

MEDIA RELEASE

North East Local Health Integration Network Salutes Its 2018 Healthy Change Champions

December 28, 2018: The North East Local Health Integration Network presents its *Healthy Change Champion* award to inspiring Northerners who make outstanding contributions to Northeastern Ontario's health care system. This year, seven people were recognized for their ongoing work that helps improve the patient experience and create a stronger system of care for Northerners.

"Our 2018 *Healthy Change Champions* are inspiring individuals who illustrate what can be achieved through a caring, collaborative and innovative approach to people's health and wellness," said Jeremy Stevenson, CEO of the North East LHIN. "Hats off to these outstanding Northerners who are making a difference in Northeastern Ontario health care."

Healthy Change Champion award winners for 2018 include:

Dr. Jennifer Jocko, Sudbury

Dr. Jocko is committed to women's health and patient-centred care. Jennifer works at Health Sciences North and the Northeastern Ontario Women's Health Network and serves as the Regional Cervical Screening and Colposcopy Lead for the North East LHIN with Cancer Care Ontario. In addition to these duties, she is also a consultant specialist at the Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre where she has a weekly half-day clinic. Dr. Jocko also operates a monthly rural outreach obstetrics and gynecology clinic on Manitoulin Island and is an associate professor at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

Donna Stewart, Espanola

Donna is the Director of Integrated Social Services at the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board, where she oversees a number of programs including social housing. Donna spearheaded a unique initiative that will help to make mental health supports available to residents within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board's social housing units. Her work led to an innovative model to better serve vulnerable patients.

Dr. Sarah White and Dr. Alan McLean, Sault Ste. Marie:

Dr. White and Dr. McLean are physicians who share a passion for helping patients in difficult circumstances. Both doctors provide physician coverage at a weekly drop-in clinic that operates on Thursday at the Neighbourhood Resource Centre on Gore Street in Sault Ste. Marie. The clinic helps to link vulnerable people to much needed medical and social supports.

Aimee Belanger, Jake Marion and John Brunetti, Sudbury, Webbwood, Espanola

Aimee Belanger (Public Health Sudbury and Districts), Jake Marion (Webbwood Public Library) and John Brunetti (Espanola Family Health Team) took the lead on an initiative to improve access to health care services in the small community of Webbwood. The model took the unique step of locating health services in the Webbwood Public Library, including exercise classes, cooking programs, and an Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) connection that allows patients to attend appointments with remote physicians, including specialists. The expansion of services brought new health care programming to Webbwood and helped reduce the need for residents to travel for health care.

Alan Elliott, Laird Township

Alan Elliott, a Laird Township resident and the co-chair of the North East LHIN's Patient and Family Advisory Committee, is a long-standing volunteer dedicated to helping the less fortunate in Sault Ste. Marie and area. Over the past two years, Alan has helped collect more than 2,000 household items for donation to charitable groups like the Salvation Army. Alan is also using his role on the Committee to advocate for vulnerable people and to bring forward patient stories that address both physical and mental health concerns.

Nipissing Collaborative Implementation Team, Nipissing District

The Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team helped to develop a system navigation guide to better connect clients to the services they need related to mental health, addictions, and developmental disabilities. Their work and dedication has helped improve and transform the mental health and addictions system in Nipissing. They are a great example of partners working together towards a common goal.

Kapuskasing and Area Interprofessional Primary Care Committee, Kapuskasing

Composed of a large number of community partners, the Kapuskasing and Area Interprofessional Primary Care Committee is dedicated to improving access to primary and team-based health care in Kapuskasing and area. The group's efforts led to the creation of a new diabetes centre, a locum clinic that has reduced Emergency Department visits, and the establishment of a new family health team. The team is a great example of how collaboration and innovation can result in a better system of care for both local patients and health care providers.

For more information on the North East LHIN's Healthy Change Champion Award, please visit:

<http://nelhin.on.ca/communityengagement/healthychangechampions.aspx>

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