees</li> <li>i. Enough staffing to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o inexperienced employees do not create safety risk for themselves or client/patients</li> <li>o employees can access mentoring and training opportunities without creating staffing shortages</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>4. Hiring Managers and senior manager report</p>	<p>4.1 Mandatory cultural safety training for senior and hiring managers should include: understanding existing disparities</p>

<p>having concerns about fairness, related to the application of the Affirmative Action Policy</p>	<p>for indigenous Aboriginal people that are the outcome of historical and existing social policy, which contributes to disparities, and the link to affirmative action policies and programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. There is an opportunity to build on hiring managers existing understanding of barriers indigenous Aboriginal residents have accessing post-secondary education</li> </ul> <p>4.2 Acknowledge the importance of diversity and inclusion for all groups, including ensuring managers complete GNWT Diversity and Inclusion, and LGBTQ2S+ training</p> <p>4.3 Ensure adequate support for managers and all new employees as recommended in 3.3 f., g., h., i.</p>
<p>5. Organizational culture and programs are based on white/western values, norms, and worldviews resulting in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Lack of fit for Aboriginal employees</li> <li>b. Ineffective service to Aboriginal communities therefore less interest by Aboriginal candidates in working for the organization</li> <li>c. Jobs and job requirements that focus on formal education and experience and fail to leverage indigenous Aboriginal talent and knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>5.1 Efforts to ensure indigenous Aboriginal languages are spoken in the NTHSSA should be pursued with input from Aboriginal staff and communities</p> <p>5.2 Ensure Aboriginal culture, values, worldviews and healing practices are an integral part of the organizational culture</p> <p>5.3 Establish cultural mentorship for indigenous Aboriginal employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Cultural mentors may be NTHSSA employees or individuals contracted externally</li> <li>b. The cultural mentor may also be an advocate, and an advisor for NTHSSA managers who may not be aware of challenges indigenous Aboriginal employee may be facing</li> </ul> <p>5.4 Provide training to managers regarding the knowledge and skills an indigenous Aboriginal employee can bring to a job such as those identified by Ganter (2016, p.127-131).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Managers often recognize only the merit that is valued within their own cultural worldview</li> </ul> <p>5.5 Review all health and social programs to determine if the existing service delivery model can be changed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Reflect Aboriginal cultural, values, and worldview</li> <li>b. Increase community ownership/partnership</li> <li>c. Reflect Aboriginal communities vision of how services should be delivered</li> <li>d. Leverage local talent and skills</li> <li>e. Leverage candidates who have Aboriginal culture and</li> </ul>



	<p>community knowledge</p> <p>f. Include positions designated for Aboriginal culture and/or local knowledge holders</p> <p>5.6 Review existing NTHSSA job descriptions to determine if the qualifications should include the kinds of merit identified by Ganter: grounded, local, and originating from the place (2016, p.127-131)</p>
<p>6. Technical qualifications requested for some positions are in excess of what is needed to do the job</p>	<p>6.1 Review existing NTHSSA job descriptions and update as required to ensure technical qualifications do not exceed what is actually required to do the job</p>
<p>7. Lack of indigenous Aboriginal employees with the education required to meet the national standards required in many health and social service jobs</p>	<p>7.1 Review job descriptions to verify what positions have bona fide requirements for technical training or education</p> <p>7.2 Identify positions that could be filled through a combination on the job-training and short-term distance education programs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Establish standardized training programs</li> <li>b. Recruit trainees to these positions</li> </ol> <p>7.3. Follow through with the implementation of the REACH program to encourage youth to enter health and social service programs</p> <p>7.4. Create tools and standardized programs that NTHSSA professional staff can use to support and encourage youth to enter health and social service careers such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Take a kid to work</li> <li>b. Presentations to students and at career fairs</li> <li>c. Job shadowing or volunteer opportunities</li> <li>d. Mentorship opportunities for youth with NTHSSA employees</li> </ol> <p>7.5. Create a point of contact to assist potential students in navigating health and social service post-secondary educational programs including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Educational institutions and program options</li> <li>b. Choosing the right courses</li> <li>c. Available funding and assistance in completing funding applications</li> <li>d. How to access housing, childcare, local transportation, et cetera</li> </ol> <p>7.6. Consider paid education leave for existing indigenous</p>

	<p>Aboriginal employees who are interested in pursuing education in hard to recruit to professions</p> <p>7.7. Consider bursaries for indigenous Aboriginal students pursuing health and social service careers</p> <p>7.8. Consider targeted education/recruitment programs for hard to recruit to positions, directed to indigenous Aboriginal candidates who are not current employees. Such programs should include financial support, summer employment, and hire upon graduation</p>
<p>8. Experience requested in job description screens out indigenous Aboriginal employees who have completed the required academic training</p>	<p>8.1. Hire indigenous Aboriginal summer students enrolled in health and social service-related education to increase their work experience</p> <p>8.2. Increase supports for new employees as outlined in recommendations 3.3. f., g., i., 5.3 to support the recruitment of less experienced employees.</p> <p>8.3. Utilize internship funding to create supernumerary positions for new graduates</p> <p>8.4 Create entry level positions</p>
<p>9. The recruitment process is negatively impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Hiring manager bias</li> <li>b. Problematic interview questions</li> <li>c. Cultural bias in the interview process</li> <li>d. Hiring manager resistance to using existing recruitment programs</li> </ul>	<p>9.1 Hire manager that are least likely to have bias as per recommendation 3.1</p> <p>9.2 Implements mandatory manager training as outlined in recommendations 3.2, 4.1, and 10.5</p> <p>9.3 Consider centralized support for hiring managers to ensure consistency and application of best practices in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Developing interview questions</li> <li>b. Application of equivalencies</li> <li>c. Identification of available recruitment programs</li> <li>d. Development of training and orientation plans for new employees</li> </ul>
<p>10. Indigenous Aboriginal employees do not have a voice within the NTHSSA</p>	<p>10.1. Address a dearth of indigenous Aboriginal leadership by investing in existing indigenous Aboriginal employees for advancement within the organization through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Providing information on training, development, and leadership programs directly to indigenous Aboriginal employees</li> <li>b. Individualized career planning and encouragement to pursue leadership positions</li> <li>c. Access to cultural mentorship throughout leadership development programs</li> </ul>

	<p>10.2. Leadership training should include ways to incorporate Aboriginal values into program and service delivery rather than being focused exclusively on white/western service delivery models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consider exploring opportunities to partner with organizations that have had success in this area such as the First Nations Health Authority or Southcentral Foundation</li> </ul> <p>10.3. Ensure Aboriginal employees and managers have flexibility in service delivery with Aboriginal service recipients and/or the ability to identify ways in which existing service delivery conflicts with Aboriginal values with recommendations for change</p> <p>10.4. Make a targeted effort to invite indigenous Aboriginal employees to participate in working groups that influence policy and program delivery</p> <p>10.5. Cultural safety training for non-Aboriginal managers and leaders should include recognizing one’s own bias, and how to support active representation of Aboriginal employees</p>
<p>11. Indigenous Aboriginal access to existing health and social services training and development programs</p>	<p>11.1. Ensure information on training and development programs is communicated to indigenous Aboriginal employees through individualized career planning</p> <p>11.2. Ensure the Affirmative Action Policy is consistently applied to recruitment and retention programs</p> <p>11.3. Have indigenous Aboriginal staff participate in the health and social service recruitment and retention planning to ensure culturally appropriate program and communication plans</p> <p>11.4 Consider paid education leave as per recommendation 7.6</p>

**9.2 Implementation**

The recommendations in table 11 address the gaps identified through this research project. Some recommendations are more foundational than others, and earlier investment in those will improve chances of success in other areas. Some priorities require a long term investment of time, and do not need to be fully achieved before beginning work on subsequent

recommendations. A suggested order of priority that includes comments related required resources is outlined below.

