



Indigenous Research, Evaluation & Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist

Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre

Job Description Summary

Contract Until March 31, 2026

Overview

Under the direction of the Executive Director, the Indigenous Research, Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement Specialist is responsible for gathering, interpreting, and weaving together multiple forms of evidence to understand, evaluate, and communicate the impact of the programs and services provided by Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre.

Working from Indigenous worldviews and a Two-Eyed Seeing approach, the Specialist brings together quantitative data, qualitative information, participant feedback, stories, observations, and lived experiences to create a comprehensive and meaningful picture of healing, wellness, and recovery. Through respectful inquiry and relational accountability, the position seeks to understand not only whether programs are effective, but how healing occurs, what contributes to positive outcomes, and where opportunities exist to strengthen services.

The Researcher works collaboratively with youth, families, Elders, Traditional Helpers, staff, communities, and external partners to gather and interpret diverse forms of evidence including program metrics, surveys, interviews, sharing circles, observations, photographs, creative works, stories, and anecdotal accounts. These multiple sources of information are brought together to tell a cohesive and authentic story of the healing journeys experienced by youth and the impact of culturally grounded, relationship-based care.

The position supports the ongoing evaluation of all aspects of the continuum of care, including intake, assessment, residential treatment, educational programming, cultural services, land-based learning, ceremony, aftercare, and community reintegration. Through continuous quality improvement and knowledge mobilization, the Researcher helps demonstrate how culture, relationships, safety, identity, connection to the land, education, and ongoing supports contribute to healing, wellness, resilience, and long-term recovery.

This position plays a critical role in helping NNHC understand and answer important questions:

- How do we know that healing is occurring?
- How can we share this evidence?
- What aspects of the program are having the greatest impact?
- How do culture, ceremony, land-based learning, traditional arts, education, and relationships contribute to wellness and recovery?

- How does continuity of care from intake through aftercare support sustained healing and relapse prevention?
- What are youth, families, staff, and communities telling us about their experiences?
- What strengths should be preserved and expanded?
- What improvements are needed to better support youth and families?
- How do we respectfully tell the NNHC story and demonstrate the effectiveness of Indigenous-led healing approaches?

Through collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and mobilizing diverse forms of evidence, the Researcher helps ensure that the stories, successes, challenges, lessons, and wisdom emerging from Nimkee's work are documented, understood, and shared in ways that honour Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, support continuous personal growth, and contribute to the long-term sustainability and growth of Indigenous healing practices for future generations.

The position supports Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles and works collaboratively with youth, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Traditional Helpers, staff, communities, and external partners to ensure that evaluation processes honour Indigenous ways of knowing while integrating evidence-informed and western evaluation methodologies where appropriate.

Rate of Pay: \$50,000 - \$60,000 per year

Key Responsibilities

Program Evaluation, Outcomes Research and Understanding Healing Journeys

- Design and implement culturally appropriate program evaluation frameworks, theories of change, and outcome measurement approaches that reflect both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing and being.
- Develop research plans, performance indicators, and meaningful measures of healing, wellness, and recovery.
- Collect, analyze, interpret, and communicate quantitative, qualitative, narrative, and anecdotal forms of evidence.
- Track trends, outcomes, strengths, emerging issues, and opportunities for growth
- Translate findings into practical recommendations, plain-language reports, and continuous quality improvement initiatives.
- Support the understanding and documentation of how a safe, structured, culturally grounded, and trauma-informed twenty-four-hour healing environment contributes to wellness and recovery.
- Explore how consistent relationships with staff, Elders, Traditional Helpers, peers, and supportive adults contribute to emotional regulation, attachment, safety, and resilience.
- Document the ways in which trauma-informed and culturally grounded approaches support healing, hope, and wellbeing.
- Understand and document the experiences and outcomes associated with residential treatment, land-based experiential learning, cultural educational programming, cultural services, aftercare, and community-based supports.

