

Mission Moment

Traditional Healing at Youth Treatment Sister Margaret Smith Centre

Clients of the Youth Live-In Treatment Program at Sister Margaret Smith Centre (SMSC) recently received spirit names through ceremonies facilitated by an Elder and supported by a Cultural Practitioner from Nanaandawe'ewin, Traditional Healing, N'doo'owe Binesi.

In addition to twice-a-week cultural programs, SMSC staff and Cultural Practitioners were able to arrange naming and healing ceremonies for each youth. Staff from SMSC noted that there was an overall sense of gratitude after the ceremonies. They also shared that youth have found the time spent with the Traditional Healing team an invaluable part of their treatment experience. Some of the comments from the youth were:

- "I am so grateful to have gotten my spirit name."
- "I felt connected to loved ones who had passed."
- "I had chills during the experience."
- "One on one with the Cultural Practitioners was so amazing. I walked out feeling confident I can get better."
- "I loved learning my spirit name. It makes me feel connected to the culture, connected to the Creator."
- "I felt accepted even though I'm not part of that culture. I understand so much more now. It was a beautiful experience."

Indigenous youth leave feeling more connected to their culture, while the ones who do not identify as Indigenous leave with a sense of respect and appreciation for the culture and gain tools to help them on their healing journeys.

- From the N'doo'owe Binesi & Sister Margaret Smith Teams



As we advance our vision of becoming a leader in client-centred care, we plan through the lens of Quality, Safety and Risk. Our Strategic Plan 2020-2024 will focus on four key Strategic Priorities:

Here for Our Clients

To address unmet needs through the provision of quality services.

Here for Our Partners

To transform the healthcare system.

Here for Our People

To support staff, physicians and volunteers to live our values.

Here for Our Future

To ensure continued organizational sustainability.

Here for Our Clients

Expanding the Post-Falls Pathway with Community Paramedicine Partners

The North West Regional Seniors' Care Program (RSCP), in partnership with Superior North Emergency Medical Services Community Paramedicine Program, has launched the Rehabilitative Care Alliance Post-Falls Pathway in Thunder Bay.

The Post-Falls Pathway is initiated after a fall in the community where 911 is called for a lift assist. If transfer to hospital is not required, the client is referred to Community Paramedicine for follow-up. Within 48 hours, Community Paramedics visit the client in their home to conduct a multifactorial and falls risk assessment and, guided by the Post-Falls Pathway, they are able to determine the best program or service to meet client need. The goal is to identify falls risk early and provide opportunity for

rehabilitative care in community, in home or in outpatient/inpatient settings as soon as possible, thereby preventing further decompensation and risk of fall and avoiding emergency department visits and acute care hospitalization.

Working collaboratively with the Community Paramedicine Commander and Director, the RSCP Manager oriented Community Paramedics on how to complete the in-home assessments. Participants then shadowed with the Seniors' Outpatient Assessment & Rehabilitation team at St. Joseph's Hospital. This experience helped expand knowledge of geriatric assessment and care, increasing understanding of geriatric services, and building confidence in identifying appropriate clients for Seniors' Outpatient Assessment & Rehabilitation. A total of 7 Community Paramedics have completed this comprehensive training.

This work builds upon the two prior pathways that the RSCP and the Regional Rehabilitation Care Program successfully implemented between 2020 and 2022 with Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre's (TBRHSC) Emergency Department and Nurse-Led Outreach Team.

Clients of High Support Housing Celebrate Halloween

"I had a lot of fun!" That's what clients from high support housing had to say about this year's Halloween House Party.

Amethyst House invited clients and staff from all sites to put on their best costumes and join them for a parade, dance-a-thon, and a festive dinner. Prizes were awarded for best costume. The Halloween evening event was a big hit, with friendship and celebration as the best treats of all.



Here for Our Partners

Northwestern Ontario Regional RAAM Design Day Event



Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) provides low-barrier access for people seeking treatment with addiction to opiates and other substances who require medical services combined with mental health and addiction supports. St Joseph's Care Group, in partnership with NorWest Community Health Centres, Dilico Anishinabek Family Care, People Advocating for Change through Empowerment, Thunder Bay Counselling

and Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, first launched operations to provide comprehensive and coordinated specialized services for individuals seeking treatment for substance use in March 2018.

Since then, regional supports for RAAM have expanded to 7 additional communities in the region and include over 50 members and 25 partner agencies working together to lead changes in our healthcare environment. This regional collaboration has created the "Standing Strong Together, Mashkowiigaabowidaa: A Toolkit for Northwestern Ontario" which was published and disseminated in March 2022. The Toolkit serves as a resource for practitioners and partners in any community interested in establishing a RAAM model of care.

On November 16th and 17th, 2023, a design event was hosted in Thunder Bay bringing together all of the regional RAAM site partners in person for the first time. This design event provided opportunity move forward as the hub and spoke model of addiction care in the region and plan for system changes to ensure clients receive safe and culturally appropriate addiction care closer to home. The event also provided an opportunity to showcase the new Northwestern Ontario Regional Logo that was created in collaboration with our regional partners and designed by Patrick Hunter, an Ojibway artist from Red Lake, Ontario. Each unique feather in the logo represents a local RAAM program community.

