

## NE LHIN Celebrates 40 Years of Empowering People to Live Independent Lives

**August 23, 2017** -- If you share the goal of living independently for as long as possible – here’s an organization that can help you! The Independence Centre and Network, or ICAN, is one of about 120 community-based health service providers supported by the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN). These providers, found in many Northeastern Ontario communities, deliver front-line care that helps Northerners to live healthy, productive, and independent lives.

ICAN provides support and rehabilitation services to people with physical disabilities and seniors. Its programs address issues such as exercise and mobility, post-stroke transitioning, getting around the community, healthy eating, and life skills. It also offers several housing options that provide support services 24 hours a day, including:

- A Supportive Housing Program, which has four-bedroom and single units located on the ICAN property.
- Two Enhanced Congregate Care Units where four people deemed ‘Alternate Level of Care’ live in a shared setting.

“We are proud to support community-based organizations like ICAN which has made a remarkable difference in the quality of life of Northerners over the past 40 years,” said Kate Fyfe, Interim CEO, NE LHIN. “The professionals who work at ICAN are exceptional at what they do and passionate about the people they help. They understand the true meaning of patient-centred care and we value their partnership in building a stronger system of care for Northerners.”



ICAN client, Wendy Burnett (left) does upper extremity exercises with the help of Independent Living Assistant, Catherine Yurich-Gratton.



ICAN clients participate in the Fitness and Mobility Exercise Program (FAME) which addresses stroke-related health conditions.

“Our organization was formed by a small group of parents who were determined to ensure their family members with physical disabilities could live independently within our community,” said Marie Leon, CEO of ICAN. “Over the last four decades, ICAN has grown into a major service provider reaching hundreds of clients – and independent living continues to be the foundation of all of our services.”

Along with its many programs, housing options, and outreach services, ICAN provides assistance to people with brain injuries. The NE LHIN is proud to help make all of these services available to Northerners.

Renée Loyer has been an ICAN client for more than a decade. She has Spina Bifida and utilizes a power wheelchair. She was twelve when she first got involved in the Youth Services Program. Today, at the age of 25, Loyer is a resident of ICAN’s Supportive Housing Program. Through the program tenants manage their own lifestyle, but trained support staff are available to help with personal care needs and homemaking.



Renée Loyer lives in one of ICAN’s four-bedroom Supportive Housing Units. She’s been an ICAN client for 13 years.

“Independence for me is being able to face and overcome all challenges that come my way, no matter how long it takes. ICAN provides me with the tools and support I need to accomplish that,” said Loyer. “It allows me to do everything on my own – with assistance when I need it.”

People who would like to join the ICAN community can call 705-673-0655, or click on [this link](#).

#### **Background Information:**

- Every year, the NE LHIN provides close to \$200 million to 120 health service providers who deliver front-line community-based care to Northerners.
- In addition to base funding, the NE LHIN provides administrative support to ICAN to help with its involvement in other community initiatives including Low Acuity Personal Support Services, Regional Stroke Network, and Assisted Living Virtual Model.
- Since it was established in 1977, ICAN has helped more than a thousand people.
- ICAN criteria for assistance: over 16-years-old, have valid OHIP card, require physical assistance due to a permanent disability, capable of directing your services, able to live safely unattended.

#### **Contact:**

Sacha Novack, Communications Officer, North East LHIN, 705-522-3460 ext. 5201, [sacha.novack@lhins.on.ca](mailto:sacha.novack@lhins.on.ca)