

## Reach out if you need mental health and addiction services in Nipissing: Help is just a phone call or click away!

### Health Care Column by Dr. Paul Preston, VP Clinical, NE LHIN

It is important that people don't forego access to care for mental health and addictions issues they may have because they have an impression nothing is available in our community.

A good place to start can be with your family doctor or nurse practitioner. If you do not have one, there is the expansion of the North Bay Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic opening soon (in January or February of this coming year) in the downtown core, as well as walk-in clinics and, in an urgent situation, the emergency room.

As well here are five ways you can get timely access to help on your own:

- 1. Feeling low mood, depressed or anxious and want to learn new skills to manage?** The North East LHIN is supporting two new, free self-help psychotherapy services: **BounceBack**, a telephone-coaching program with workbooks and videos, and **Big White Wall**, an online peer support and self-management tool. Both programs, funded by the Ontario Government for residents of Ontario, are designed to help adults and youth with depression, and anxiety. These two services provide skill-building and cognitive behaviour therapy. For more information on BounceBack go to <https://bouncebackontario.ca/> or call 1-866-345-0224, or check out the Big White Wall at <https://www.bigwhitewall.ca/>
- 2. Are you struggling with opioid or alcohol addictions? The Nipissing Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic**, based in the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing (361 McIntyre St. East, North Bay) is now taking clients. You can visit an evening RAAM clinic –no appointment needed—to be quickly connected with opioid or alcohol addiction medicine as well as other addiction treatment services in the community. Call 705-472-6515 to find out RAAM clinic hours.
- 3. Do you have a situation in your life you need to talk over with a counsellor? There is a Walk-in Counselling Service available** at the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing (705-472-6515) that runs Tuesday and Thursdays from 1 pm to 7 pm. No fees or appointment are required. Some topics that people wish to discuss include couple and family relationships, domestic violence, sexual assault, alcohol or substance abuse regarding themselves or significant others, financial or debt challenges, among others.
- 4. Interested in exploring what mental health or addiction services in Nipissing might fit your needs?** Help is a couple clicks away. A section of the **NortheastHealthline** is devoted to Mental Health and Addiction services. Go to <https://connect.northeasthealthline.ca> to find services here in Nipissing tailored to your needs and how to access them. This site also has referral forms.

5. **Feeling isolated and want someone to talk to, or would you like to connect with peers for support?** The **North East Regional WARM Line** offers peer support peer support, self-help groups, social, educational and recreational activities to individuals with mental health and addiction. Peer counsellors are ready to take your call between 6 p.m. and midnight at 1-866-856-9276. You can also connect locally with peer at **PEP (People for Equal Partnership In Mental Health)** by calling (705) 494-4774.

We don't have a perfect system, however local organizations are working together to connect what we do have and fill in the gaps and further develop the system of care. My main message is to reach out if you need help, there are services and care is available in Nipissing.