

Context:

- Contracted industrial medical service providers offer a wide range of services and qualities, and add variable value to a project/operator and their workforce. Northern Health (NH) Population and Public Health assisted industrial operators in their efforts to support the health and wellness of their workforces through the COVID-19 pandemic. In this experience, health leaders became familiar with the varying capacities of contracted industrial medical service providers that operate within the NH region.

Audience:

- This document is developed to guide industrial proponents and operators to assist in tendering, negotiating, and assessing medical service provider competencies and contracts.
- Below is a list of qualities exhibited by top-performing industrial medical service providers. When a provider demonstrates these qualities, NH tends to be increasingly satisfied with the health and medical management of – and for – the workforce. The list is seven major areas, some of which contain several sub-bullets. The list is not exhaustive.

Purpose statement:

- NH expects the following qualities in contracted medical service providers where an industrial operator has a condition in their Environmental Assessment Certificate to develop a health and medical services plan (HMSP) in consultation with NH.
- NH expects that the contracted industrial medical service provider is an active collaborator and partner, and engages to advance the development of a project's health and medical service plan. The HMSP supports shared understanding of how health services are coordinated between your project and the health authority. Planning supports that the system works when needed, often in times of emergency.
- NH expects every major project in the NH region to develop a HMSP, and some projects require this (and more) as part of their Environmental Assessment certificate.¹

¹ See: [Health and Medical Services Plan Best Management Guide for Industrial Camps](#) (2015) and [Best Practices for Industrial Work Settings No. 2: Communicable Disease Management Guide](#) (2023).

MSP Qualities:

1. Identifies, operates within, and meets all regulatory requirements.
2. Adherent to the safety and privacy of the patient's personal medical information; able to appropriately manage patient information/health records on behalf of the project.
3. Able to deliver non-urgent and [urgent care services](#) that extend beyond occupational illness and injury management.² This scope would include:
 - Primary and public health care services, including [primary care](#), care continuity with the individual's primary care provider, and preventive medicine.
 - Infection prevention and control, communicable disease, vaccination programming.
4. Demonstrable capacity and support are available beyond minimum service requirements (e.g., surge capacity in the event of a communicable disease outbreak or other medical emergency; the ability to rapidly scale services up or down, based on demonstrated need).
5. Leadership is provided by an engaged physician medical director who is:
 - registered to practice in the province of BC,
 - has a minimum of five years' experience in the planning and delivery of health care services in rural or remote communities, and
 - can support multiple project levels, as required (e.g., senior leadership and field operations).
 - Supports coordination of services with project, camp, and community health and safety programs and personnel.
 - Supports corporate leadership: able to provide health and medical leadership to the project.
 - Willingness to provide support direct to subcontractors, if required.

² Life-threatening illnesses and injuries are to seek emergent care in the emergency department as soon as possible. This includes suspected stroke or heart attack, poisoning or overdose, major trauma, head injury with loss of consciousness, etc... For reference, see the Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale Guideline, a standardized national assessment and prioritization tool used in Canadian emergency departments (e.g., Ontario Base Hospitals, Adult Prehospital CTAS infographic, available at: <https://cper.myobh.ca/frontpage-news-blog/231-ctas-infographic.html>, Accessed August 9, 2023).

6. Physician medical director is acutely aware of the regional/provincial context,³ your specific industry, the limitations of health service accessibility due to the remote location of your project, and impacts to/from health and medical service provision on the project.
 - Demonstrable ability to remain current with changing regulations, policies, guidelines, and practices.
 - Demonstrable situational awareness of local/regional health and health service context in which the project will operate.
 - Healthcare professionals who are knowledgeable of local best practices related to industrial/remote practice (e.g., able to advise on effective and appropriate strategies to communicate with local communities).
 - Demonstrable ability to work in positive relationship with local communities – indigenous and non-indigenous.
 - Demonstrable ability to work in positive relationship with jurisdictional health authorities and other regulators.
 - Demonstrable flexibility; ability to pivot and respond.
7. Willing to work beyond the contract in a timely way, if medically necessary.
 - Ability to integrate services with other medical service providers, as required.
 - Ability to rapidly adjust service levels and broaden reach of health human resources, as required.

Questions?

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³ See: Northern Health Service Distribution Framework Discussion Report (Available at: https://www.northernhealth.ca/sites/northern_health/files/services/office-health-resource-development/documents/nh-service-distribution-framework-discussion.pdf. Accessed August 9, 2023).