

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **North East LHIN Celebrates National Aboriginal Day**

#### *NE LHIN Highlights Work with Aboriginal Partners*

June 21, 2013 – National Aboriginal Day is a day to recognize and celebrate the cultures and contributions of Aboriginal/First Nations/Métis people. Here in Northeastern Ontario, close to 10 per cent of the population is Aboriginal and the NE LHIN continually works to improve access to health services for Aboriginal Northerners.

Targeting the needs of culturally diverse population groups is one of the North East LHIN's four priorities outlined in its [2013-2016 strategic plan](#).

“We work closely with the members of our Local Aboriginal Health Committee, and our health care partners to move yard sticks to improve access to care for Aboriginal people living in our LHIN,” said Louise Paquette, CEO of the North East LHIN. “National Aboriginal Day is a time to reflect on what has been accomplished and also to consider where we need to focus our energies to continue to move forward.”

Earlier this year, the NE LHIN provided funding for a Navigator at Shkagamik-Kwe Aboriginal Health Centre in Sudbury. This July, Marida McGregor will take on this role. Marida will help Aboriginal/First Nations/Métis elders find the care they need as close to where they live as possible.

“Our Navigator will act as the main line of communication between our Centre and other providers, and will maintain a referral network of community based services, providers, culturally specific services, and hospital based programs to ensure equitable access to health care and proper communication between clients and their families,” said Angela Recollet, Executive Director at Shkagamik-Kwe. “The initiative is in the initial stages of further developing a network of “navigators” through a collaboration and partnership with Health Sciences North, Shkagamik-Kwe Health Centre, Noojmowin Teg Health Access Centre and Mamaweswen, and North Shore Tribal Council.”

This past February, a group from the North East LHIN and a team of physicians visited the coastal communities of Moosonee, Moose Factory, Peawanuck, Kashechewan, and Fort Albany. The team met with elders and health care leaders to try to find ways to improve the care being delivered in these remote, fly-in communities. Since then, the LHIN has invested in more assisted living, transportation services, foot care for people suffering from diabetes and personal support worker training, to name a few.



*Earlier this year, Trudy Tourville (right) with her 95-year-old mother Daisy Turner participated in an engagement with the North East LHIN at the Elders Gathering Centre in Moosonee.*

Earlier this spring, the LHIN's Local Health Aboriginal Committee struck a group to look at ways and means of easing the reporting requirements for Aboriginal providers. Their work has the potential to benefit all NE LHIN health service providers.

**Facts:**

- The NE LHIN's Local Aboriginal Health Committee (LAHC) advises the NE LHIN on health service priorities within Aboriginal (First Nation, Métis, urban, rural) communities, and opportunities for the integration and coordination of health care services. The LAHC and NE LHIN work collaboratively to identify targeted engagement activities on the specific needs of Aboriginal populations.
- The Aboriginal diversity within the NE LHIN is comprised of Cree, Ojibwa, Odawa, and Métis cultural groups, including 41 First Nations and 14 urban and rural Aboriginal communities.
- Every year the NE LHIN provides a total of \$35 million to Aboriginal health service providers including one hospital, one long term care home, one community health centre, 32 community support service agencies, seven agencies delivering mental health and addiction services.
- There are 75 Aboriginal/First Nations/Métis health partners involved in the planning and delivery of care to the region's Aboriginal population, which is estimated conservatively at over 55,000 persons.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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