

Media Release

North East LHIN and Partners Launch:

The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic (RAAM) for Cochrane and James Bay *Bringing more timely addiction medicine care for opioids and alcohol closer to home*

May 4, 2018 – People in the Cochrane and James Bay sub-regions will receive more timely medical treatment for opioid and alcohol addictions, closer to home.

The **Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) for Cochrane and James Bay** hosted by South Cochrane Addictions Services, had its launch on Friday at the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) office. The RAAM Clinic provides timely, barrier-free treatment for patients who are addicted to alcohol or opioids.



Funded by the NE LHIN, the RAAM Clinic is part of the NE LHIN's Regional Opioid Strategy, designed to meet the rising rates of opioid use disorder, accidental overdoses, hospitalizations and ER visits in Northeastern Ontario. This strategy was developed by the NE LHIN's Regional Mental Health and Addiction Advisory Council who continues to work with local Opioid Task Forces within each of the Sub-Regions, supporting implementation and helping to ensure Northerners have timely and equitable access to care.

Left to right: Laurie Vance, Manager, Mental Health and Addictions, Weeneebayko Area Health Authority; Angèle Desormeau, Executive Director, South Cochrane Addictions Services; Debbie Szymanski, NE LHIN Coastal Lead; Cheryl St. Amour, NE LHIN Board Member; Denis Berube, NE LHIN Board Member.

How the RAAM for Cochrane and James Bay Works:

Patients can call the RAAM Clinic at **705-531-RAAM (7226)** to see a RAAM physician. No referral is necessary, although referrals from doctors, nurses, social workers, addiction counselors and community providers are welcomed.

The location of the RAAM Clinic in Timmins will vary depending on the day of the week and volume of patients with locations currently including the **Timmins Family Health Team, Fifth Avenue Site, and Jubilee Centre.**

The RAAM model is designed to start treatment for opioid or alcohol addiction 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 or a treatment clinic.

The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) for Cochrane and James Bay will also, in due course, provide addiction medicine treatment support to people living in smaller communities in both sub-regions—through the use of the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN). Knowledge exchange and engagement with physicians and the communities are ongoing. As one of the highest users of telemedicine with 300 OTN sites across the region, this strategy leverages virtual expertise to ensure equitable access to services for Northerners living across the region.

Quotes

“The Opioid strategy recognizes the need to bring care closer to home for people in the Cochrane and James Bay sub-regions who are impacted by the rising rates of opioid use disorder, accidental overdoses, hospitalizations and ER visits. Developed by our Regional Mental Health and Addiction Advisory Council, it leverages both local knowledge and expertise as well as technology through the use of the Ontario Telemedicine Network to bring care to people living in smaller communities. It is a great example of how sub-region planning is empowering providers to collaborate and make local decisions to improve access and coordination of services for residents. -- **Jeremy Stevenson, CEO of the North East LHIN**

“We have strong linkages and pathways within the Sub-Regions to build on. We are incorporating existing and current pathways of services to help create an integrated primary care approach that leads to fewer barriers for patients.” -- **Angèle Desormeau, Executive Director of South Cochrane Addictions Services**

“We are losing people in this crisis. Let’s get the Clinic up and running so that we can start saving lives.” – **Dr. Richard Lebel**

Quick Facts for the RAAM for Cochrane and James Bay Sub Regions

- Clients access the RAAM Clinic by calling **705-531-RAAM (7226)**. Self-referrals are welcomed.
- Providers can refer by calling **705-531-RAAM (7226)** or faxing **705-531-7227**.
- The location of the clinic in Timmins will vary depending on the day or volume of patients, with locations including the Timmins Family Health Team Fifth Avenue Site and Jubilee Centre.
- The RAAM Clinic will also eventually provide support to people and providers in smaller communities in Cochrane and James Bay through the use of the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN).
- South Cochrane Addictions Services received \$460,000 in funding as lead sponsor agency for the RAAM Clinic.

Background – NE LHIN and Provincial Opioid Strategy

- Funding is being invested across the Northeastern Ontario as part of the NE LHIN’s Regional Opioid Strategy. The funding is going toward creating and enhancing four RAAM Clinics and enhancing 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 departments, primary care providers, mental health and addiction agencies, and withdrawal management programs.
- Over the next three years, Ontario is investing more than \$222 million province-wide to combat the opioid crisis in Ontario.

- Announced in fall 2016, Ontario's comprehensive [Strategy to Prevent Opioid Addiction and Overdose](#) is ensuring people in pain receive appropriate treatment, increasing access to holistic treatment for those with opioid use disorder, and improving the safety and health of people who use opioids, through access to harm reduction services including the life-saving drug naloxone.

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