- Explore the factors that contribute to reductions in substance use and relapse and support long-term recovery.
- Document how youth engagement, retention, successful completion, and continuity of care contribute to positive outcomes.
- Understand how youth experience increased hope, self-esteem, self-awareness, life skills, emotional regulation, and self-determination.
- Document the contributions of family, kinship, community connections, and natural support systems to healing and belonging.
- Understand and document the role of culture, ceremony, language, traditional teachings, and relationships with Elders and Traditional Helpers in promoting identity, belonging, and wellness.
- Explore how land-based learning, traditional ecological knowledge, and relationships with the land contribute to resilience, identity, and healing.
- Document the role of traditional arts, crafts, storytelling, songs, drumming, and creative expression in strengthening cultural continuity and Indigenous identity.
- Understand the impact of educational engagement, school attendance, credit completion, and learning success on youth wellbeing and future opportunities.
- Explore the ways in which aftercare and continuity of care contribute to sustained wellness, relapse prevention, housing stability, educational success, employment readiness, community integration, and access to physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and medical supports.
- Gather, synthesize, and interpret diverse forms of evidence to help tell the story of healing at Nimkee and to understand how relationships, culture, community, education, ceremony, and connection to the land contribute to hope, resilience, wellness, and long-term recovery.
- Support a culture of learning and continuous improvement by helping staff, leadership, youth, families, and communities understand what is working well, what can be strengthened, and how Indigenous-led healing approaches contribute to positive outcomes and meaningful change.

Indigenous Evaluation and Two-Eyed Seeing

- Apply Indigenous methodologies, Two-Eyed Seeing, and relational approaches to evaluation.
- Ensure research and evaluation activities respect Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles, OCAP®, and community protocols.
- Integrate Indigenous ways of knowing, storytelling, ceremony, sharing circles, and experiential knowledge into evaluation processes.
- Collaborate with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Traditional Helpers, and communities to define meaningful outcomes and measures of success.
- Support decolonizing approaches to research and evaluation.
- Ensure that evaluation reflects wholistic wellness including spiritual, emotional, physical, mental, relational, and cultural dimensions.

Research Ethics, Consent & Community Accountability

- Ensure research and evaluation activities are conducted ethically and in accordance with Indigenous research principles, organizational policies, and community protocols.
- Promote informed consent, confidentiality, and respectful engagement with youth, families, Elders, and communities.
- Support culturally safe and trauma-informed approaches to data collection and storytelling.

- Ensure research activities uphold relational accountability and protect the dignity, voices, and experiences of participants.

Knowledge Mobilization, Storytelling and Impact Communication

A key responsibility of this position is to help document, preserve, and communicate the story of healing at Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre. The Researcher will support the organization in demonstrating not only what outcomes are achieved, but how healing occurs and what factors contribute to long-term wellness and recovery.

Responsibilities include:

Documenting the Story of Healing

- Capture and document the experiences of young people through culturally appropriate and trauma-informed approaches.
- Ensure that the voices and lived experiences of youth and families are represented respectfully and authentically.
- Help tell the story of Nimkee's healing journey through narrative, storytelling, photographs, artwork, audio and video recordings, and written reflections, where appropriate and with informed consent.
- Support the preservation of organizational knowledge and the documentation of promising practices for future generations.

Qualitative, Quantitative, and Anecdotal Evidence

- Collect, analyze, and synthesize quantitative data including participation rates, treatment completion rates, educational outcomes, relapse prevention outcomes, aftercare engagement, and other indicators of success.
- Collect qualitative information through interviews, sharing circles, surveys, observations, and narrative approaches.
- Document stories of hope, resilience, cultural identity, and healing that illustrate the impact of services beyond traditional performance indicators.
- Capture anecdotal evidence and examples of transformational change that reflect the lived experiences of youth and families.
- Integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and storytelling alongside western evaluation methodologies using a Two-Eyed Seeing approach.

Demonstrating Program Impact

Document and communicate how:

- Culture, ceremony, and traditional teachings contribute to healing and wellness.
- Land-based learning strengthens identity, resilience, and connection and sense of identity.
- Traditional arts, crafts, language, and creative expression promote belonging and cultural pride.
- The residential treatment environment and twenty-four-hour support contribute to safety, attachment, and recovery.

- Relationships with staff, peers, Elders, Helpers, Knowledge Keepers and communities support healing and growth.
- Continuity of care from intake, treatment, education, and aftercare contributes to sustained wellness and relapse prevention.
- Youth continue to access culture, ceremony, education, housing, employment, physical health, mental health, emotional support, and spiritual supports following discharge.

Knowledge Sharing and Dissemination

- Translate evaluation findings into accessible and meaningful reports, presentations, infographics, videos, and other products.
- Prepare reports, case studies, and success stories.
- Develop youth stories, healing journeys, and impact summaries that demonstrate the effectiveness of Nimkee's programs and services.
- Support presentations, publications, and knowledge exchange opportunities.
- Promote a culture of continuous learning and organizational reflection.
- Ensure all research, documentation, and knowledge sharing activities uphold principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, OCAP®, relational accountability, and cultural safety.

