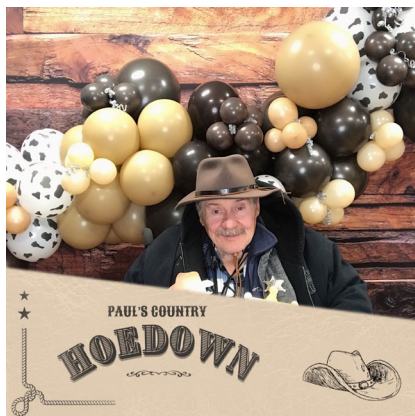


Mission Moment



For one long-time resident of Sister Leila Greco Apartments (SLG), the desire to support community spirit took the form of hosting a dinner party for his fellow tenants. Mr. Chamut has been a part of SLG since it opened in 2013; he takes great pride in calling SLG his home and considers the people there his family.

Just before Christmas, Mr. Chamut went to staff with an idea: he wanted to plan and host a special dinner party for his fellow tenants with a carefully chosen menu, and he wanted to make a donation through St. Joseph's Foundation to bring this event to life.

On Tuesday, January 28, 2025, SLG hosted a dinner that is still being talked about today. The Western-themed night featured a menu of roast beef (carved by the chef), shrimp, BBQ ribs, and all the trimmings you could imagine. The celebration didn't end with dinner. A Western-themed party followed, where residents and staff enjoyed live

music from a band who braved a snowstorm to attend.

The night was filled with joy, laughter, and community spirit, and Mr. Chamut wore the biggest smile of all. Thank you Mr. Chamut!

This article is shared in loving memory of Mr. Chamut, who passed away in March 2025.

— Sister Leila Greco Apartments

Drive High-Quality People-Centred Care

Connection to Culture and the Land in Addiction Recovery



In 1967, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie opened the first alcohol and drug treatment centre located inside a general hospital in what was a controversial decision at a time, when addiction was seen as a 'weakness in character.' That program has evolved and is now operating as a standalone site called the Sister Margaret Smith Centre. Over the years, the addictions recovery programs and services have continued to change and advance as our knowledge of the disease grew, incorporating new evidence-based approaches to meet the needs of people and families seeking support.

The Youth Live-In Program, a 5-week intensive program rooted in a strengths-based strategy, has experienced completion rates of around 50% over the past two years. In response, the program has tried a new approach, and the early results are promising.

In November 2024, the program offered an all male cohort with enhanced supports from N'doo'owe Binesi to double cultural programming from two to four sessions per week while also increasing land-based activities. Core offerings like group therapy, individual counselling, life skills development, and relapse prevention remained part of the program. The cohort achieved a 100% completion rate, giving graduates a more complete skillset to equip them for success.

What resonated was the strong, positive connections that formed among the youths, who shared that they each felt understood and that the cultural teachings and land-based learnings gave them insights and confidence to move forward on their paths. Nodin Moses, Cultural Practitioner, gifted each youth with a feather that symbolized their commitment and strength.

Next up will be an all female youth cohort adopting the same approach. Choice is important, and youth can attend programming for the gender with which they identify, and can always opt for mixed group or individual programming, underscoring the importance of meeting people where they are on their journey.

Nurture Our People

Cultural Safety and Equity Learning Opportunities

St. Joseph's Care Group's values describe how we act as an organization, providing care that is safe and welcoming, actively addressing systemic racism and discrimination as we strive for a healthcare environment that is equitable for all. Collectively, all staff incorporate those values while at the same time bringing their unique experiences, culture, background and beliefs to their work.

Recently, a new and innovative approach to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (EDIA-R) training was introduced. It is an approach that leans into self-directed learning, empowering staff to develop the skills and knowledge they feel they need in a way that is psychologically safe and highly personalized. Incorporated as part of mandatory annual learnings, St. Joseph's Care Group staff must complete two self-directed Cultural Safety & Equity Training modules annually. To position staff for success, a Learning Library has been curated with mixed media resources that are easily accessed. In Spring 2025, the Learning Library will be extended to St. Joseph's Care Group's Board of Directors.

St. Joseph's Care Group is working purposefully to *Advance Our Work in Truth & Reconciliation and EDIA-R*, as prioritized in our *Strategic Plan 2024-2028* and reinforced in the Commitment Statements of the Board of Directors.

Lead and Enhance Regional Specialized Care

Building Bridges to Opportunity Through Knowledge Sharing

Last March, the two-day *Regional Knowledge Gathering Event: Walking Together with Humility* brought together Indigenous communities, healthcare providers, professionals, community agencies, and Indigenous groups to strategize pathways forward to improve health service delivery in a way that works for Indigenous peoples.

An integral part of N'doo'owe Binesi's work is to grow and share knowledge, and on February 18, 2025, they were invited to make a presentation to the Advisory Circle of Indigenous Services Canada's First Nation & Inuit Health Branch. The Advisory Circle is a network comprised of over 30 government officials and representatives from Indigenous health organizations that aims to address Indigenous-specific racism in Canada's healthcare system. What we learned through the *Regional Knowledge Gathering Event* was conveyed, along with further details on Envisioning Design Events; St. Joseph's Care Group's Anti-Racism & Discrimination Framework; N'doo'owe Binesi Staff Engagement; and the *Walking with Humility: Embracing the Teachings of the West 2024-2028 Plan*.

This opportunity provided direct connections and fostered relationships with providers and planners at the local and federal levels, and as one Advisory Circle member noted, "The discussion around person-centred care, community-driven approaches, and cultural representation was inspiring." For St. Joseph's Care Group, it furthers our priority to lead and enhance regional specialized care by amplifying the impact of our Indigenous cultural safety approach on the system by sharing our learnings with peers.

Strategic Enablers

A Visit from Federal Minister of Mental Health & Addictions

On Friday, February 28, 2025, Federal Minister of Mental Health & Addictions Ya'ara Saks, together with Marcus Powlowski, Member of Parliament (MP) for Thunder Bay – Rainy River, visited St. Joseph's Care Group's Oliver Road location. The visit was an opportunity to see firsthand the work underway to expand and enhance addictions services, notably the relocation of Withdrawal Management and, at the time of the visit, preparations to open the first seven safe sobering beds at the site.

It was a visit framed around connections. The Minister wanted to understand more about the local need, and during her visit she engaged with and heard the perspectives of a client with lived experience who is now helping collaboratively design services at the site, an addictions medicine physician, site leadership, and SJCG's President & CEO and Vice President N'doo'owe Binesi.