### **Priority 1: Strategic Planning**

With the 2015 – 2020 Health and Social Services Human Resource Strategic plan expiring, there is an opportunity to include increasing the representation of indigenous Aboriginal employees as a strategic priority in the new plan. Early incorporation into operational plans will also assist in keeping this an active priority. There are minimal additional resources required for Priority 1 as strategic human resource and operational planning are pre-existing organizational requirements.

Associated recommendations are: 1.1, 1.2, and 2.1

### **Priority 2 Creating Capacity for Change**

Practical recommendations related to addressing manager workload issues, and supporting all new employees, will contribute to an organization that has the capacity to invest in indigenous Aboriginal employees. It also creates an environment in which managers are more amenable to changing views that negatively impact the recruitment and retention of indigenous Aboriginal employees. Priority 2 requires the greatest investment of resources as it includes the creation of additional positions to provide clinical mentorship and standardized orientations. However these investments as well as investment in centralized support for recruitment processes will improve overall efficiency and reduce duplication. Investments here are likely to reduce manager burnout, employee turnover, and associated relocation costs related to employee turnover.

Associated recommendations are: 2.2, 3.3, 4.3, and 9.3

### **Priority 3 Changing Management Views**

Developing an organization that values, and therefore invests in, indigenous Aboriginal employees requires changing the views of some senior and middle managers. Priority 3 involves messaging from senior management, training for senior and middle managers, and access to advice from cultural mentors. Required resources for Priority 3 include an initial investment in training development, and key messaging to support change. An ongoing investment in staff educators and resources to provide cultural mentorship is required.

Associated recommendations are: 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 e, 4.1, 4.2, 5.3 b, 5.4, and 10.5

### **Priority 4 Opening the Door to Indigenous Aboriginal Employees**

An organization that attracts and retains indigenous Aboriginal employees ensures programs and job descriptions do not create systematic bias; has built in supports targeted to indigenous Aboriginal employees; and ensures managers have information and supports that

enable them to access existing programs. Required resources for Priority 4 includes establishing a position to act as a resource in providing centralized advice on existing programs and developing training plans. This resource can be linked to other central supports recommended and may be created in collaboration with the Department of Finance, Human Resources who shares some responsibility in ensuring this information is available to managers. Engaging cultural mentors for indigenous Aboriginal employees would also require an investment of resources. Existing employees may be utilized in this capacity but must be given adequate time to provide mentorship. Contracting external mentors would require an ongoing financial investment.

Associated recommendations are: 3.3 a, b, c, d, e, 5.3, 5.6, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 7.6, 7.8, 8.1, 8, 8.3, 8.4, 9.3, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, and 11.4

### **Priority 5 Incorporate Aboriginal Worldview and Merit**

An organization that attracts and retains indigenous Aboriginal employees has addressed organizational bias and has incorporated Aboriginal worldviews into programs and services. This includes ensuring programs and job descriptions do not create systematic barriers, reflect the merit indigenous Aboriginal employee bring, and leverage available indigenous Aboriginal skillsets. It also supports active representation to ensure indigenous Aboriginal employees have a voice. Priority 5 requires a significant initial investment of time to review job descriptions and programs, however it is anticipated the long term outcome will be improved service delivery, and reduced employee turnover, as more positions will be filled with local indigenous Aboriginal employees who experience greater job satisfaction.

Associated recommendations are: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4

### **Priority 6 Investing in a Future Workforce**

A key lesson from the literature and an identified gap in hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees was the lack of candidates who meet the technical qualifications required in many health and social service jobs. A number of recommendations are identified to address this gap and build future employees. Required resources include initial development of tools and resources for existing staff, and employee time to connect to potential new employees.

Associated recommendations are: 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, and 7.8

### **Priority 7 Ensuring Continued Change**

Ensuring changes implemented are maintained and enhanced requires ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and data collection to inform future planning. Building the right management team through targeted screening is also important. Required resources for Priority 7 include an initial investment of time to develop the processes to collect, maintain, and analyze data, as well as tools to screen managers. Once the initial investments are made in areas of

strategic planning and manager training and development, increased efficiencies can be expected as a result if reduced staff turnover.

Associated recommendations are: 1.3, 1.4, and 3.1

## 10.0 Conclusion

The primary research question explored in this project was: *What evidence-based actions can the NTHSSA take to increase the number of indigenous Aboriginal people within its workforce?* The literature review, data from a comparative organization, and original research contributed to forty-four evidence-based recommended actions. Secondary research questions answered included: the current state of indigenous Aboriginal representation within the NTHSSA; existing GNWT health and social services recruitment and retention initiatives; perceived internal and external barriers to increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation; whether key stakeholders hold opinions or misperceptions about the Affirmative Action Policy and hiring indigenous Aboriginal employees, which results in barriers to increasing indigenous Aboriginal representation; lessons learned from jurisdictions outside of the NWT that can be applied to the NTHSSA; and successes and lessons learned within the NWT that can be applied to the NTHSSA. The uptake of recruitment and retention initiatives by indigenous Aboriginal candidates was not answered, as requested data was not provided and it was unclear whether or not the data existed.

This project and analysis was limited to the particular experience and purview of the NTHSSA, with some additional insight from external GNWT senior managers and the TCSA. Areas for further research include: best practices in creating access to health and social service education for rural and remote students; the development of health and social service systems based on Aboriginal worldviews and healing practices; and the pervasive influence of the invisible white and mythic “northerner” in maintaining colonialism in the NWT.

There is evidence that the current approach of health and social service agencies in the NWT have served to maintain the status quo. The rate of indigenous Aboriginal employees has remained constant over the past nineteen years despite an Affirmative Action Policy that requires strong preference for indigenous Aboriginal candidates. Without change to current practices the rate of representation is not likely to increase. The organization’s ability to meet the health and social service needs of the Aboriginal population it serves will continue to fall short, and the NTHSSA will be complicit to an ongoing legacy of colonialism and oppression. As Kingsley points out, an organization that is not representative contributes to maintaining the status quo, and power over disenfranchised groups (Kingsley, 1944, p. 281).

Lessons learned from other jurisdictions and organizations established key themes for analyzing the research data. Gaps were found within each key theme indicating there are many opportunities for the NTHSSA to improve the representation of indigenous Aboriginal people within the organization. Key takeaways include: the influence views of front line hiring managers have on successfully recruiting and retaining Aboriginal employees; and the importance of management recognizing and promoting the added value Aboriginal employees bring when delivering services to Aboriginal people.