Capacity-Building and System Improvements for People with Spinal Cord Injuries

The North West Regional Rehabilitative Care Program (RRCP) launched two projects in November to build capacity and improve care pathways for people with Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI). St Joseph's Hospital's inpatient Physical Rehabilitation team (3N) and Spinal Cord Injury Ontario are partnering to improve community reintegration through transitions from hospital to home. SJCG is

now a participant site of the National Spinal Cord Injury Implementation, Evaluation, and Quality Care Consortium. Denise Taylor (Manager RRCP), Stephanie Schurr (Clinical Manager, Physical Rehabilitation), Dr. Hanan El Sherif (Physiatrist), and Kiri Simpson (Occupational Therapist) attended the SCI National Conference on Nov 21-23, 2023.

In addition, the North West RRCP launched a project to develop and implement a Wellness Checklist tool for people with SCI to use as a guide to plan their appointments with their primary care provider. The tool is being developed by a team that includes people with SCI from across the region as well as rehabilitation care providers across the continuum of care. The new tool will be piloted with a small number of people with SCI and their primary care provider before the end of March 2024.



St. Joseph's Care Group Presented at the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association Conference

Nancy Scoging, Manager of Seniors' Supportive Housing, presented at the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) Conference in Toronto in late October. The presentation featured an overview of PR Cook and Sister Leila Greco Seniors' Support Services Programs, as well an introduction to Willow Place Community Transitional Care Program. The presentation and panel discussion was followed by questions and inquiries into our model of supportive care for seniors.

Palliative Physician, Dr. Christian Ntizimira, Visits Thunder Bay from Rwanda East Africa

On October 23, 2023, the Regional Palliative Care Program (RPCP), in collaboration with the Centre for Education and Research on Aging and Health (CERAH) and Hospice Northwest, hosted two palliative care workshops featuring a special guest from Rwanda, Dr. Christian Ntizimira. Dr. Ntizimira is the Founder and Executive Director of the African Center for Research on End-of-Life Care (ACREOL). His initiatives have changed how health providers in Rwanda approach end-of-life care, rooted in the Ubuntu philosophy and African perspectives.

The first workshop focused on 'Decolonizing Palliative Care: End-life Care Experiences in Rwanda and First Nation Communities' and offered insights into the integration of palliative care and end-of-life services and cultural norms/practices within local health settings and communities. The second workshop called 'The Safari Concept: Ubuntu Philosophy and African Perspectives on End-of-Life Care' drew on Dr. Ntizimira's own experiences as he led the audience on his safari (translated journey) of integrating palliative care within Rwandan health services and community settings.

Both events served as a learning platform for the diverse audience to gain insights into his approach and engage in meaningful reflection and discussion, with the aim of fostering a deeper understanding of culturally sensitive palliative care practices.

N'doo'owe Binesi and Ogichidaa Onaakonigewin Mourn the Passing of Elder Luke Sagutch

N'doo'owe Binesi staff and the Ogichidaa Onaakonigewin (Elders Council), together with many others, mourn Elder Luke Sagutch, who passed away peacefully at the age of 75 at St. Joseph's Hospital on November 1, 2023. Known by his spirit name Blue Feather and as part of the Sturgeon Clan, Luke was born in Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope) and is a member of Neskantaga First Nation.

As one of the founding members of the Ogichidaa Onaakonigewin, Luke was instrumental in the early vision and development of N'doo'owe Binesi. He was integral to the introduction of traditional knowledge into client care and saw the need for and found a way to incorporate Sharing Circles into clients' care journeys. Luke also supported clients and staff as an Elder and co-facilitated training for the inaugural cohort of students for the Community Rehabilitation Worker certificate program. Over the past five years, Luke contributed significantly to St. Joseph's Care Group and to the broader community, sharing his vision for reconciliation and healing.



Volunteer Connection

Pam, one of our long-serving volunteers, walks her dog every morning on the trail behind Sister Leila Greco Apartments. Each time she passes by the building, she looks up in to the windows and connects with one of our residents, Inez. Over many years, and especially during the pandemic, Pam and Inez have built a relationship through waves, smiles, and body language. When the pair met face-to-face for the first time in September, Inez exclaimed “It’s like a dream. After all these years, I can’t believe we get to meet in person. You’re part of my family.” This is a wonderful example of care, compassion and commitment demonstrated by our volunteers at SJCG.



Recognizing our Students While Planning for our Future

St. Joseph’s Care Group (SJCG) held a student recognition event on Friday, November 17th, 2023 at Hogarth Riverview Manor (HRM) that included wide representation from HRM and Bethammi Nursing Home, as well as members of our SJCG Human Resources, Professional Practice and Wellness Committee.

The purpose of the event was to acknowledge and express gratitude to the 1st year Confederation College Bachelor of Science in Nursing Students for their contributions to both SJCG and the healthcare field.

SJCG offers varied and rewarding careers in a variety of nursing specialties and disciplines, and having the opportunity to learn and ask questions directly with frontline nurses and our long-term care management team is the best way to build relationships, experience our culture and open the door for placements and career opportunities. The event was a great success and many of the students expressed that they are considering SJCG for future employment.

*The Leadership Team would like to take a moment
to wish everyone a very safe and happy holiday season.
Merry Christmas and all the best for 2024!*