

Job Description: Researcher

The Health Quality Council (HQC) works in service of the province and its citizens to meet the challenges of improving health and health care. As an independent, evidence-driven organization, we share our expertise in systems thinking and educational design to help build the capability to improve and we influence policy and delivery by identifying what works and why, through objective analysis.

Position Summary:

The HQC works closely with key health system partners, post-secondary academic institutions, community-based organizations, government sectors, and patient partners to accelerate improvement in the quality of health and health care throughout Saskatchewan.

A Researcher at the HQC contributes to the mission and vision of the organization by:

- advancing the use of data analytics to inform evidence-based decision making, practice and policy through research collaborations;
- designing and developing measurement infrastructure with HQC partners to address gaps in health and health care quality; and
- building capacity and capability with HQC partners in the use of measurement, data analytics and evidence.

The scope of this role is provincial in nature. National or inter-provincial collaboration may also be required.

Reporting Relationship:

This position has no subordinates reporting to it. However, the Researcher may be asked to oversee, and coordinate, tasks performed by Research Analysts or students.

Responsibilities:

- Lead, coach and facilitate internal teams and external research collaborations in the design, implementation, management and reporting of research and evaluation projects.
- Lead, coach and facilitate teams in the measurement design and implementation of quality improvement projects.
- Uphold data quality standards by developing and documenting research and data analysis plans as well as conduct and improve HQC data quality assurance processes.
- Design and conduct evidence review and summaries.
- Apply appropriate methods to communicate information (e.g., knowledge translation activity) with relevant internal and external audiences (e.g., reports, peer and non-peer reviewed articles, presentations, etc.).
- Identify, test, and share new knowledge translation methods that improve understanding of evidence with relevant audiences (e.g., visual displays of data).
- Build capacity and capability in data literacy with relevant external stakeholders through coaching and training (e.g., build capability in measurement design, health data/database use, privacy, ethics, data linkage methods, and data interpretation).
- Develop and maintain strong collaborative relationships with multiple stakeholders to advance key research and/or improvement priorities.

Knowledge and Abilities:

- Demonstrated understanding of research principles, practices, and protocols.
- Knowledge in a specialized area of research methodology; for example: survey design and administration, longitudinal analysis, time-series analysis, hierarchical regression modelling, spatial analysis, cost analysis, qualitative research methods and analysis.
- Proficient with statistical/analytical software (e.g., SAS, R, NVivo, etc.), database and spreadsheet programs (i.e., Excel), word processing applications (i.e., Word), and virtual meeting programs (i.e., Teams).
- Knowledge and ability to design, organize, and manage research projects, including multiple projects simultaneously.
- Knowledge of quality improvement science concepts, tools, and methods, including measurement to understand variation.
- Demonstrated interest, commitment, and ability to learn new things and teach and coach acquired skills to others.
- Demonstrated ability with presenting analyses and results to academic, clinical, public, and government audiences as well as with writing research reports and articles for peer-reviewed publication.
- Experience with program and policy evaluation, applying both quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess outcomes and inform decisions.
- Experience with knowledge synthesis, including systematic reviews, environmental scans, and other methods of integrating research findings.
- Ability to live in both qualitative and quantitative research worlds, seamlessly integrating mixed methods approaches in research and evaluation.
- Knowledge or experience in policy analysis, particularly in how research can inform strategic planning and decision-making.

Competencies:

