

North Bay's Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic Grand Opening

Increasing Access and Coordination of Addiction Treatment for People in Nipissing and Temiskaming

November 23, 2018 – People in North Bay and across the District are now receiving more timely medical treatment for substance use disorders closer to home.

The **Nipissing-Temiskaming Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic**, operated by the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing, had its grand opening on Friday to introduce patients and partners to its location at 361 McIntyre Street in North Bay and allow them to learn more about the service. The clinic provides expedited, barrier-free treatment for patients who have a substance use disorders, particularly with alcohol or opioid use.



From left to right: Dr. Paul Preston, VP Clinical, North East LHIN; Vic Fedeli, MPP, Nipissing; Dr. Valerie Primeau, North Bay RAAM Physician Lead, Al McDonald, Mayor, City of North Bay; Wendy Prieur, Executive Director, North Bay Recovery Home; and Alan McQuarrie, Executive Director, Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing.

Funded by the North East Local Health Integration Network (North East LHIN), the RAAM clinic is part of the North East LHIN's Regional Opioid Strategy, designed to meet the rising rates of opioid use disorder, accidental overdoses, hospitalizations and hospital emergency room visits across Northeastern Ontario. The strategy was developed by the LHIN's Regional Mental Health and Addiction Advisory Council which continues to work with local Opioid Task Forces across the region to support implementation, ensuring Northerners have timely and equitable access to care.

How the Nipissing Temiskaming RAAM Clinic Works

The Nipissing Temiskaming RAAM Clinic sees clients at the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing, 361 McIntyre Street East, in North Bay. While the clinic has physician coverage from **4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Mondays and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursdays**, the clinic offers intake five days a week through the RAAM navigator. Patients can walk in or call **705-472-6515**. No booked appointment or referral is necessary, although referrals from doctors, nurses, social workers, addiction counselors, and community providers are welcome. Through the RAAM clinic, patients can also access addiction counselling, case management and receive assistance in securing residential treatment services.

The RAAM model is designed to initiate therapy for Substance Use Disorders, primarily opioid or alcohol use, and then triage clients to the most appropriate ongoing care provider. It is not intended to replace or duplicate the care provided by a primary care provider.

The North East LHIN's Strategy uses a "hub and spoke" model, in which RAAM Clinics are located within each sub-region's urban centre (the hub) with links (spokes) to outlying areas. The Nipissing Temiskaming RAAM Clinic in North Bay will be the "hub" site, and will work with the "spoke" sites in Mattawa, West Nipissing, New Liskeard, Englehart, Powassan, and Kirkland Lake to develop capacity in these areas to deliver rapid access addiction medicine. 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

"As we state in our recent Fall Economic Statement, our government knows that demand for addictions services exceeds supply in Ontario, often leaving people waiting for services while in a vulnerable state. That's why the Province is providing funding to expand the scope and coverage of Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) clinic for individuals with substance abuse issues that require specialized, evidence-based addiction medicine support by creating new or expanded RAAMs in communities of high need."-- **Vic Fedeli, Nipissing MPP**

"RAAM clinics are about providing comprehensive addictions assessments and starting appropriate treatment as quickly as possible when the window to change is open. This is the best chance to set people on the path of recovery. The opening of this clinic is an important step in building a fulsome system of care needed in our community."--**Jeremy Stevenson, North East LHIN CEO**

"Providing timely access to addictions medicine in the communities where people live is one of the best ways to help our most vulnerable people recover from addictions." -- **Alan McQuarrie, Executive Director, Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing**

"The Northeast region is known to have one of the highest rates of substance use disorders as well as opioid-related deaths in Ontario. Unfortunately, health professionals often feel ill equipped in their offices to treat this complex and vulnerable population. The RAAM clinics are filling the existing gap by providing timely evidence-based care to patients with concurrent disorders and also foster capacity building with primary care providers in the community."-- **Dr. Valerie Primeau, North Bay RAAM Physician Lead**

"The North Bay Recovery Home is proud to be providing brief intervention case management services to support the efforts of the RAAM Clinic. The case manager will provide immediate support to help stabilize an individual and help connect them to long term supports. This is a real enhancement to the services of the Addiction & Mental Health Systems Table." -- **Wendy Prieur, Executive Director, North Bay Recovery Home**

Quick Facts Nipissing Temiskaming RAAM Clinic

- The RAAM Clinic offers help with substance use disorders, particularly alcohol and opioid use disorder
- Patients access the RAAM Clinic by referral, walk-in, or by calling **705-472-6515**. Self-referrals are welcomed.
- Providers can refer by calling 705-472-6515 or faxing 705-472-4582.
- The Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing received \$200,000 in funding from the North East LHIN for the operation of the Nipissing Temiskaming RAAM clinic and to enhance community withdrawal management.

Background

- Base funding has been invested across Northeastern Ontario as part of the North East LHIN's Regional Opioid Strategy. The funding been used to create and enhance four RAAM Clinics and enhance community withdrawal management programs.
- RAAM Clinics provide an addictions treatment pathway between the clinic and different places where the client is likely to seek care such as emergency room, primary care providers, mental health and addiction agencies, and withdrawal management programs.

For more information contact: NE LHIN Communications Lead Lara Bradley at Lara.Bradley@lhins.on.ca or 705-207-1259. **Or** Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing Executive Director, Alan McQuarrie at amcquarrie@cccnip.com or 705-472-6515 ext. 242.