

North East LHIN Launches Opioid Strategy *Increasing Access and Coordination of Addiction Treatment for Northerners*

Jan. 16, 2018 --The North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) is increasing treatment services to meet the growing needs of people with addiction to opioids. A total of \$1.65 million in base funding is being invested across the Northeastern Ontario to bring care closer to home for Northerners, increasing access to treatment and care coordination in NE LHIN communities.

On Tuesday, January 16th, the NE LHIN launched its Opioid Strategy at a meeting of its Regional Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council, which was instrumental in developing the strategy and will work with Opioid Task Forces within each of the North East LHIN's Sub-Regions --Algoma, Sudbury/Parry Sound/Manitoulin, Cochrane, James and Hudson Bay Coast, and Nipissing/Temiskaming—to implement the strategy.



Left to right/ de gauche à droite : Glenn Thibeault, Sudbury MPP / député provincial de Sudbury; Kate Fyfe, Interim CEO North East LHIN/ Directrice générale par interim RLISS; Alicia Reid, patient; Dr. Mike Franklyn; and Maureen McLelland, Special Advisor to the CEO, Health Sciences North/ Conseillère Spéciale du PDG, Horizon Santé-Nord

The new funding will expand and create **Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinics** that provide an addictions treatment pathway between the clinic and different places where the client is likely to seek care such as emergency departments, primary care providers, mental health and addiction agencies, and withdrawal management programs. It will also enhance and expand **Community Based Withdrawal Management Programs**, a recommendation made to the North East LHIN by Dr. Brian Rush in his **North East LHIN Addiction Services Review**. Dr. Rush noted that while there are many residential treatment programs, more community day programs are needed as they bring care closer to home, allowing participants to continue to live at home.

Each sub-region received \$200,000 to establish a RAAM clinic and \$130,000 to enhance withdrawal management and addiction counselling. An additional \$200,000 will also go to Health Sciences North (HSN) who will take on a role as lead agency for research, data collection/analysis, and evaluation. HSN will also work with the sub-region RAAM clinics to explore opportunities to create a regional platform to ensure timely access for Northerners to these clinics. The NE LHIN has allocated the following funding:

- **Nipissing Temiskaming (transfer agencies): North Bay Regional Health Centre (\$200,000); North Bay Recovery Home (\$130,000)**
- **Algoma (transfer agency): Sault Area Hospital (\$200,000 +\$130,000)**
- **Cochrane and James Bay Coast (transfer agency): South Cochrane Addiction Services (\$200,000 + \$260,000)**
- **Sudbury/Manitoulin/Parry Sound (transfer agencies): Health Sciences North (\$400,000); Parry Sound CMHA (\$130,000)**

The NE LHIN's Strategy uses a "hub and spoke" model, in which RAAM Clinics are located within each Sub-region's urban centres (the hub) with links (spokes) to outlying areas (see a further breakdown by area on page 2). As one of the highest users of telemedicine with 300 Ontario Telemedicine Network sites across the region, this strategy leverages virtual expertise to ensure equitable access to services for Northerners.

Quotes

"The devastating impact of opioid use disorder and overdose has reached every community in Ontario, and crosses all demographics. Our government has been working closely with partners across the province to combat this urgent issue for more than a year, and we are continuing to strengthen our strategy and increase harm reduction, addiction treatment and other supports. It is through this collaborative, evidence-based and comprehensive approach that we will be able to effectively address this crisis and save lives."

— Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"This increase in treatment services will mean we are poised to address this growing public health emergency in a way that best suits the needs of our community. The North East Local Health Integration Network has implemented an approach that will link together our existing healthcare providers as well as creating new resources for those most in need. The opioid crisis effects every aspect of life in our community, healthcare, homelessness, policing, but most important it effects lives. The lives of sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers whose death is an avoidable tragedy."

—Glenn Thibeault, Sudbury MPP

"This strategy recognizes the need to bring care closer to home for Northerners who are impacted by the rising rates of opioid use disorder, accidental overdoses, hospitalizations and ER visits across the North East Region. It is also a good example of how sub-region planning is empowering providers to collaborate and make local decisions to improve access and coordination of services for their residents."

— Kate Fyfe, Interim CEO of the North East LHIN

Hub and Spoke Model:

In the NE LHIN, HSN has piloted a RAAM Clinic for more than a year. With the funding it will extend its hours of operation to five days a week. The other RAAM clinics will be up and running before the end of March. Each RAAM clinic will have a grand-opening to draw awareness to its services.

- The RAAM Clinic in the Sudbury-Manitoulin-Parry Sound sub-region will be located at Health Sciences North and will provide outreach supports to West Parry Sound, Manitoulin, and Espanola. As well, HSN will assume a regional role for research, data collection and regional outreach
- The RAAM Clinic in the Nipissing-Temiskaming sub-region will be located at North Bay Regional Health Centre and will provide outreach supports to West Nipissing, Temiskaming Shores, Mattawa and Temagami.
- The RAAM Clinic in the Algoma sub-region will be located at the Algoma Treatment Centre and will provide outreach supports to Blind River, Thessalon, St. Joseph's Island, Elliot Lake, Wawa and Hornepayne.
- The RAAM Clinic in the Cochrane and James and Hudson Bay Coasts is still to be determined. The clinic will provide outreach supports to communities in both sub-regions (Chapleau, Matheson, Iroquois falls, Cochrane, Smooth Rock Falls, Kapuskasing, Hearst, Moose Factory, Moosonee, Fort Albany, Attawapiskat, Kaschechewan, and Peawanuck).

Quick Facts

- Announced in fall 2016, Ontario's comprehensive Strategy to Prevent Opioid Addiction and Overdose is ensuring people in pain receive appropriate treatment, increasing access to holistic treatment for those with opioid use disorder, and improving the safety and health of people who use opioids, including access to the life-saving drug naloxone.
- Over the next three years, Ontario is investing more than \$222 million province-wide to combat the opioid crisis in Ontario, including expanding harm reduction services, hiring more front-line staff and improving access to addictions supports across the province.
- Naloxone kits are distributed for free across Ontario. Find the location nearest you.
- Ontario is establishing an Opioid Emergency Task Force that will include a province-wide representation of front-line workers and people with lived experience to strengthen the province's coordinated response to the opioid crisis.

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For more information or to arrange interviews, contact Communications Officer Lara Bradley at Lara.Bradley@lhins.on.ca or 705-207-1259.