## References

- Abella, R. S. (1984) Report of the commission on equality in employment. Minister of Supply and Services Canada. Retrieved from: <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.699768/publication.html>
- Agocs C., & Osborne, B. (2009) Comparing equity policies in Canada and Northern Ireland: Policy learning in two directions. *Canadian Public Policy / Analyse de Politiques*, 35(2), 237-262. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cpp.35.2.237>
- Allan, B., & Smylie, J. (2015) *First Peoples, Second Class Treatment: The Role of Racism in the Health and Well-Being of Indigenous Peoples in Canada*. Well Living House. Wesley Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www-deslibris-ca.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/ID/245514>
- Allen, D. G. (2006) Whiteness and difference in nursing. *Nursing Philosophy*, 7 (2), 65-78. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1466-769X.2006.00255.x>
- Auger, M. & Gomes, T. (2016). Moving toward holistic wellness, empowerment and self-determination for indigenous peoples in Canada: Can traditional indigenous health care practices increase ownership over health and health care decisions? *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 107(4), e393-e398. <https://doi.org/10.17269/cjph.107.5366>
- Aurora College (2019) Programs and Courses. Program: 158 - Post Graduate Certificate in Remote Nursing. Retrieved from: [http://www.auroracollege.nt.ca/\\_live/pages/wpPages/ProgramInfoDisplay.aspx?id=125&tp=PRG](http://www.auroracollege.nt.ca/_live/pages/wpPages/ProgramInfoDisplay.aspx?id=125&tp=PRG)
- Bardach, E. (n.d.) “Smart (Best) Practices” Research: Understanding and Making Use of What Look Like Good Ideas from Somewhere Else. Part III Smart Practices Research. Retrieved July 20, 2019 from: [https://blackboard.angelo.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/LFA/CSS/Course%20Material/BOR6301/Readings/Bardach\\_smart\\_practice.pdf](https://blackboard.angelo.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/LFA/CSS/Course%20Material/BOR6301/Readings/Bardach_smart_practice.pdf)
- Bhavnani, R. R., and Lee, A. (2018) Does affirmative action worsen bureaucratic performance? Evidence from the Indian administrative service. University of Wisconsin, Faculty of Political Science, R. R. Bhavnani website. Retrieved from <https://faculty.polisci.wisc.edu/bhavnani/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/aa.pdf>
- Blake, E. (2018) Yellowknife Woman Raises Concerns of Cultural Bias in Health Care System. CBC News North. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yellowknife-woman-raises-concerns-of-cultural-bias-in-health-care-system-1.4703688>
- Blash, L., Dower, C., and Chapman, S. (2012) Southcentral Foundation – Nuka Model of Care Provides Career Growth for Frontline Staff. Center for the Health Professions at the University of



California, San Francisco. Retrieved from: <https://scfnuka.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Center-for-Health-Professionals-article.pdf>

Bracha, A. Cohen, A. and Conell-Price, L (2019). The heterogeneous effect of affirmative action on performance. *158 (C)*, pp. 173-218. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2018.11.019>

Canadian Nurses Association (2014) Aboriginal Health Nursing and Aboriginal Health: Charting Policy Direction for Nursing in Canada. <https://doi.org/978-1-55119-416-5>

Chandler, M. J., and Donlop, W. L. (2018) Cultural Wounds Demand Cultural Medicines. In Greenwood, M., de Leeuw, S., & Lindsay, N. M., (Eds.) *Determinants of Indigenous Peoples Health, Second Edition: Beyond the Social*. (pp. 147 – 159) Toronto: Canadian Scholars.

Conference Board of Canada. (2015). *Healthy Foundations: Nursing's Role in Building Strong Aboriginal Communities*. Ottawa. The Conference Board of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=6870>

Conference Board of Canada (2019) *Working Together: Indigenous Recruitment and Retention in Remote Canada*. Ottawa. The Conference Board of Canada. Retrieved from: [https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/56dd504b-8401-4b4b-94d2-e9e59026733e/10121\\_IndigenousEmployment-RPT.pdf](https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/56dd504b-8401-4b4b-94d2-e9e59026733e/10121_IndigenousEmployment-RPT.pdf)

Cross, S., Day, A., Gogliotti, L., and Pung, J. (2013) Challenges to recruit and retain American Indian and Alaskan natives in social work programs: and the impact on the child welfare workforce. *Child Welfare* 92 (4) pp. 31-53.

Daniels, J., and Schultz, A. J. (2006) Constructing whiteness in health disparities research. In Schultz, A.J. and Mullings, L. (Eds.) *Health and Illness at the Intersections of Gender Race and Class* (pp.89-127). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing. Retrieved from: [https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc\\_pubs/270/](https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc_pubs/270/)

Department of Health and Social Services (2015) Human Resource Strategy for the Health and Social Services System. Retrieved from: <https://www.practicenwt.ca/sites/practicenwt/files/resources/final-strategic-plan-april-2015dd.pdf>

Dolan, J., and Rosenbloom, D. H. (2003) Public personnel policy and social representation. In *Representative Bureaucracy: Classic Readings and Continuing Controversies* (Chapter 2) Routledge, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315541471>

Eckhard, S. (2014). Bureaucratic representation and ethnic bureaucratic drift: A case study of United Nations minority policy implementation in Kosovo. *The American Review of Public Administration* 44 (5) pp. 600–621. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074013478151>

- Ganter, E. (2016). *Reluctant Representatives: Blackfella Bureaucrats Speak in Australia's north*. Australia: ANU Press. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12291>
- Gottlieb, K., Sylvester, I., & Eby, D. (2008). Transforming your practice: What matters most. *Family Practice Management*, 15(1), 32-38. Retrieved from: <https://www.aafp.org/fpm/2008/0100/p32.html>
- Gottlieb, K (2013) The Nuka System of Care: improving health through ownership and relationships. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, 72 (1). <https://doi.org/10.3402/ijch.v72i0.21118>
- Government of Canada (1982) Constitution Act, 1982. Part 1 Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Retrieved from: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-15.html>
- Government of Canada (2019) Employment Equity Act. Justice Laws Website. Retrieved from: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/page-2.html#docCont>
- Government of the Northwest Territories (n.d.) Practice NWT. Retrieved from: <https://www.practicenwt.ca/en>
- Government of the Northwest Territories (1998) *Government of the Northwest Territories Annual Report on the Affirmative Action Policy 1999*. Tabled Document No. 39 14 (3). NWT Legislative Library.
- Government of the Northwest Territories (1998-2019) *Public Services Reports*. (Government of the Northwest Territories Publications). Retrieved from: [https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/resources?search\\_api\\_views\\_fulltext=public+service+report&sort\\_by=field\\_resource\\_publication\\_date&sort\\_order=DESC](https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/resources?search_api_views_fulltext=public+service+report&sort_by=field_resource_publication_date&sort_order=DESC)
- Government of the Northwest Territories (2006) *Affirmative Action Policy 15.04*. Retrieved from: [https://www.eia.gov.nt.ca/sites/eia/files/content/15.04\\_-\\_affirmative\\_action\\_2017-04-01\\_0.pdf](https://www.eia.gov.nt.ca/sites/eia/files/content/15.04_-_affirmative_action_2017-04-01_0.pdf)
- Government of the Northwest Territories (2009) *20/20 A Brilliant North: NWT Strategic Human Resources Plan Public Service Public Focus*. (Government of the Northwest Territories Publication). Retrieved from: <https://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/09-06-04td63-163.pdf>
- Government of the Northwest Territories (2014) *Human Resource Manual*. Retrieved from: <https://my.hr.gov.nt.ca/human-resource-manual>
- Government of the Northwest Territories (2015) *Meeting the Challenge: The Government of the Northwest Territories Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action*. Tabled Document 330-17 (5). Retrieved from: [https://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/td\\_330-175.pdf](https://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/td_330-175.pdf)