Legacy and Sustainability

- Support the development of a body of knowledge that demonstrates the effectiveness of Indigenous-led healing and treatment approaches.
- Contribute to building evidence that can influence policy, improve practice, strengthen funding opportunities, and support the long-term sustainability of Indigenous healing programs.
- Help ensure that the lessons, stories, successes, and wisdom gained through Nimkee's work are preserved and shared in ways that honour youth, families, communities, and future generations.

Continuum of Care and Aftercare Outcomes

Intake - Evaluate the effectiveness of integrated care from:

- Engagement and readiness for treatment.
- Assessment processes and individualized planning.
- Accommodations and Differentiation Strategies
- Cultural and family connections established prior to admission

Residential Treatment - Residential Treatment – Understanding How Relationships, Culture, Education, and Twenty-Four-Hour Support Contribute to Healing and Recovery

- Healing journeys and recovery experiences for young people.
- Cultural participation and identity development.
- Changes in hope, resilience, self-awareness, self-esteem, and overall wellness.

- The role of twenty-four-hour care, safety, consistency, and supportive relationships in promoting healing.
- Social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental wellbeing.
- Development of life skills, coping skills, and emotional regulation.
- Youth engagement, retention, and successful completion of treatment.
- The impact of relationships with staff, peers, Elders, Traditional Helpers, and families.
- Youth perceptions of safety, trust, support, and connectedness within the residential environment.
- The role of trauma-informed, culturally grounded, and strengths-based approaches in supporting healing.
- Stories, observations, and experiences that illustrate the impact of integrated care and the healing environment.
- Educational engagement

Aftercare - Understanding and Documenting Continuity of Care and Long-Term Healing

- Sobriety and relapse prevention.
- Housing stability and safe living environments.
- Long-term wellness and quality of life.
- Family and community connections.
- Community integration.
- positive peer relationships.
- Ongoing participation in culture, ceremony, land-based activities, language, and traditional teachings.
- Sense of belonging, identity, and connection to culture.
- Connection to community, family, clan, and Nation.
- Continued relationships with Elders, Traditional Helpers, cultural mentors, and supportive adults.
- Crisis prevention and safety planning
- School attendance and educational success.
- Employment readiness
- Access to physical, mental, emotional, spiritual supports.
- Family reconnection, kinship relationships, and strengthening of support systems.
- Long-term wellness, hope, resilience, and quality of life.
- Development of healthy relationships and relational accountability.
- Increased self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-determination.
- Emotional balance, self-regulation, and coping skills.
- Experiences of safety, trust, and being cared for.
- Reduction in shame, stigma, isolation, and lateral violence.
- Development of life skills, independence, and personal responsibility.

Documentation and Compliance

- Ensure all documentation is complete, current, and accessible to support accreditation, audit, and Ministry review processes.
- Support the development, review, and continuous improvement of policies, procedures, and operational practices to reflect best practices, accreditation standards, Indigenous ethics, and culturally grounded approaches to service delivery.

- Support the integration and advancement of Nimkee’s lens, Indigenous ethical frameworks, and relational principles by incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into organizational practices, governance, program delivery, and evaluation processes.
- Assist in developing evidence-informed approaches that demonstrate excellence in Indigenous-led services, cultural safety, community accountability, and holistic wellness practices within an Indigenous organization.
- Foster respectful working relationships grounded in Indigenous relational approaches that value collaboration, mentorship, shared learning, reciprocity, and collective responsibility in achieving organizational compliance and accreditation goals.

Indigenous Governance, Community Engagement & Accountability

- Support organizational initiatives that advance Indigenous self-determination, community-led decision-making, and culturally grounded governance practices.
- Assist in developing systems, policies, and accountability frameworks that reflect Indigenous values, Nimkee’s lens, community priorities, and relational approaches to leadership.
- Build and maintain respectful working relationships with First Nations, Indigenous organizations, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community leaders, and external partners.
- Support community engagement, consultation, and feedback processes to ensure organizational planning, service delivery, and strategic initiatives remain responsive to community needs and priorities.

