Working Together to Bring Care Closer to Home

An update from Northeastern Ontario Health Care Partners for the People of Attawapiskat

Newsletter – February 2016

Welcome!

Welcome to the first issue of a newsletter written collaboratively by health care partners who are focused on your local health care. The partners working with the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) are: Red Cross, Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA), and North East Specialized Geriatric Services (NESGS).

A lot of positive, patient-focused activities have been happening with health care in your community, and we want you to know more about all the good work underway. We also want you to learn more about what is in the works and how you can get involved.

Updates from the North East LHIN

The NE LHIN is a provincial heath agency responsible for planning, integrating, coordinating and funding about 150 health service providers across Northeastern Ontario. Every year, the NE LHIN provides approximately $27 million in funding to deliver health care services to people living in coastal communities, including hospital services, community support services, mental health and addictions, diabetes education, technology investments, and more. This includes $450,000 to Red Cross for Personal Support Worker training, and $272,000 to NESGS for specialized geriatric clinics. The NE LHIN continues to focus on building meaningful relationships with people in James Bay coastal communities to help improve the health and well-being of people living there.

NE LHIN Senior Advisor to the James Bay Coast

Carol Philbin-Jolette

Carol Philbin-Jolette is the LHIN's Senior Advisor for the James Bay Coast. Carol has worked for the NE LHIN for many years and has a lot of experience in Aboriginal health care. She is dedicated to health care improvements along the coast, and work with all the care providers that the NE LHIN funds. She's also looking forward to creating partnerships between provincial and federal health programs that improve care coordination. Carol's job is determining how to help health care providers coordinate care for you, so that it's easier for you to access when you need it.

You can reach Carol at carol.philbinjolette@lhins.on.ca or 1-866-906-5446 (toll-free).

NE LHIN examples of recent progress in Attawapiskat:

- The NE LHIN provides Red Cross approximately $147,000 to deliver community support services to Attawapiskat. Red Cross is working with Attawapiskat to identify the types of community supports required. Red Cross is in the process of implementing congregate dining in the community.

- In late August, 2015, Carol met with the Attawapiskat Chief and Council and WAHA representatives to discuss how to work together to reopen your hospital before the winter months. Carol also attended a community engagement session in your community on October 1, 2015, along with WAHA and the consultants to provide your community with an update on the efforts to clean the oil spill under the hospital. I am very happy that your hospital is now open. A meeting is scheduled in your community in early February with your Chief and Council, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, WAHA and Carol will discuss the next steps to remediate the historical oil spills in the other sites.

- On Nov. 24, 2015, Carol travelled to your community with Health Canada and a third party evaluator to engage with your community on the Weeneebayko Area Health Integration Framework Agreement (WAHIFA). We met with your Chief and Council members as well as community members to discuss how health care was delivered in your community in the last five years. The engagement provided insights on how WAHA can improve the health care system in the James Bay Coast. The NE LHIN also commissioned a review of WAHA's operations. The WAHIFA report and operational review report will be finalized in the next month. Carol will be working closely with Health Canada and WAHA to develop an action plan that outlines strategies to address the concerns expressed at the engagement session. We will be coming back to your community in the next few months to discuss the action plan.

Updates from the Canadian Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross has programs in the communities in James and Hudson Bay, including Attawapiskat, where we have staff. As we have started our programs in Coast communities, we have consulted with Chief and council, met with the elders and members of the health team, and sought their advice. Each community has its own vision for community supports and we are working to ensure that the investments of the NE LHIN are able to best support the needs. We listen to the communities and find ways to adapt our programs and our health funding around their needs.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Cranney, heather.cranney@redcross.ca or 705-477-3561.

Heather Cranney

Red Cross has been working with Attawapiskat First Nation and has met with the Chief and the Elders to talk about planning for services for the elders.

We have created a supply of crafting materials and food service items to share with those that serve the Elders in the Community.

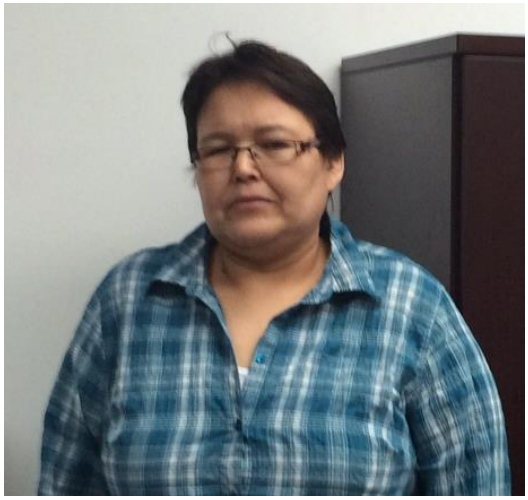
Red Cross has worked with the health team, including the Health Director, Theresa Spence, the Home Care Program, Public Health and Emergency Services.

Using NE LHIN funding, we have arranged the repair of a vehicle to be used for transporting Elders in the community.

Red Cross staff are on the local community committee called "Neeganiway Attooskaywin" that is a collaborative approach to wellness and safety in the community.

We participated in community gatherings that were held during Addiction Awareness week, and many members came out to share information with people of all ages.

When Red Cross was recently in Attawapiskat, we had a chance to support victims of two house fires by liaising with our Disaster Response Volunteers.