- Government of the Northwest Territories (2016) *Building a Culturally Respectful HSS System*. (Government of the Northwest Territories Publication). Retrieved from: <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/building-culturally-respectful-hss-system.pdf>
- Government of the Northwest Territories (2018) *2017-2018 Annual Report of the Director of Child and Family Services (including years 2007-2008 to 2017-2018)*. (Government of the Northwest Territories Publication). Retrieved from: <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/cfs-director-report.pdf>
- Government of the Northwest Territories, Finance (2018) Diversity and Inclusion. Affirmative Action. Retrieved from: <https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/services/diversity-and-inclusion/affirmative-action>
- Government of the Northwest Territories Hansards (February 2017) Supports For Priority Hiring Candidates Under The Affirmative action Policy. Members Statements, February 28th, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://hansard.opennwt.ca/debates/2017/2/28/tom-beaulieu-1/>
- Government of the Northwest Territories Hansards (June 2018) Question 348-18(3): Affirmative action Policy and Human Resource Planning. Oral Questions, Page 4183. Retrieved from <https://hansard.opennwt.ca/debates/2018/6/1/tom-beaulieu-2/>
- Government of the Northwest Territories, My HR (2018) Diversity and Inclusion. Retrieved from: <https://my.hr.gov.nt.ca/learning-development/catalogue/category/diversity-and-inclusion>
- Institute of Manufacturing (n.d.) University of Cambridge. Retrieved July 20, 2019 from: <https://www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/research/dstools/gap-analysis/>
- Kalev, A., Dobbin, F, and Kelly, A (2006) Best practices or best guesses? Assessing the efficacy of corporate affirmative action and diversity practices. *American Sociological Review* 71 (4), pp. 589-617. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F000312240607100404>
- Kernaghan, K. (2011). Getting engaged: Public-service merit and motivation revisited. *Canadian Public Administration*, 54(1), pp. 1-21. doi:10.1111/j.1754-7121.2011.00158.x
- Kingsley, J. D. 1. (1944). *Representative Bureaucracy: An Interpretation of the British Civil Service*. Yellow Springs, O: Antioch Press.
- Kravitz, D. (1995). Attitudes toward affirmative action plans directed at blacks: Effects of plan and individual Differences. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 25(24), pp. 2192-2220. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1995.tb01833.x>
- Kravitz, D. (2008) The diversity-validity dilemma: Beyond selection – The role of affirmative action. *Personnel Psychology*, 61(1) pp. 173-193. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2008.00110.x>

- Kravitz, D. (2017). Affirmative action. In Rogelberg, S. (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of industrial and organizational psychology, 2nd edition* (pp. 32-35). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc doi: 10.4135/9781483386874.n13
- Lai, G. C., Taylor, E. V., Haigh, M. M., & Thompson, S. C. (2018). Factors affecting the retention of indigenous australians in the health workforce: A systematic review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(5), 914. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15050914>
- Lee, H. (2015) Affirmative action in Malaysia and South Africa: Contrasting structures, continuing Pursuits. *Journal of African and Asian Studies*, 50 (5), pp. 615-634. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0021909615600470>
- Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories (2011) *One Land, Many voices. Creating the New Northwest Territories*. (Government of the Northwest Territories publication). Retrieved from: [https://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/one\\_land\\_many\\_voices\\_pdf.pdf](https://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/one_land_many_voices_pdf.pdf)
- Leslie L., Mayer D., Kravitz, D. (2014). The Stigma of Affirmative action: A Stereotyping- Based Theory and Meta-Analytic Test of the Consequences for Performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57 (4), pp. 964-989. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0940>
- Leung D.Y., Chung B.P.M. (2019) Content analysis: Using critical realism to extend its utility. In: Liamputtong P. (eds) *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences*. Pp. 827-842. Springer, Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4\\_102](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_102)
- Little Bear, L. (2000) Jagged worldviews colliding. In Baptiste, M. (Ed) *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, pp 77-85. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- MacDonald, C., and Steenback, A. (2015) The impact of colonization and western assimilation on health and wellbeing of Canadian Aboriginal people. *International Journal of Regional and Local History*, 10 (1), pp. 32-46. <https://doi.org/10.1179/2051453015Z.00000000023>
- Marvel, J. D. and Resh W. G. (2013) Bureaucratic discretion, client demographics, and representative bureaucracy. *American Review of Public Administration* , 45 (3), pp. 281–310. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074013492008>
- McBride K.A., MacMillan F., George E.S., Steiner G.Z. (2019) The use of mixed methods in research. In: Liamputtong P. (Eds.) *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences*. Springer, Singapore. pp. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4\\_97](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_97)
- McLeod, R. C. (2017) Follow-up letter for oral question 650-18(2): Hiring candidates under the Affirmative Action Policy. Retrieved from: [http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/td\\_365-182.pdf](http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/td_365-182.pdf)
- Nachmias, D., and Rosenbloom, D. H. (1973) Measuring bureaucratic representation and integration. *Public Administration Review*, 33 (6), pp. 590-597. <https://doi.org/10.2307/974575>

- Naff, K. C. and Jurée Capers, K. (2014) The complexity of descriptive representation and bureaucracy: The case of South Africa. *International Public Management Journal*, 17 (4) pp. 515-539. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2014.958804>
- Neilson, A. Stuart, L. and Gorman, D. (2014) Confronting the cultural challenge of the whiteness of nursing: Aboriginal registered nurses perspective. *Contemporary Nurse*, 48 (2) pp. 190-196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10376178.2014.11081940>
- Ng, E. S. and Sears, G. J. (2015) Toward representative bureaucracy: Predicting public service attraction among underrepresented groups in Canada. *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 35, (4), pp. 367-385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X14544546>
- Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (n.d.) About us. NTHSSA Website. Retrieved June 10, 2018 from: <https://www.nthssa.ca/en/about-us>
- NWT Bureau of Statistics (n.d.) Community populations by ethnicity. Retrieved June 30, 2019 from: <https://www.statsnwt.ca/population/population-estimates/bycommunity.php>
- NWT Bureau of Statistics (2018) Summary of Community Statistics 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.statsnwt.ca/community-d2006ata/NWT%20summary%20of%20Community%20Statistics%202018.pdf>
- O'Connor, K. (2014) *Public Administration in Contested Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137298157>
- Premdas, R. (2016) Social justice and affirmative action. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39, (3), pp. 449-462. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1109681>
- Puzan, E. (2003) The unbearable whiteness of being (in nursing). *Nursing Inquiry*, 10 (3). pp. 193-200. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1440-1800.2003.00180.x>
- Ratuva, S. (2013) *The Politics of Preferential Development; Transglobal Study of Affirmative Action and Ethnic Conflict in Fiji, Malaysia and South Africa*. Published by Australia National University E press. [http://doi.org/10.26530/OntAPEN\\_459990](http://doi.org/10.26530/OntAPEN_459990)
- Ratuva, S. (2016) Positive discrimination. The case of Fiji. *World Policy Journal*. Retrieved from: <https://worldpolicy.org/2016/04/19/positive-discrimination-the-case-of-fiji/>
- Riccuci, N. M., and Van Ryzen, G. G. (2016) Representative bureaucracy: A lever to enhance social equity, coproduction, and democracy. *Public Administration Review*, 77 (1), pp. 21-30. <http://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12649>
- Roberson, Q. M. (April 2006) Disentangling the meanings of diversity and inclusion in organizations. *Group and Organization Management*, 31 (2), pp. 212-236. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1059601104273064>

