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Thunder Bay-Atikokan

Thunder Bay-Superior North

Ontario Expanding Addiction Supports in Northwestern Ontario *Province Opening New Addiction Clinics in Thunder Bay*

NEWS

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Ontario is working with St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay to expand access to addiction supports in the wake of the ongoing opioid crisis.

St. Joseph's Care Group is opening new Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) clinics to improve access to comprehensive care for people in Thunder Bay living with addiction. These clinics will provide people with immediate help and short-term addiction treatment and counselling, as well as connecting them to longer-term holistic support. There will be two RAAM Clinics in Thunder Bay: one at St. Joseph's Care Group's Balmoral Centre and the other at NorWest Community Health Centres Simpson Street location. St. Joseph's Care Group is working in partnership with NorWest Community Health Centres, Dilico Anishinabek Family Care, People Advocating for Change through Empowerment (PACE) and Thunder Bay Counselling Centre.

Across Ontario, more than 30 communities will benefit from new or expanded RAAM clinics.

Ontario has also recently expanded access to naloxone, a life-saving drug that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone kits are currently available for free at [participating pharmacies](#) and from eligible community and health organizations.

QUOTES

"I'm pleased to know that people living in Thunder Bay and the Region will have access to additional supports offered to combat opioid addictions. St. Joseph's Care Group's Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic will provide immediate comprehensive care for people living with an opioid addiction through short term addictions treatment and counseling as well as referral to other community organizations that utilize a long term holistic approach. Support for the RAAM Program is another important step taken by the Province to set up the most effective and efficient system possible to battle the opioid crisis."

— **Bill Mauro, MPP, Thunder Bay – Atikokan**



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“I am proud of our government’s commitment to expanding supports for opioid addictions in our region. The Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinic and accompanying organizations will be instrumental in providing comprehensive short term care those suffering from addiction, including counselling, harm reduction services, and holistic care while they transition into long term support. This investment is an important step in providing comprehensive and quality healthcare in our region.”

— **Michael Gravelle, MPP, Thunder Bay – Superior North**

“The opening of new addiction medicine clinics will significantly improve access to high-quality addiction supports in communities across the province grappling with the opioid crisis. Our government is committed to continuing to work with all partners impacted by this crisis and using every tool available to save lives.”

— **Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care**

“RAAM Clinics are designed to provide immediate access to medical treatment and counselling for people living with complex substance use issues. All service system partners recognize the challenges people face trying to find the most appropriate level of care in a timely manner. RAAM partners will work together to provide a full spectrum of services including withdrawal management, assessment, residential and outpatient treatment and system navigation to address other needs, like affordable and safe housing. Ultimately, all people living with addictions and other health issues will have an opportunity for improved quality of life and overall health and well being.”

— **Tracy Buckler, President & CEO, St. Joseph’s Care Group**

“The North West Local Health Integration Network welcomes this investment to expand access to addiction supports to the people of Northwestern Ontario in the wake of the ongoing opioid crisis. Together with health system partners, this funding will provide people in the Northwest with access to comprehensive care who are living with addiction, and require access to immediate help and short-term addiction treatment and counselling. The North West Local Health Integration Network acknowledges the commitment and leadership of St. Joseph’s Care Group in collaboration with health system partners, in helping communities deal with the opioid crisis within the Northwest region.”

— **Laura Kokocinski, CEO North West LHIN**



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QUICK FACTS

- Ontario has established an Opioid Emergency Task Force that includes front-line workers and people with lived experience to strengthen the province's coordinated response to the opioid crisis.
- Over the next three years, Ontario is investing more than \$222 million to combat the opioid crisis in Ontario, including expanding harm reduction services, hiring more front-line staff and improving access to addiction supports across the province.
- The government has also committed to invest \$20 million annually in Ontario's Chronic Pain Network.
- Ontario is working with Health Quality Ontario and other partner organizations to provide customized prescribing data, mentoring, education and other supports for physicians to learn best practices for supporting people with opioid use disorder, and for safe opioid prescribing and effective approaches to managing pain.

LEARN MORE

- [Where to Get Naloxone Kits and How to Use Them](#)
- [Ontario's Strategy to Prevent Opioid Addiction and Overdose](#)
- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)

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