

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **North East LHIN Takes a Mindful Approach to Providing Cultural Training for Front-Line Health Care Staff**

*April 24, 2018*—One of the areas recognized as being important to improving Indigenous health outcomes is to educate health care professionals about Indigenous Cultural Safety. To accomplish this, the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) is facilitating Cultural Mindfulness Training for health care workers in hospitals, home and community care, and community mental health and addictions programs over the next two years.

Over the last two years, the NE LHIN has provided Indigenous Cultural Safety on-line training to more than 400 people working in health care across Northeastern Ontario. These efforts are in keeping with the NE LHIN's Aboriginal Health Care Reconciliation Action Plan, published in 2016, which identifies cultural competency as a core value. The Action plan recognizes the importance for all health service providers to develop cultural competency to better understand the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada, the legacy of residential schools, and to learn approaches that deliver health services in a culturally safe manner.



*Above:* Some of the Indigenous cultural materials that will be incorporated in the Cultural Mindfulness training. (Photo courtesy of George Couchie).

“Indigenous Cultural Competency, engagement and partnership development are key strategic directions outlined in the NE LHIN Health Care Reconciliation Action Plan,” said Darlene Orton, Indigenous Officer with the North East LHIN. “This training will be experiential and allow participants to learn and build on the success of the on-line Indigenous Cultural Safety training that has already been delivered to Northerners.”

The Cultural Mindfulness Training will begin this spring with the region's four Hub Hospitals—North Bay Regional Health Centre, Timmins and District Hospital, Sault Area Hospital, and Health Sciences North. The North East LHIN is helping to develop a three-day on-site training session focusing on the Emergency Department, Mental Health and Addiction, and Maternal/Child units.

Next year, a similar approach will be used to roll out the training to all Northeastern Ontario hospitals, home and community care staff, and people working in community mental health and addictions.

Trainer George Couchie of Nipissing First Nation will deliver the training. George is a retired OPP officer and has been training front-line police officers, teachers, and health care workers for several years. As part of his work, he organizes community sessions to talk about local reconciliation.

"I hope when people are done the training that they realize that everyone has a story and that they will be inspired to be a little more compassionate. Canada has a story with Indigenous people that we need to hear," said Couchie.

The NE LHIN is also engaging to establish local Indigenous resource groups. These groups will work with George to conduct the sessions, ensure ongoing supports once the training is completed, and establish formal partnerships with the health care system in their local area.

**FACTS:**

- The Indigenous diversity within the NE LHIN is comprised of Cree, Ojibwa, Odawa, Algonquin and Métis identified cultural groups – representing approximately 11% of the total population in Northeastern Ontario.
- Each year, the NE LHIN invests over \$39 million to support front-line health care delivery to Indigenous people living in Northeastern Ontario.
- Increased access to culturally appropriate care for Indigenous people in the northeast is aligned with the North East LHIN's [Aboriginal Health Care Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

To learn more about the North East LHIN's Indigenous Health priorities, please visit:

[www.nelhin.on.ca/indigenous](http://www.nelhin.on.ca/indigenous)

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