- Rousseau, J. (2014). Empowered or tokenized?: The experiences of aboriginal human service workers and organizational responses in a historically oppressive child welfare system. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from: <http://hdl.handle.net/1828/5273>
- Rousseau, J. (December 2018) Struggling towards Indigenous representation and service improvement within the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. *Canadian Public Administration*, 61 (4), pp. 641-664. <https://doi.org/10.1111/capa.12303>
- Selden, S. (2011). Representative bureaucracy. In Badie, B., Berg-Schlosser, D., & Morlino, L. (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, pp. 2286-2288. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412959636.n523>
- Shahnaz, A., Burns, C., and Grant, L. (2013) Equality and diversity in the health service. An evidence led culture change. *Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational Culture*, 3 (S1), pp. 190-209. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jpoc.21092>
- Sowell, T. (2004). *Affirmative action around the world: An empirical study*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Spitzer, A. J. (2015). Confronting 'Kymlicka's dilemma': Settler voting rights, indigenous representation and the 1998-99 electoral reapportionment in Canada's Northwest Territories (Doctoral dissertation, Order No. 1599934). Retrieved from: <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/6077>
- State of Alaska (2019) State of Alaska 2019 progress report on Equal Employment Opportunity and affirmative action in Alaska state government (State of Alaska publication). Retrieved from: [http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/fileadmin/Equal\\_Employment/pdf/2019ProgressReportEEOAA.pdf](http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/fileadmin/Equal_Employment/pdf/2019ProgressReportEEOAA.pdf)
- Statistics Canada (2019) Focus on geography series, 2016 census. Northwest Territories. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/fogs-spg/Facts-pr-eng.cfm?Lang=Eng&GK=PR&GC=61&TOPIC=7>
- Stuart, L., and Nielsen, A. (2011) Two Aboriginal registered nurses show us why black nurses caring for black patients is good medicine. *Contemporary Nurse*, 37 (1). pp. 96-101. <https://doi.org/10.5172/conu.2011.37.1.096>
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Truth and reconciliation commission of canada: Calls to action. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from: [http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)
- Van Herek, K. A., Smith, D., and Andrew, C. (2011) Identity matters: Aboriginal mothers experiences of accessing health care. *Contemporary Nurse: A Journal for the Australian Nursing Profession*, 37 (1), pp. 57-68. <https://doi.org/10.5172/conu.2011.37.1.057>

- Weber, B. (2017) N.W.T. report into elder's death will help address 'systemic racism' in health care: Minister. The Canadian Press. Retrieved from: [www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/03/01/nwt-report-into-elders-death-will-help-address-systemic-racism-in-health-care-minister.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/03/01/nwt-report-into-elders-death-will-help-address-systemic-racism-in-health-care-minister.html)
- White, G. (1994) *The Adaptation of Non-Aboriginal Institutions of Governance in the Northwest Territories*. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Government of Canada Publication). Retrieved from: [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2016/bcp-pco/Z1-1991-1-41-66-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2016/bcp-pco/Z1-1991-1-41-66-eng.pdf)
- Van DeVeer, C., Crosby, F. J. (2000). *Sex, Race, and Merit: Debating Affirmative Action in Education and Employment*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Retrieved from: <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015050261315>

## Appendices

### Appendix “A”

Appendix "A"  
Indigenous Aboriginal (IA) Representation in GNWT and NTHSSA HSSA's

Reporting Year	%IA GNWT ee's	# HSSA ee's *	# IA HSSA ee's*	% of IA HSSA ee's*
1999	33%			22%*
2000	32%	726	184	25%
2001	32%	755	203	27%
2002	32%	837	233	28%
2003	32%	882	239	27%
2004	32%	930	255	27%
2005	31%	1058	240	23%
2006	31%	1124	262	23%
2007	31%	1147	271	24%
2008	31%	1126	253	22%
2009	31%	1144	267	23%
2010	32%	1163	273	23%
2011	32%	1165	282	24%
2012	32%	1173	284	24%
2013	32%	1202	294	24%
2014	31%	1252	297	24%
2015	31%	1283	298	23%
2016/17**	31%	1288	299	23%
2017/18	31%	1282	303	24%

\* Minus Dogrib/Tlicho

\*\* Change in naming convention in 2016)

GNWT 1999-2018 Public Service Reports;  
1999, p. 38; 2000, p. 40; 2001, p. 30; 2002, p. 35; 2003, p. 44; 2004, p. 44; 2005, p. 41;  
2006, p. 40; 2007, p. 42; 2008, p. 44; 2009, p. 31; 2010, p. 34; 2011, p. 37; 2012, p. 40;  
2013, p. 37; 2014, p.36; 2015, p. 30; 2016, p. 30; 2018, p. 30; 2019, p. 30.



## Appendix “B”

### Letter of information for Implied Consent



### Letter of Information for Implied Consent Interview Participants

#### Creating a Representative Health Social Service System in the NWT

You are invited to participate in a study that is being conducted to better understand the barriers to the recruitment of Indigenous/aboriginal staff to the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA). My name is Arlene Jorgensen and I am conducting the study.

As a graduate student, I am required to complete a Masters Project, a substantial analysis of a management, policy, or program issue for a client in the non-profit or public sector. The project requires a research component and is part of the requirements for a degree in Public Administration. The project and related research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Kimberly Speers. You may contact my supervisor at [kspeers@uvic.ca](mailto:kspeers@uvic.ca) or telephone 250-721-8057.

This project is also being conducted for a client, Ms. Sue Cullen, Chief Operating Officer of NTHSSA.

#### Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research is to understand the barriers to the NTHSSA increasing their number of Indigenous/aboriginal employees; the information gathered will contribute to the development of recommendations for improving Indigenous/aboriginal representation within the NTHSSA.

#### Importance of this Research

Research of this type is important because it can lead to improved delivery of health and social services in the NWT, improved health outcomes for Aboriginal people accessing the NWT health and social services system, and make progress towards meeting Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to action.

#### Participants Selection

Your knowledge and experience related to northern human resources recruitment and retention would provide valuable insight and support meaningful recommendations for the NTHSSA.

#### What is Involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include participation in a semi-structured interview. The interview would take approximately 45 to 75 minutes, depending on the length of your answers.

The interview would be conducted via telephone or in person where possible, and would be recorded. There are no anticipated risks or discomforts related to this research.

**Risks**

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

?

**Benefits**

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an opportunity for you to share your knowledge and experience related to northern human resources recruitment and retention, which will provide valuable insight and support meaningful recommendations for the NTHSSA.

?

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will be used only to the extent that you agree.

?

**Researcher’s Relationship with Participants**

The researcher may have a dual relationship to potential participants related to any role as Chief Operating Officer of the NTHSSA Beaufort Delta Region (BDR) and any role as researcher. As such questions about the research can either be directed to the NTHSSA Director of Quality, Safety, and Client Experience, Lorie Anne Danielson, or to me. If you choose not to participate you can advise Lorie Anne, myself, or you can choose not to respond at all.

?

There are no repercussions if you do choose not to participate in the interview, if you do participate you will be able to end the interview at any time, or choose not to answer specific questions.

?

**Anonymity**

The request for an interview is based on your role within the public service. The project report will not include names of individuals interviewed; however there will be a listing of the position titles of each person interviewed, and the report may reference the title of the position associated with particular perspectives. As such, there is no guarantee of anonymity, however care will be taken to ensure opinions that may be expressed in interviews contrary to government policy will not be attributed to specific individuals or positions.

?

**Confidentiality**

Data collected will be stored on the researcher’s password protected personal computer and/or phone. Only interview summaries will be included in the project report. All other data will be destroyed.

?

**Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: A project report which includes the results and analysis of the data collected in this study that will be provided to the University of Victoria as well as to the CEO of the NTHSSA. The project report may also be shared with other GNWT senior managers.