Indigenous Data Sovereignty, Information Governance & Evaluation

- Support the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of organizational information governance frameworks that reflect Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles and OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession) principles where applicable.
- Ensure organizational data collection, reporting, evaluation, and information management practices are ethical, culturally respectful, and aligned with Indigenous approaches to knowledge stewardship, community accountability, and organizational integrity.
- Develop, maintain, and strengthen systems that protect confidential, cultural, clinical, educational, operational, community, and organizational information while supporting informed decision-making, regulatory compliance, and organizational accountability.
- Support the collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of organizational data to inform strategic planning, accreditation, compliance activities, continuous quality improvement, and organizational growth.
- Work collaboratively with leadership to ensure reporting and information management activities remain culturally grounded, community-informed, and responsive to Indigenous priorities.
- Support organizational efforts to balance Western practice with Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural teachings, relational accountability, and organizationally-defined measures of success.
- Maintain records management that support organizational integrity, responsible stewardship of information, and long-term sustainability.
- Monitor data quality, reporting processes, and evaluation activities, identifying opportunities to strengthen organizational information systems, improve decision-making, and enhance organizational effectiveness.
- Support the development of culturally grounded reporting and evaluation frameworks that demonstrate excellence in Indigenous-led governance, community accountability, service delivery, and holistic wellness outcomes.

Qualifications

- Master's degree in Indigenous Studies, Social Work, Public Health, Psychology, Sociology, Education, Program Evaluation, Community Development, or related field preferred.
- Experience conducting community-based, Indigenous, and participatory research.
- Knowledge of Indigenous research methodologies and Two-Eyed Seeing.
- Knowledge of OCAP® principles and Indigenous Data Sovereignty.
- Experience in evaluation, quality improvement, and outcome measurement.
- Experience working with Indigenous youth, families, and communities.
- Knowledge of Indigenous cultures, perspectives, and ways of knowing, or a commitment to ongoing learning and cultural humility
- Understanding of substance use treatment, trauma, mental health, and recovery.
- Knowledge of cultural continuity, resilience, and Indigenous wellness frameworks.
- Strong statistical, analytical, and qualitative and quantitative research skills.
- Experience using surveys, interviews, focus groups, sharing circles, storytelling, and mixed-method approaches.
- Ability to remain calm, patient, flexible, and responsive in dynamic or emotionally complex environments

Core Competencies

The ideal candidate:

- Has a commitment to cultural safety, relational accountability, reconciliation, and anti-oppressive practice.
- Has an understanding of Indigenous governance models, Indigenous self-determination, and community-led service delivery.
- Has an understanding of Indigenous Data Sovereignty and OCAP® principles.
- Values Indigenous approaches to healing, wellness, and wholistic service delivery.
- Believes that healing can occur through relationships, culture, ceremony, and connection to the land.
- Values Indigenous knowledge systems as valid forms of evidence.
- Can respectfully bridge Indigenous and Western ways of knowing.
- Recognizes strengths, resilience, and hope as essential indicators of healing
- Demonstrates a commitment to ethical research, accountability, and community-centred decision-making.
- Has the ability to build collaborative relationships
- Is curious and committed to lifelong learning.
- Possesses strong critical thinking and analytical abilities.
- Is capable of translating research into practical improvements.
- Demonstrates exceptional knowledge mobilization skills and the ability to transform quantitative, qualitative, narrative, and anecdotal evidence into meaningful and accessible products, including plain-language reports, infographics, presentations, impact stories, and high-level research documents that effectively communicate the story and impact of Indigenous-led healing to diverse audiences
- Demonstrates exceptional organization and attention to detail.
- Has the ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines.
- Has a high level of discretion and confidentiality.

Working Conditions

- Primarily office-based with extended periods of computer work.
 - Extensive computer use, and document preparation.
 - Attending meetings and other organizational commitments as directed.
 - May require flexibility to meet critical deadlines and project milestones.
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- ☐ 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
 - ☐ Children's Residential Licensing Orientation Video
 - ☐ Prohibited Methods of Discipline and Intervention
 - ☐ Diversity Training (2SLGBTQIA+)
 - ☐ Pharmacology Training

Closing Statement

The Researcher plays an important role in supporting Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre's commitment to continuous learning, accountability, and excellence in Indigenous-led service delivery. Through culturally grounded, ethical, and community-informed research and evaluation practices, this position supports the Centre's mission by strengthening evidence-informed decision-making, promoting continuous quality improvement, and helping tell the story of healing and wellness. The organization is committed to providing a culturally safe, trauma-informed, and respectful workplace that honours Indigenous ways of knowing, healing, and community care.

Accessibility and Equity Statement

Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre is committed to creating an inclusive, accessible, and respectful workplace. Accommodations are available in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Ontario Human Rights Code throughout employment and the recruitment process.

Preference may be given to qualified Indigenous applicants in accordance with applicable human rights legislation and organizational hiring policies.