



Mental Health & Addictions Counsellor

EAGLE Crisis Team

Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre

OVERVIEW MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS COUNSELLOR

\$27.00-\$30.00 per hour

The Mental Health & Addictions Counsellor with the EAGLE Crisis Team provides trauma-informed, clinically grounded, and culturally safe support to individuals experiencing mental health and substance-related crises.

This role operates within an Indigenous-led crisis response framework and works in alignment with community governance, Elders, Traditional Counsellors, and Indigenous healing systems. The counsellor provides clinical assessment, stabilization, safety planning, and addictions-focused intervention while respecting Indigenous ways of knowing and cultural authority.

This role does not replace Indigenous healing practice but works collaboratively, integrating counselling proficiency with cultural humility and community-led direction.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE EAGLE CRISIS TEAM

- Relational Accountability
- Cultural Safety & Humility
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Rapid Response with Respect
- Protection of Community Dignity
- Collaborative Leadership
- Respect for Indigenous Governance & Cultural Authority

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Degree in Social Work, Psychology, Counselling, or related mental health field.
- Registration with a recognized regulatory body (if applicable).
- Experience in crisis response, suicide intervention, mental health, and addictions counselling.
- Strong understanding of trauma-informed care and harm reduction.
- Experience working with individuals impacted by mental health challenges, substance use, or crisis

- Demonstrated knowledge of the impacts of colonization, systemic racism, and intergenerational trauma.
- Understanding of complex grief responses, including traumatic grief, compounded loss, ambiguous loss, and grief related to suicide or sudden death.
- Capacity to recognize and respond to collective trauma responses within families and communities, including ripple effects across kinship systems and heightened vulnerability following community-wide events.
- Ability to work respectfully within a multidisciplinary crisis team
- Ability to work respectfully within Indigenous governance structures

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Clinical Crisis Response & Stabilization

- Provide immediate mental health and addictions-focused crisis intervention.
- Conduct risk assessments and safety planning.
- Provide de-escalation and stabilization using evidence-informed approaches.
- Honour client autonomy, dignity, and self-determination.
- Recognize when cultural supports are required and respond appropriately.

Addictions-Focused Intervention

- Support clients experiencing substance-related harm through harm reduction, motivational interviewing, and stabilization.
- Address withdrawal risk, overdose risk, and relapse dynamics.
- Collaborate with medical providers when necessary.
- Support clients in accessing treatment, or community supports.

Suicide-Specific Response & Contagion Mitigation

- Conduct suicide risk assessments and immediate intervention planning.
- Participate in suicide postvention planning.
- Support community response following suicide deaths.
- Monitor and respond to suicide contagion risk and youth vulnerability dynamics.
- Mitigate social media amplification risks.

Collaboration with Indigenous Healing Systems

- Work alongside Traditional Counsellors, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers.
- Respect cultural protocols and defer when spiritual or ceremonial leadership is required.
- Avoid interpreting or appropriating sacred teachings.

- Support clients in accessing culturally grounded healing supports.

Post-Crisis Follow-Up & Case Management

- Provide structured follow-up after crisis stabilization.
- Monitor vulnerable individuals following suicide-related incidents.
- Support referrals to appropriate services.
- Maintain accurate, ethical documentation.

Interagency & Systems Coordination

- Participate in coordinated crisis planning with leadership, health services, police, and schools.
- Advocate for client needs within larger systems.
- Identify systemic barriers impacting wellbeing.

Ethical Practice & Accountability

- Act with integrity and transparency.
- Maintain strict confidentiality in small-community environments.
- Clearly distinguish clinical intervention from cultural authority.
- Seek supervision when dual relationships or ethical dilemmas arise.
- Uphold professional regulatory standards.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Cultural Safety & Governance Alignment

- Demonstrated cultural humility.
- Respect for Elder authority and community decision-making processes.
- Demonstrated ability to operate effectively within Indigenous governance structures, respecting community authority, leadership protocols, and culturally grounded decision-making processes.
- Demonstrated ability to understand the distinction between clinical authority and cultural authority and works in alignment with both.