?

**Disposal of Data**

Data from this study will be disposed of as follows: Audio recordings will be destroyed as soon as interview notes are completed. Audio and electronic information will be kept on the researcher’s password protected computer or phone until the information has been destroyed.

Researcher: Arlene Jorgensen

Contact Information: [Arlene\\_Faye@hotmail.com](mailto:Arlene_Faye@hotmail.com) or Telephone 250-678-0572

?

Academic Supervisor: Kimberly Speers

Contact Information: [kspeers@uvic.ca](mailto:kspeers@uvic.ca) or Telephone 250-721-8057

?

NTHSSA Director of Quality, Safety, and Client Experience, Lorie Anne Danielson

Contact Information: [Lorie-Anne\\_Danielson@gov.nt.ca](mailto:Lorie-Anne_Danielson@gov.nt.ca) or by Telephone at (867) 2767-9106 ext. 40016.

?

You may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

?

By participating in an interview **YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED** and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

?

?

?

***Please retain a copy of this letter for your reference.***

## Appendix “C”

### GNWT Senior Manager Interview Questions

1. The GNWT has made a commitment to a representative public service. Do you agree with this as a goal, and do you think it is achievable?
2. Do you believe the GNWT’s Affirmative action Policy is an effective tool in achieving the goal of a representative bureaucracy? Explain.
3. The GNWT webpage that speaks to Affirmative action, does this under a heading of “Diversity and Inclusion”. Can you tell me from your perspective, what Diversity and Inclusion means, and how it relates to Affirmative action?
4. 50% of the population of the NWT are aboriginal people. Over the past 10 years the HSSA’s that make up the NTHSSA have employed between 22-24% IA ee’s. In 2016 the NTHSSA had 22% indigenous employees.

Why do you think the HSSA’s have struggled to increase the representation of IA employees?

5. Are you aware of approaches or initiatives that have been successful in the NWT or other jurisdictions, or that you believe are promising practices in the recruitment and retention of indigenous aboriginal employees?
6. What work, programs, or initiatives has your division undertaken that support recruiting and retaining IA ee’s in the NTHSSA?
7. Do you think there is value in the NTHSSA specifically targeting recruitment and retention of IA employees? Explain.
8. What do you think are main barriers to IA people being recruited by the NTHSSA?

9. What do you think are the main barriers to IA people being retained by the NTHSSA?
  
10. What recommendations do you have for increasing the numbers of IA employees within the NTHSSA?
  
11. Is there anything else you want to add related to affirmative action, or thoughts on the NTHSSA's efforts to increase the number of IA employees?

## Appendix “D”

### TCSA Interview

1. The GNWT has made a commitment to a representative public service but has struggled to achieve it’s goal, the Tlicho government has been much more successful. Can you tell me what you think are the reasons the TCSA HSS has been able to hire 66% Indigenous Aboriginal HSS employees when the NTHSSA regions have only been able to achieve a 23% Indigenous Aboriginal employees?
2. Do you believe the GNWT’s Affirmative action Policy is an effective tool in achieving the goal of a representative bureaucracy?
3. Are there specific strategies, practices, or training programs the TCSA follows that support recruiting and retaining Indigenous Aboriginal staff in addition to those of the GNWT and Department of HSS?
4. What strategy, practice, or program has been most effective in recruiting and retaining Indigenous Aboriginal employees?
5. What has been the TCSA’s greatest barrier to hiring Indigenous Aboriginal HSS employees?
6. What advice, or lessons learned can you pass on to the NTHSSA in its
7. efforts to increase it’s indigenous Aboriginal workforce?
8. Do you have any final comments?

## Appendix “E”

### Letter of Informed Consent for Survey Participants



### Letter of Information for Implied Consent Survey Participants

#### Creating a Representative Health Social Service System in the NWT

You are invited to participate in a study that is being conducted to better understand the barriers to the recruitment of Indigenous Aboriginal staff to the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA). My name is Arlene Jorgensen and I am conducting the study.

As a graduate student, I am required to complete a Masters Project, a substantial analysis of a management, policy, or program issue for a client in the non-profit or public sector. The project requires a research component and is part of the requirements for a degree in Public Administration. The project and related research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Kimberly Speers. You may contact my supervisor at [kspeers@uvic.ca](mailto:kspeers@uvic.ca) or telephone 250-721-8057.

This project is also being conducted for a client, Ms. Sue Cullen, Chief Operating Officer of the NTHSSA.

#### Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research is to understand the barriers to the NTHSSA increasing their number of Indigenous Aboriginal employees; the information gathered will contribute to the development of recommendations for improving Indigenous Aboriginal representation within the NTHSSA.

#### Importance of this Research

Research of this type is important because it can lead to improved delivery of health and social services in the NWT, improved health outcomes for Aboriginal people accessing the NWT health and social services system, and make progress towards meeting Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to action.

#### Participants Selection

Your knowledge and experience related to northern health and social services human resources recruitment and retention would provide valuable insight and support meaningful recommendations for the NTHSSA.

#### What is Involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include completion of a short online survey using the SurveyMonkey, an online survey platform. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes or less to complete.

By using SurveyMonkey this research study will include data storage in U.S.A. As such, there is a possibility that information that is gathered for this research study may be accessed without your knowledge or consent by the U.S. government, in compliance with the U.S. Freedom Act.

**Risks**

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

**Benefits**

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an opportunity for you to share your valuable knowledge and experience related to northern human resources recruitment and retention, which provide valuable insight and support meaningful recommendations for the NTHSSA.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you only partially complete the survey only the portion you have completed will be used.

**Researcher’s Relationship with Participants**

The researcher may have a dual relationship to potential participants in any role as Chief Operating Officer of the NTHSSA Beaufort Delta Region (BDR) and any role as researcher. As such questions about the research can either be directed to the NTHSSA Director of Quality, Safety, and Client Experience, Lorie Anne Danielson, or to me. If you choose not to participate you can advise Lorie Anne, myself, or you can choose not to respond at all.

There are no repercussions if you do choose not to participate.

**Anonymity**

Surveys are anonymous. The use of an online survey tool (Survey Monkey) will ensure the anonymity of survey participants with the following exception:

A survey specific to the Tlcho Community Services Agency (TCSA) will be sent to CSA health and social services hiring managers. The small number of potential CSA participants means there anonymity is guaranteed for CSA health and social services hiring managers who participate in the survey.

**Confidentiality**

Data collected will be stored on the researcher’s password protected personal computer. Only a summary of survey data will be included in the project report. All other data will be destroyed.

**Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: A project report which includes the results and analysis of the data collected in this study that will be provided to the University of Victoria as well as to the CEO of the NTHSSA. The project report may also be shared with other GNWT senior managers.

**Disposal of Data**

Data from this study will be disposed of as follows: Electronic information will be kept on the researcher’s password protected computer until the information has been destroyed. The researcher will delete survey from the survey site no later than 3 months after project report is completed and is permanently deleted from the survey site 90 days later.

All documentation will be destroyed no later than one year after completion of project report.