Maggie Koostachin

We have now hired one staff person, Maggie Koostachin, and she is meeting with seniors to sign them up for programs with Red Cross.

Red Cross is planning on starting a PSW Course before March 31 and is starting now to recruit.

For more information, please contact Maggie Koostachin in Attawapiskat or email Felicia.danesi@redcross.ca

Updates from North East Specialized Geriatric Services

North East Specialized Geriatric Services (NESGS) is a multidisciplinary team of health care providers who deliver specialized care for older adults with complex health needs, as well as expert resources for health care professionals and caregivers throughout Northeastern Ontario. Our vision is to improve the independence, quality of life and health outcomes for the frail elderly throughout Northeastern Ontario. We value the independence and dignity of our patients, the contribution of partners in care throughout Northeastern Ontario and the importance of shared knowledge and best practices in Geriatrics. We have been fortunate enough to hire a nurse through NESGS who is dedicated to make the connections in each of the communities along the James Bay Coast. Please welcome Crystal McComb RN Geriatric Nurse Clinician to the team. She is a former resident of Moosonee and has a Public Health background as well as a degree in Gerontology.

Dr. Jo-Anne Clarke of North East Specialized Geriatric Services (NESGS)

Over the past year, Geriatricians were able to assess a few of the Elders from Attawapiskat while they were staying in Fort Albany and Moose Factory during the evacuation.

Assessments were completed for four Attawapiskat patients while at Moose Factory hospital during the Geriatric clinic that was held in February 2015, and three patients were assessed while staying in Fort Albany Hospital during the September 2015 Geriatric clinic.

These patients are due to return back home to Attawapiskat over the next few weeks.

Every 4-6 weeks we will work with WAHA staff and the Nursing Stations to provide case management for the seven patients who received a Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment. Plans are also underway to bring the Geriatricians to Attawapiskat in the fall of 2016 so these patients will have the opportunity to be re-assessed for follow-up; as well we will plan to see new patients within the community.

Crystal McComb RN, Geriatric Nurse Clinician, with her daughter Paisley standing along the Moose River in Moosonee on December 5.

For further information on the Geriatric Clinics, please contact Crystal McComb at 1-866-551-6501.

Updates from Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA)

The organization WAHA resulted from the October 1, 2010 integration of the Weeneebayko Health Ahtuskaywin/ Weeneebayko General Hospital in Moose Factory, the James Bay General Hospital in Moosonee, Fort Albany and Attawapiskat and the hospitals' associated agencies in the communities of Kashechewan and Peawanuck. As a hospital based in Ontario, the organization is subject to the provisions of the Public Hospitals Act.

WAHA Re-Opens Attawapiskat Hospital

Attawapiskat Hospital welcomes back patients

The Attawapiskat Hospital officially re-opened on December 2, 2015 to provide urgent walk-in medical services to the public. The hospital was closed as the result of an oil spill which was discovered on November 29, 2014.

WAHA President and CEO Bernie D. Schmidt noted the collaborative efforts from all stakeholders. "We are excited to welcome the residents of Attawapiskat back to their hospital."

The hospital phone line (705) 997-2150 is the primary contact for all hospital services.

For more information: Deborah Hill, WAHA Vice President of Clinical Services - (705) 658-4544 ext. 2294.

WAHA Offers Dog Management Project to Attawapiskat First Nation

An innovative program to help control dog overpopulation was offered by the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) to Attawapiskat First Nation. The two-year program provides free contraceptive (birth control) implants to female dogs, as well as vaccinations, deworming and microchips for all dogs in the community.

The project is a partnership between WAHA, Dogs with No Names (DWNN), the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Health Canada, and the Porcupine Public Health Unit. PetSmart Charities of Canada provided a $206,000 grant to WAHA, one of the non-profit's largest grants.

The vet team serviced 102 dogs in Attawapiskat during their visit in July of 2015. Special thanks go to Attawapiskat Chief and Council, Myriam Innocent, and Scott Miller for their support in hosting the dog clinics. "Over 100 dogs in Attawapiskat were taken care of, which is fantastic," commented Caroline Lidstone-Jones, WAHA's Chief Quality Officer. "The project was well received and will impact public safety, improving overall health outcomes. We expect similar results when the vet team returns to the community in the summer of 2016."

For more information: Caroline Lidstone-Jones and Rob Gagnon, WAHA's Quality Department - (705) 658-4544 ext. 2332

WAHA Regional Discharge Planning Team Visits Attawapiskat Hospital

Since 2013/14, the WAHA Regional Discharge Planning Team has been working with the NE LHIN and North East Community Care Access Centre (NE CCAC) to educate community members about the following services:

- Primary care
- Discharge care plans for patients and their families
- Community-based home services

The Regional Discharge (RD) Planner collaborates, coordinates and arranges necessary services as close to home as possible. The Regional Patient Navigator (PN) assists anyone having difficulty understanding the health care system and is able to provide Cree translation if required. Follow up health care is delivered by the team for as long as needed by the patient and family.

The team recently assisted with bringing Attawapiskat elders back home to the community hospital after it re-opened on December 2, 2015 because of the oil spill. Next, the team will be visiting Attawapiskat First Nation and key community leaders in the New Year to continue promoting the program and provide education on services offered. The team looks forward to the upcoming visit and helping patients, and their families receive care closer to home.

For more information: Crystal Culp, WAHA Director of Professional Practice - (705) 658-4544 ext. 2228