

MEDIA RELEASE

North East LHIN Increases Access to Primary Care and Mental Health & Addictions Services in Nipissing-Temiskaming

May 4, 2018 -- People in North Bay and across the Nipissing-Temiskaming Sub Region will have increased access to high-quality primary health care closer to home with a North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) announcement earlier today of a \$6.2 million investment to connect patients with a range of health care professionals, including nurse practitioners, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, physiotherapists, social workers, and dieticians.



- **Primary Care Clinic for North Bay's Marginalized Population:** The North Bay Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic (NPLC) is receiving \$1.1 million to support the delivery of primary health care and programming that is accessible, non-judgemental, and meets the needs of North Bay's marginalized population in the downtown core, focussing on improving health equity.
- **Nipissing/Temiskaming Rapid Access Addictions Medicine (RAAM) Clinic:** Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing is receiving \$200,000 to bring timely medical treatment closer to home for people with opioid and alcohol addictions. The clinic will be based in North Bay and will serve the entire sub-region. The North Bay Recovery Home will provide Addiction Case Management support services to the RAAM Clinic.
- **Family Health Team:** The Mattawa Hospital is receiving \$581,000 to create a new Family Health Team and offer allied health programs and services to patients of the rural townships of Papineau-Cameron, Mattawan, Mattawa, Calvin, Bonfield, and Chisholm.
- **Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Team for Nipissing/North Bay:** Nipissing First Nation is receiving \$2.6 million to create an Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Team to serve the three First Nations of Dokis, Nipissing, and Temagami as well as the Indigenous population in North Bay.
- **Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Team for Temiskaming:** The Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group is receiving \$1.7 million for a new Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Team to serve Indigenous people in the Temiskaming district.

The investment in the North Bay NPLC will allow the clinic to open a new satellite site with a particular focus on patients who are marginalized or have barriers to seeking primary care as a result of social determinants of health. The clinic will connect complex patients and people without a primary care provider with a range of health care professionals, such as nurse practitioners, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, and dietitians – to address a broad range of healthcare needs, including mental health and chronic disease management.

The RAAM clinic is part of the NE LHIN's Regional Opioid Strategy, designed to meet the needs of rising rates of opioid use disorder, accidental overdoses, hospitalizations, and ER visits in Northeastern Ontario. The clinic will provide timely medical treatment for opioid and alcohol addictions, closer to home and will treat people in North Bay in addition to providing outreach to neighbouring communities. Starting later this spring, this clinic will open to clients, who can walk-in or call to get help.

Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Teams are Indigenous community-led, primary health care organizations, providing a combination of traditional healing, primary care, cultural programs, health promotion programs, community development initiatives, and social support services to Indigenous people. In the fall of 2016, the NE LHIN published the **North East LHIN Aboriginal Health Care Reconciliation Action Plan**, which guides the LHIN's work to ensure stronger system of care for Indigenous Northerners.

The investment in the Mattawa Hospital will allow for the creation of a Family Health Team in Mattawa to serve patients in the entire community, who currently do not have access to allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, social workers, dietitians, and others.

Quotes:

“Our government is committed to ensuring everyone in Ontario has access to high-quality primary care, closer to home. The support of interprofessional primary care teams in the community is an important and significant step toward achieving this goal.

– Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

“Today's announcement is about investing in people. All Northerners deserve equitable access to health care services as close to where they live as possible. The North East LHIN will continue to work in partnership to ensure a strong system of care here in Northeastern Ontario.”

– Jeremy Stevenson, CEO, North East LHIN

“Today's announcement speaks to the commitment of full continuum of care investment, traditional healing and cultural programs, that will meet the needs of vulnerable residents and people living with mental health and addictions. This is great news for North Bay and region.”

– Al McDonald, North Bay Mayor

“People who want help reducing their use of substances can now get help quickly. Ensuring that people have fast access to medical supports in the treatment of their addictions is essential. The RAAM clinic will ensure comprehensive, responsive help is available when needed.” – Alan McQuarrie, Executive Director, Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing.

“The Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic is an important step in addressing the barriers to health access faced by North Bay's most vulnerable citizens. Services will be delivered from an

inclusive, health equity perspective that emphasizes treating clients with respect and dignity and working with them to improve their health and well being." – Dr. Sarah Eckler, North Bay

"Data has shown that there is a critical need for the vulnerable and marginalized members of our community to have better access to primary health care. Our downtown clinic will meet patients where they are and provide them with essential health care and support. We look forward to working with our community partners and our patients to provide support where it is needed the most." – Doug Steringa, Executive Director, NPLC

"This funding for rural primary care is a boost to the health of our patients. It is great that the Government has agreed that the hospital is the leader in the development of our community Health Hub." – Pierre Noel, Interim CEO, Mattawa Hospital.

BACKGROUND:

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care investment in the North Bay Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic shows commitment to ensuring health equity for all people in Ontario, by focusing on patients who have barriers to accessing comprehensive primary care services.
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care investment in the Mattawa Hospital will help ensure that patients in rural areas have access to interprofessional primary care services.
- In the 2017 Budget, the province made a commitment of \$15.5 million for 2017-18 and an additional 27.8 million in 2018-19 to create and expand interprofessional primary care teams (Family Health Teams, Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics, Community Health Centres) focusing on areas with the greatest needs.
- Ontario has also committed \$329.2 million over five years to recruit and retain interprofessional primary care professionals.
- There are currently 294 interprofessional care teams across Ontario delivering care to more than four million people.
- The province is providing \$23 million per year over three years to improve care coordination for complex patients through the [Health Links initiative](#).

LEARN MORE:

- [Health Links](#)
- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)
- [North East LHIN Aboriginal Health Care Reconciliation Action Plan](#)

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