

MEDIA RELEASE

Espanola Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic Grand Opening

Increasing Access and Coordination of Addiction Treatment for People in Espanola

June 11, 2019 – People in the Espanola area are now receiving more timely medical treatment for substance use disorders closer to home.

The **Espanola Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic**, based in the Espanola and Area Family Health Team, had its grand opening on Tuesday to introduce patients and partners to its location on the **Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre** campus as well as to share information about the service. The clinic provides expedited, barrier-free treatment for patients who have a substance use disorders, particularly with alcohol or opioid use.

The RAAM clinic is part of the North East Local Health Integration Network's (North East LHIN) Regional Opioid Strategy, designed to meet the rising rates of opioid use disorder, accidental overdoses, hospitalizations, and hospital emergency room visits across Northeastern Ontario. The strategy was developed by the Regional Mental Health and Addiction Advisory Council which continues to work with local mental health and addiction planning tables across the region to support implementation, ensuring Northerners have timely and equitable access to care.

How the Espanola RAAM Clinic Works

The RAAM clinic is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, weekdays; it welcomes walk-ins or calls to find out more about its services (705-862-7991 ext. 4245). No referral is necessary, although referrals from doctors, nurses, social workers, addiction counselors, and community providers are certainly accepted. Patients will be seen by an Addiction Worker within 24-48 hours after calling the clinic or after referral. They will then be seen by the Addiction Specialist to create and implement a treatment and medication plan. Through the RAAM clinic, patients can also access addiction counselling, case management and receive assistance in securing residential treatment services.

The RAAM model is designed to initiate therapy for Substance Use Disorders, primarily opioid or alcohol use, and then transition clients to the most appropriate ongoing care provider. It is not intended to replace or duplicate the care provided by a primary care provider.



(Left to right) Jon Brunetti, Primary Care Manager Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre, Jane Battistelli, Jane Battistelli, Director of Clinical Services /Chief Nursing Officer, Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre, Nancy Lacasse, Director with the North East LHIN, Dr. Brian Dressler, and Stephanie Paquette, Mental Health and Addiction Lead with the North East LHIN.

Espanola's RAAM clinic is unique in that it is based on a strong collaboration between the Family Health Team and the hospital, as well as the Espanola & Area Mental Health / Addictions Community of Care Planning Network made up of more than 20 agencies.

The North East LHIN's Strategy uses a "hub and spoke" model, in which larger RAAM Clinics are located within each sub-region's urban centre (the hub) with links (spokes) to outlying areas. The Espanola RAAM Clinic is a "spoke" site connected to a hub in Sudbury, operated by Health Sciences North.

Quotes

"The Espanola RAAM provides a collaborative approach to enhancing access to addictions and substance-related support, and treatment services within our community. This collaboration and the many harm reduction strategies initiated within our catchment will help to achieve better integration of addictions services across the continuum of care. In addition to working with patients, the RAAM clinical team provide support to primary care providers including the mentoring, reassessment and referral of patients. The Clinical team work together with regulatory bodies to ensure appropriate education, tools and ongoing support are provided to health-care professionals.

--Jon Brunetti, RN, Primary Care Manager Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre

"We are extremely grateful to our Espanola & Area Mental Health / Addictions Community of Care Planning Network for coming together to create a RAAM model of care that meets the needs of our community. Care pathways allow patients to connect to the RAAM Clinic from hospital, community or primary care in a supportive and integrated team approach. We are so fortunate to have many providers dedicated to the well-being of those suffering with addiction."

--Jane Battistelli, Director of Clinical Services /Chief Nursing Officer, Espanola Regional Hospital and Health Centre

"RAAM clinics are about providing comprehensive addictions assessments and starting appropriate treatment as quickly as possible when the window to change is open. This is the best chance to set people on the path of recovery. The opening of this clinic is an important step in building a fulsome system of care needed in the Espanola area."--**Jeremy Stevenson, North East LHIN CEO**

Quick Facts:

- The RAAM Clinic offers help with substance use disorders, particularly alcohol and opioid use disorder.
- You can contact the Espanola RAAM clinic Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm by calling (705) 862-7991 ext. 4245.
- Patients will be seen by an Addiction Worker within 24-48 hours after calling the clinic or after referral. They will then be seen by the Addiction Specialist to create and implement a treatment and medication plan.
- While not everyone with addictions requires pharmacological treatment, some may benefit from prescription medications that may help with lessening cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Additionally, the RAAM Clinic will support family physicians to ensure they are able to help with pharmacological treatment for addictions.
- The RAAM Clinic also helps patients successfully connect with community-based mental health and addiction services.

- **Other RAAM Clinics in the North East Region include: Sudbury** (705-523-7100, ext. 1875) hosted by Health Sciences North; **Sault Ste. Marie** (705-759-3434 Ext. 7200) hosted by the Sault Area Hospital; **North Bay** (705-472-6515) hosted by Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing; and **Timmins** (705-531-7226 (RAAM) hosted by South Cochrane Addiction Services.

For more information contact: Jon Brunetti, Executive Director of the Espanola and Area Family Health Team, at 705-862-7991 ext. 229 or jbrunetti@esphosp.on.ca