**Contacts**

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include:

Researcher: Arlene Jorgensen

Contact information: [Arlene\\_Faye@hotmail.com](mailto:Arlene_Faye@hotmail.com) or telephone 867-678-0572

Academic Supervisor: Kimberly Speers

Contact information: [kspeers@uvic.ca](mailto:kspeers@uvic.ca) or telephone 250-721-8057

NTHSSA Director of Quality, Safety, and Client Experience, Lorie Anne Danielson

Contact information: [Lorie-Anne\\_Danielson@gov.nt.ca](mailto:Lorie-Anne_Danielson@gov.nt.ca) or by telephone at (867) 67-9106 ext. 40016

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

By completing and submitting the survey, **YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED** and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

***Please retain a copy of this letter for your reference.***

**Appendix “F”**

NTHSSA Hiring Manager Survey

1. Do you believe hiring more indigenous Aboriginal staff will result in the NTHSSA providing better services?

Yes, Definitely  Most of the Time  Sometimes  Seldom  Not at all

Comments

2. How do you feel about to having to follow the GNWT Affirmative action Hiring policy?

Very positive  Somewhat positive  Neutral  Somewhat negative  Very Negative

Comments

3. Do you believe applying the GWNT affirmative action hiring policy results in the best candidate getting the job?

Always  Usually  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

Comments

4. What barriers do believe exist that prevent indigenous Aboriginal candidates from getting hired by the NTHSSA?

5. During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting to a position and an indigenous Aboriginal candidate was not screened in, but you felt they could have done the job?

Many times  Sometimes  Can't recall  Rarely  Never

Comments

6 During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting and you believed an indigenous Aboriginal candidate could have done the job but failed the interview?

Many times  Sometimes  Can't recall  Rarely  Never

Comments

7 What do you think the NTHSSA can do to increase the number of indigenous Aboriginal employees within their organization?

8 In your opinion, what is the most important thing the NTHSSA can do to retain Indigenous Aboriginal employees.

9 In your opinion, what is the biggest barrier to the NTHSSA retaining indigenous Aboriginal employee?.

10. We are interested in whether indigenous Aboriginal employees have a different perspective that non-indigenous aboriginal employees. Can you please let us know if you identify as an NWT indigenous Aboriginal person.

Yes  No  I'd rather not to say

## Appendix “G”

### HRO Survey

1. Do you believe hiring more indigenous Aboriginal staff will result in the NTHSSA providing better services?

Yes, Definitely  Most of the Time  Sometimes  Seldom  Not at all

Comments

2. How do you feel about to having to follow the GNWT Affirmative action Hiring policy?

Very positive  Somewhat positive  Neutral  Somewhat negative  Very Negative

Comments

3. Based on your experience over the past year, how do you think NTHSSA hiring managers feel about following the GNWT Affirmative action Policy.

Very positive  Somewhat positive  Neutral  Somewhat negative  Very Negative

Comments

4. Do you believe applying the GWNT affirmative action hiring policy results in the best candidate getting the job?

Always  Usually  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

Comments

5. What barriers do believe exist that prevent indigenous Aboriginal candidates from getting hired by the NTHSSA?

6. During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting to a position and an indigenous Aboriginal candidate was not screened in, but you felt they could have done the job?

Many times  Sometimes  Can't recall  Rarely  Never

Comments

7. During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting and you believed an indigenous Aboriginal candidate could have done the job but failed the interview?

Many times  Sometimes  Can't recall  Rarely  Never

Comments

8. What do you think the NTHSSA can do to increase the number of indigenous Aboriginal employees within their organization?

9. In your opinion, what is the biggest barrier to the NTHSSA retaining indigenous Aboriginal employees?

10. We are interested in whether indigenous Aboriginal employees have a different perspective than non-indigenous aboriginal employees. Can you please let us know if you identify as an NWT indigenous Aboriginal person.

Yes  No  I'd rather not to say

## Appendix “H”

### TCSA Hiring Manager Survey

1. Do you believe hiring more Indigenous Aboriginal staff will result in the TCSA providing better services?

Yes, Definitely  Most of the Time  Sometimes  Seldom  Not at all

Comments

2. How do you feel about to having to follow the GNWT Affirmative action Hiring policy?

Very positive  Somewhat positive  Neutral  Somewhat negative  Very Negative

Comments

3. Do you believe applying the GWNT affirmative action hiring policy results in the best candidate getting the job?

Always  Usually  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

Comments

4. What barriers prevent Indigenous Aboriginal candidates from getting hired by the TCSA?

5. During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting to a position and an Indigenous Aboriginal candidate was not screened in, but you felt they could have done the job?

Many times  Sometimes  Can't recall  Rarely  Never

Comments

6. During the past year have there been instances when you have been recruiting and you believed an Indigenous Aboriginal candidate could have done the job but failed the interview?

Many times  Sometimes  Can't recall  Rarely  Never

Comments

7. In your opinion, what do you think the TCSA can do to increase the number of Indigenous Aboriginal employees within their organization?

8. In your opinion, what is the greatest barrier to the TCSA retaining Indigenous Aboriginal employees?

9. The TCSA has been more successful in hiring Indigenous Aboriginal employees (66% of the TCSA HSS employees are indigenous Aboriginal) than the NTHSSA (23% of the NTHSSA employees are indigenous Aboriginal). Why do you think the TSCA has been so much more successful in this area than the NTHSSA?

10. We are interested in whether indigenous Aboriginal employees have a different perspective than non-indigenous employees. Can you please let us know if you identify as an NWT indigenous Aboriginal person.

Yes  No  I'd rather not to say

## Appendix “I”

### GNWT Document Review

GNWT Human Resources documents:

- 20/20: A Brilliant North NWT Public Service Strategic Plan Public Service. Public Focus.
- Public Service Annual Report 2017/18
- Policies and guidelines:
  - Affirmative Action Policy
  - Affected Employee and Staffing Priority Policy
  - Lay off Policy
  - Staff Retention Policy
- Human Resource Manual - Section 100

Recruitment programs

- Regional Recruitment Program
- Indigenous Career Gateway Program
- Summer Student Employment policy

Training programs

- Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training
- Diversity and Inclusion training (released March 2019)
- Indigenous Management Development and Training Program
- Internship Program
- Leadership Development Program

### Health and Social Services specific documents

- Department of Health and Social Services HR Strategy for Health and Social Services System
- NTHSSA 2016/17 Annual report
- Internal NTHSSA report on the Affirmative action status of Nurses and Social Workers in the NTHSSA.

Training and development programs

- Executive Leadership Development Program
- Graduate Entry Level Internship Program
- Professional Development Initiative (PDI)
- Targeted Academic Support Program
- Rural and Remote Nursing



**Appendix “J”**

**NTHSSA NURSE STATS - By Affirmative Action Status**

*as of October 31st, 2018.*

Nurse Type	Affirmative Action Status				Grand Total
	Ind-Ab	Ind Non-Ab	Non-Ab	South Ab	
CC	1	2	8		11
CHN	2	2	34	1	39
LPN	4	1	60	2	67
NIC	2		21		23
NP	1		13	1	15
Other	3		21		24
PHN		2	11		13
RN	25	23	211	1	260
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>452</b>

Nurse Type	Affirmative Action Status			
	Ind-Ab	Ind Non-Ab	Non-Ab	South Ab
CC	9%	18%	73%	0%
CHN	5%	5%	87%	3%
LPN	6%	1%	90%	3%
NIC	9%	0%	91%	0%
NP	7%	0%	87%	7%
Other	13%	0%	88%	0%
PHN	0%	15%	85%	0%
RN	10%	9%	81%	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>83.8%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

**NTHSSA CHILD and FAMILY SERVICES STATS - By Affirmative Action Status**

*as at October 31st, 2018.*

CFS Position Type	Affirmative Action Status				Grand Total
	Ind-Ab	Ind Non-Ab	Non-Ab	South Ab	
Community SW	2		6		8
Community Wellness Worker	4		2		6
Coordinator	1		1		2
Counsellor	1		25		26