Ethical & Professional Practice

- Commitment to ethical and safe practice.
- Commitment to protecting confidentiality in all settings.
- Clear professional boundaries in small, interconnected communities.
- Adherence to regulatory and documentation standards.

- Commitment to maintaining professional boundaries in community settings at all times within small, interconnected communities where dual relationships, kinship overlap, and high visibility are common.

Core Crisis & Clinical Competence

- Responds appropriately to crisis situations while maintaining cultural safety and dignity.
- Able to provide culturally grounded support that contributes to de-escalation and stabilization.
- Competence in responding to intimate partner violence, including risk assessment, safety planning, documentation, and coordination with appropriate services while maintaining cultural safety.
- Suicide risk assessment proficiency.
- Harm reduction approaches.
- Complex grief support.
- Trauma-informed de-escalation.

Suicide-Specific Competencies

- Ability to respond to suicide deaths in culturally safe and stabilizing ways.
- Effective suicide postvention:
- Coordinated support and interventions provided after a suicide death to support healing, reduce trauma impact, and prevent further harm.
- Crisis contagion awareness.
- Ability to de-escalate potential for suicide clustering.
- Ability to mitigate social media impacts.
- Ability to recognize and respond effectively to youth vulnerability dynamics, including grief clusters, peer contagion risk, identity struggles, and trauma-triggered behaviours, while maintaining safety and relational trust.
- Competence in responding to suicide risk and intimate partner violence, including risk assessment, safety planning, documentation, and coordination with appropriate services while maintaining cultural safety.

Personal Capacity

- Emotional resilience in high-stress crisis settings.
- Ability to remain grounded during suicide or violence risk situations.
- Strong relational and listening skills.
- Clear communication and teamwork skills.
- Engages in reflective practice.
- Maintains fitness for duty in crisis environments.

Community Facilitation & Systems Navigation

- Participation in community forums and healing gatherings (support role)
- Grief gatherings
- Youth-focused discussions

- Interagency coordination skills and understanding of:
 - Jordan's Principle
 - Health systems Child welfare
 - Policing
 - Interagency coordination
- Systems Navigation & Advocacy

WORKING CONDITIONS:

- Work involves evening, overnights, weekends and days.
- Work involves responding to individuals, families, and communities experiencing acute emotional distress, mental health crisis, and substance-related harm.
- The role may include irregular hours, including evenings, weekends, on-call shifts, or extended hours based on crisis response needs.
- Work may occur in a variety of settings, including office-based, community-based, outreach, virtual, and on-site crisis response locations.
- The position may involve travel to support clients and communities.
- Counsellors may be exposed to emotionally demanding situations and narratives related to trauma, grief, loss, and addiction.
- The role requires the ability to remain calm, grounded, and professional in unpredictable or high-stress environments.
- Physical requirements may include periods of sitting, standing, walking, and travel, as well as the ability to respond promptly to crisis situations.
- Adherence to organizational health and safety policies, including infection prevention and risk management protocols, is required.
- Regular participation in supervision, debriefing, and wellness support is expected to support professional sustainability.
- The position requires respectful collaboration within a multidisciplinary team and engagement with community partners.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Small Community Dynamics & Relational Accountability

The Nimkee Eagle Crisis Team operates within a close-knit First Nations community environment where relationships are interconnected and longstanding. Staff must practice relational accountability while upholding professional ethics.

Dual Relationships

Team members recognize that dual or overlapping relationships are common in small communities. Staff may serve individuals who are relatives, friends, or connected through extended kinship networks. In these situations, counsellors will:

- Disclose potential conflicts to leadership promptly.
- Maintain professional boundaries while honouring community relationships.
- Seek supervision when role conflict arises.
- Support client choice if referral to another team member is more appropriate.

Kinship Overlap

Given the strong kinship structures within community, crisis responses often impact entire family systems rather than individuals alone. Counsellors must:

- Assess broader family dynamics during crisis intervention.
- Consider clan, family, and relational roles in safety planning.
- Communicate respectfully across extended networks while maintaining confidentiality.

Confidentiality Complexities in Small Communities

Confidentiality in small communities requires heightened awareness. Staff must:

- Avoid informal disclosure through casual conversation or community settings.
- Protect client information in public spaces where visibility is high.
- Be mindful of social media and public presence.
- Clearly explain limits of confidentiality to clients, especially when family systems are involved.