1. **Leadership** – demonstrates personal leadership with the desire to enable others and foster the ongoing learning or development of self and others, shares information and promotes individual effectiveness and promotes team effectiveness and feedback by:
 - giving directions or demonstrations with rationale as a learning strategy for others.
 - soliciting input from team members to solve problems and generate solutions.
 - giving individuals specific feedback for development purposes on a regular basis.
 - allowing people to learn from mistakes and reassure others after a setback.
 - respecting the privacy and need for confidentiality of the patients and providers that we work with.
 - even in 'difficult cases,' finding something constructive to say and motivating individuals to continue or improve performance.Understanding and managing the emotions of self and others.
2. **Adaptive Capacity** – deals, participates and advocates the advantages of change by:
 - Actively acquiring knowledge, skills, and ability to remain current with job requirements.
 - Utilizing existing resources to deal with new demands or tasks.
 - Identifying and bringing forward obstacles to change.
 - Managing change effectively; implementing new methods and systems.
 - Switching to a different strategy when an initially selected one is unsuccessful.
 - Demonstrating a willingness to modify a strongly held position in the face of contrary evidence.
3. **Results Orientation** – takes personal responsibility for results, creates own measures of excellence, improves performance, sets, and works to meet challenging goals, by:
 - setting challenging goals with objective performance indicators, and measures success against these.
 - analyzing costs, benefits, and risks of different activities; making decisions and setting priorities based on potential value created.
 - identifying significant barriers to project team performance and persists over an extended period in overcoming them.
 - identifying and managing risks to achieve significant performance gains.
4. **Continuous Improvement** – has interest and keeps current in own field of expertise, keeps current with organizational changes, and links knowledge to current needs by:
 - demonstrating an in-depth understanding of potential solutions in areas of expertise/work that could impact the organization.
 - seeing the applicability of current or emerging approaches, tools, methods and/or technologies in other health systems to improve health care quality in Saskatchewan.
 - incorporating learning from past successes and failures when developing new processes and methodologies.
5. **Decisive Insight** – breaks down problems, analyzes problems to reach decisions, uses strategies and conducts in-depth analysis to solve problems, by:
 - using a variety of conceptual frameworks to examine problems.
 - making multiple causal links: Several potential causes of events, consequences of actions, or multiple chains of events.
 - anticipating obstacles and thinking ahead about next steps.
 - interpreting data to provide usable insights for the organization and customers.

- staying grounded in available evidence to inform decisions, even in emotionally charged situations.
6. **Building Partnerships** – The ability to build relationships, collaborate effectively, and solidify relationships by:
 - developing collaborative relationships with stakeholders with the explicit intent to share information/resources and advance the objectives of both groups.
 - providing value to stakeholder relationships by giving them information or assistance when no specific project/initiative is underway.
 - actively seeking to learn from others on one’s team.
 - engaging others through open and planned communication.
 - building relationships based on personal trust, credibility and expertise, not formal power or hierarchy.
 7. **Strategic Thinking** – understands strategies, thinks in strategic (future-oriented) terms, and aligns own priorities to organizational objectives, by:
 - developing plans for short-term or clearly defined projects, which involve determining milestones, assessing the impact of the project on others, and effectively communicating at the appropriate stages.
 - assessing and linking short and mid-term actions and priorities in the context of long-term organizational strategies.
 - reviewing own and team’s actions and priorities against the organization’s objectives and adjusting actions/priorities accordingly.
 - developing and defining own work and development goals in line with organizational objectives.
 - understanding competing organizational priorities.
 8. **Communication** – listens actively and responsively and uses multiple actions to persuade, calculates impact of actions or words, uses complex or indirect methods of communication, by:
 - clearly expressing ideas using both written and oral communication.
 - adapting style and approach, maintaining own integrity, to suit different audiences.
 - challenging the status quo, presenting new ideas and effectively handling potential conflicts.
 - addressing counter arguments with well-considered responses; demonstrating flexibility in approach and language.
 - Interpreting information beyond what is said, especially where thoughts, concerns or feelings are poorly expressed by others.
 - effectively reasoning/negotiating with others by clearly articulating concepts/strategies and focusing on how new ideas can achieve HQC’s mission.
 - demonstrating the ability to see things from another’s perspective, responsive to others’ feelings.
 - building networks of support for ideas and/or initiatives.

Working Conditions:

1. **Physical Effort:** Regular exposure to computer work two to three hours at a time.
2. **Travel:** As a provincial organization supporting health organizations across the province, travel will be expected. Although efforts will be made to meet virtually, when appropriate, day trips as well as overnight trips may be required.

3. **Sensory Attention:** Significant attention to detail is required with focused concentration given to data analysis and display as well as report preparation; significant ability to manage multiple and competing priorities daily.
4. **Flexibility:** Some meetings must be scheduled early in the morning, early in the evening or on Saturdays to facilitate participation by stakeholders whose office hours are already fully committed.
5. **Mental Stress:** Flexible hours and considerable innovation to meet competing organizational (and system) priorities and demands; comfort in challenging administrative and clinical leaders to think in non-conventional ways; adept in mining and leveraging a broad range of data to influence change.

Qualifications:

- A master's degree in public health, epidemiology, or a relevant discipline, such as health science, social science, statistics and
- At least three years of work experience, preferably in a health environment, with broader research experience
- Knowledge and experience in research involving health administrative and clinical databases would be considered an asset.
- Training in quality improvement science, tools and methods would be considered an asset.
- Employees must hold a valid driving license, entitling them to drive in Saskatchewan.
- Employees must also provide and maintain a satisfactory criminal record check.