CSSW III	4		6	1	11
CSSW IV	2		2		4
Family and Community SW	4	1	11	1	17
Family Home Visitor / Support Worker	5		3		8
Other			2		2
Regional Manager	3		5		8
Regional Supervisor	1	1	6		8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>

CFS Position Type	Affirmative Action Status			
	Ind-Ab	Ind Non-Ab	Non-Ab	South Ab
Community SW	25%	0%	75%	0%
Community Wellness Worker	67%	0%	33%	0%
Coordinator	50%	0%	50%	0%
Counsellor	4%	0%	96%	0%
CSSW III	36%	0%	55%	9%
CSSW IV	50%	0%	50%	0%
Family and Community SW	24%	6%	65%	6%
Family Home Visitor / Support Worker	63%	0%	38%	0%
Other	0%	0%	100%	0%
Regional Manager	38%	0%	63%	0%
Regional Supervisor	13%	13%	75%	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>69.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>

## Appendix “K”



### Program Guidelines for Hiring Managers

#### Health and Social Services Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program

##### 1. Program Description

The Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program offers relevant work experience to Northern post-secondary graduates for one to two years. Graduates are employed in entry-level health and social services intern positions related to their field of study within the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services System (HSS System).

The HSS System includes the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority (HRHSSA), and the Tlicho Community Services Agency (TCSA – Health).

##### 2. Program Objective

The objective of the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program is to provide recent post-secondary graduates with meaningful work experience related to their education in the field of health and/or social services. Working within the HSS System, graduates will be able to develop their skills and competencies through ongoing mentoring, learning, and development opportunities.

##### 3. Program Eligibility

The Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program is a targeted internship program for post-secondary graduates, designed specifically for entry-level intern positions in the areas of **nursing, social work, and allied health**.

Hiring managers seeking funding for entry-level internship positions with educational requirements in fields of study other than nursing and social work are encouraged to apply to the [GNWT Internship Program](#), administered by the Department of Finance. Positions in allied health are eligible under both internship programs.

In addition to having an educational background in nursing, social work, or allied health, eligible applicants are northern graduates who:

- Resided in the Northwest Territories (NWT) for 12 months immediately prior to acceptance into post-secondary studies; and
- Graduated from a recognized Canadian college or university in a certificate, diploma or degree program; and
- Graduated within 12 months of application to the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program.

#### **4. Program Length**

Entry-level internships are a minimum of one year and a maximum of two years. The decision to hire a graduate entry-level intern for longer than one year is at the discretion of the hiring manager or supervisor, as approved by their Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operating Officer (COO), or Executive Director (ED).

#### **5. Program Funding**

The System Human Resource Planning Division (SHRP) provides up to \$75,000 in funding per entry-level internship placement, regardless of the internship length. Funding is only available for the first year of the placement. All costs over and above the maximum of \$75,000 are the responsibility of the hiring authority/region.

Entry-level internship positions located outside of Yellowknife will be giving funding priority.

#### **6. Program Capacity**

The annual (fiscal year) budget can support up to six entry-level interns at any one time.

#### **7. Program Deadline**

##### Graduates

The deadline for graduates to submit their application for consideration in an entry-level internship positions is April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Registered applicants become candidates for entry-level internships with their resumes and cover letters kept on file for one year from the date of approval.

Applications submitted after the ~~deadline are~~ considered for entry-level internship positions only after the initial round of hiring has concluded.

##### Managers

Managers must confirm their intention to hire a graduate by April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, by submitting applications to SHRP at [hssprograms@gov.nt.ca](mailto:hssprograms@gov.nt.ca). Applications submitted after this deadline ~~will be reviewed and approved following the initial round of hiring, based on available funding.~~

## 8. Application Process

### Graduates

Graduates can apply for entry-level intern positions in the areas of nursing, social work or allied health by submitting a cover letter and resume to the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program job posting on the [GNWT Careers website](#).

### Managers

After the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for graduate submissions, a list of applicants, including their preferred work location(s) and field of study, will be provided to senior managers within the HSS System to share with interested hiring managers.

Hiring managers/supervisors may then apply to SHRP by email at [hssprograms@gov.nt.ca](mailto:hssprograms@gov.nt.ca) stating their intent to hire an entry-level intern. The initial request must include COO/CEO/ED approval to hire an intern. A copy of the job description and the [job evaluation request form](#) must also be submitted as soon as possible.

SHRP will work with hiring managers in advance of the April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline to ensure that positions meet the program criteria and that hiring managers are aware of any outstanding materials required to be considered for funding.

After April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, all entry-level internship positions will be reviewed and prioritized for funding. Hiring managers ~~will then be notified~~ of the funding status of their position.

Program funding ~~will only be released~~ by SHRP after an intern has been hired and direct appointed into their position. SHRP will help provide support and guidance on the direct appointment process, as necessary.

## 9. Program Components

All entry-level intern positions are supernumerary positions (a position that is an addition to the position compliment of a health authority), designed to provide learning and development opportunities to a position in nursing, social work, or allied health to help support entry-level graduates in gaining valuable work experience.

The direct manager/supervisor of the entry-level intern position is responsible for the training and development of the intern.



Participation in the GRADUATE ENTRY-LEVEL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM does not guarantee an intern indeterminate employment upon completion of the internship, however available options within the HSS system will be explored.

## 10. Roles and Responsibilities

### *System Human Resource Planning Division*

- Provides funding, coordination and administration of the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program;
- Provides guidance to applicants and hiring managers during the application process; and
- Monitors, evaluates and reports on program outcomes, budget expenditures and other program reports, statistics, etc. that may be required.

### *Graduates*

- Apply to the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program through the [GNWT Careers website](#);
- Ensure contact information is up to date;
- Provide confirmation of completion of certificate/program/degree prior to starting in an entry-level internship position; and
- Provide confirmation of northern residency in the 12-months immediately prior to acceptance into post-secondary studies, prior to starting in an entry-level internship position.

### *Managers/Supervisors*

- Obtains approval of CEO/CEO/ED to create an entry-level intern position;
- Develops a job description for the entry-level intern position;
- Ensures the job description is evaluated by the Job Evaluation Unit within the Human Resources Branch (HR) of Finance;
- Submits a request to SHRP for funding to support an entry-level intern in the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program;
- ~~Provides SHRP with the relevant documents to determine position eligibility in the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program. This includes, the entry-level internship position job description and the [job evaluation request form](#);~~
- Works with SHRP to select a suitable graduate for their identified and approved entry-level intern position;
- Works with HR to interview and complete the hiring process;
- Works with the Policy, Legislation, and Communications unit in the Department of Health and Social Services to draft a Direct Appointment decision paper;
- Hires interns, provides supervision, and complete performance evaluation(s); and
- Develops and monitors work and/or learning and development plans for hired interns.



*Department of Finance – Human Resources Branch*

- Advertises the availability of Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program on the GNWT Careers website, and provides potential candidate resumes to the SHRP Division;
- Supports the job description and job evaluation process, through the Job Evaluation Unit; and
- Assists with the staffing process, and works with individual managers/supervisors as required throughout the intern's placement.

**For More Information**

For information on the Graduate Entry-Level Internship Program, please visit [www.practicenorth.ca](http://www.practicenorth.ca) or contact the System Human Resource Planning Division at [hssprograms@gov.nt.ca](mailto:hssprograms@gov.nt.ca).