Responding to Relatives

When responding to a relative or someone within one's kinship network, staff will:

- Inform supervisory leadership immediately.
- Follow internal guidelines regarding reassignment when appropriate.
- Continue to uphold dignity, cultural safety, and non-judgment.
- Balance community responsibility with ethical standards.

CULTURAL PROTOCOL & AUTHORITY

The Eagle Crisis Team operates within Indigenous governance, cultural teachings, and community-specific protocols. Crisis response is grounded in cultural safety and humility.

When Elders Lead

Elders or Knowledge Keepers lead when:

- Sacred teachings, ceremony, or spiritual intervention is required.
- Cultural decision-making impacts family or community direction.
- Grief, loss, or traditional healing processes require ceremonial guidance.
- Protocol calls for Elder authority in mediation or restoration.

Counsellors defer respectfully and provide supportive roles in these instances.

When Counsellors Lead

Counsellors lead when:

- Immediate risk assessment or safety stabilization is required.
- Clinical crisis intervention is necessary.
- Suicide risk assessment or substance-related harm intervention is needed.
- Documentation and case management are required.
- Coordination with external services is necessary.

Boundaries Around Sacred Knowledge

Eagle Crisis Team members:

- Do not appropriate or interpret sacred teachings beyond their scope.
- Do not disclose ceremonial content outside proper cultural context.
- Respect that certain knowledge is restricted to specific roles or community members.
- Seek permission before referencing cultural teachings in documentation.

Adherence to Community-Specific Protocols

Staff must:

- Follow guidance from Cultural Leadership and Elders.
- Participate in ongoing cultural training.
- Understand that protocols may differ across Nations and families.
- Respect decision-making structures unique to the community.

REQUIRED CREDENTIALS (UPON HIRE)

- Vulnerable Sector Check/Broad Record Check
- Emergency First Aid & CPR
- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI)
- Physical Assessment/Medical
- Valid Driver's License & Driver's Abstract

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work with youth experiencing trauma, substance use, grief, and complex behavioural needs
- Exposure to high-stress crisis environments
- Participation in Indigenous ceremony, including exposure to smudge, sacred medicines, and ceremonial practices
- Indoor and outdoor work environments
- Exposure to varied weather conditions
- Participation in multi-day crisis response efforts when required
- Shift work including days, evenings, weekends, and overnight and flexible hours based on programming needs
- Must be able to work 12 hour shifts
-

REQUIRED TRAINING

- ☐ Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Training
- ☐ Cultural Competency
- ☐ CPR First Aid
- ☐ ASIST Training/Life is Sacred
- ☐ CPI (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention)
- ☐ Fire Safety Training
- ☐ Fire Extinguisher Training
- ☐ Knowledge Test - Physical Restraints & Non-Use of Mechanical Restraints
- ☐ CCPC Global Accreditation Certification (Support Workers)
- ☐ Infection Prevention Training
- ☐ Hygiene Training
- ☐ Safe Food Handling
- ☐ Serious Occurrence Training
- ☐ WHMIS
- ☐ Workplace Violence Prevention
- ☐ Diversity Training (2SLGBTQIA+)
- ☐ Pharmacology Training

EQUITY STATEMENT

Preference will be given to Indigenous applicants (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) in accordance with Section 14 of the Ontario Human Rights Code. Applicants with lived experience connected to healing, recovery, land-based practices, and community are strongly encouraged to apply.

CLOSING STATEMENT

The Mental Health & Addictions Counsellor - EAGLE Crisis Team plays a critical role in providing immediate, compassionate, and culturally responsive mental health and addictions support to Indigenous youth experiencing crisis. Working as part of a multidisciplinary team, this position delivers crisis intervention, mental health and addictions assessment, therapeutic counselling, safety planning, stabilization, and short-term clinical support to help young people navigate acute challenges while promoting hope, resilience, and healing.

The organization is committed to providing a culturally safe, trauma-informed, and respectful workplace that honours Indigenous ways of knowing, healing, and community care.