

## Mission Moment



On March 5, 2026, St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) hosted Iftar gatherings at St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Joseph's Heritage, and Hogarth Riverview Manor, recognizing the significance of Ramadan for many members of our team. Iftar, the evening meal that marks the end of the daily fast observed by Muslims from dawn to sunset, offered a meaningful opportunity to support staff in their faith and create space for connection.

Across the three sites, approximately one hundred employees came together to break their fast at sunset. These gatherings were more than events – they were a tangible expression of SJCG's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring that staff feel seen, respected, and supported in bringing their full selves to work.

By fostering an environment where cultural and religious practices are acknowledged and supported, SJCG continues to strengthen a sense of belonging across the organization and reinforce the values that underpin a compassionate, inclusive workplace.

*- Submitted on behalf of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council*

## Drive High-Quality People-Centred Care

### Wound Care Expansion

Over the past several years, the Wound Care program has experienced steady growth that has surpassed current clinic capacity. Members of the Clinical, Central Registration and Admission and Regional Referral Systems teams have collaborated to streamline workflows and support clients and families, including expanded clinic hours and strengthened partnerships with community and regional providers. This has improved access and ensured greater continuity of care.

While these actions provide meaningful quality improvement, they do not fully bridge the gap between demand and available resources, highlighting the need for strategic capacity enhancements. SJCG invested in an enhanced staffing model, including the addition of a Nurse Practitioner, to ensure the delivery of comprehensive wound, ostomy, and continence care locally and across the region, while also reducing demand on acute care emergency department and inpatient beds. To fully support this service expansion, changes to the clinic space across the existing Ambulatory Care space at St. Joseph's Hospital were made to create additional treatment rooms.

Implementation is underway, with divisional staff and a Client & Family Partner engaged to inform the final design of the spaces. SJCG continues to evaluate longer-term opportunities to enhance clinical capacity and infrastructure.

## Nurture Our People

### Translating Values into Practice through Updated Principles of Conduct

SJCG's Principles of Conduct (POCs) have recently undergone a comprehensive review and revision in response to our recent Mission, Vision, and Values update, with the goal of ensuring that behavioural and professional standards of staff reflect and support existing organizational frameworks.

The collaborative review and revision process was done through a multidisciplinary committee consisting of representatives from management and staff across each division of SJCG, as well as a Client & Family Partner. The committee carefully examined both the purpose and practical application of the POCs within the organization. This work informed the transition of the POCs from a guiding document into a formal policy, providing clearer expectations and a more structured framework to ensure consistency, fairness, and transparency in how the POCs are understood and applied.

The updated policy was made live on March 17, 2026, and is grounded in three key principles (SJCG's core values) that guide staff interactions with clients, colleagues, and the broader community. Together with the new policy, these principles establish clear, values-aligned expectations for care and conduct, translating our Mission and Values into practice and supporting SJCG's commitment to fostering a compassionate, culturally safe, and inclusive environment for everyone.

## Lead and Enhance Regional Specialized Care

### Supporting Education and Communities with the Regional Palliative Care Program

The North West Regional Palliative Care Program (RPCP) is responsible for supporting access to high-quality palliative care across the region we serve, ensuring everyone has access to person-centred care that is close to home. The program operates using a community capacity-building approach by building on existing strengths and resources in each community, coupled with fostering relationships and providing continuing education to care providers.

As part of our funding requirements, we assess and respond to the learning needs that are identified in community by healthcare providers working with us. On March 19, 2026, the RPCP and Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health hosted a lecture on Serious Illness Conversations and Addressing Suffering with guest speaker and palliative care physician Dr. Jeff Myers (University of Toronto). The session was accredited by The College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Continuing Education and Professional Development Office at Northern Ontario School of Medicine University.

The presentation focused on exploring options for the evolving landscape of primary care in serious illness, including Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)\*, with an emphasis placed on the importance of good communication skills to provide compassionate, high-quality care. The information on MAiD\* centred on Ontario's legislation changes, where other provinces differ with their legislation, and the complexity and opportunity to further explore suffering with patients when a request is made. The presentation was a success, with more than 50 Nurse Practitioners and Physicians in attendance, and an overwhelmingly positive response in provided feedback.

In addition to formal education sessions, healthcare providers and partner organizations will also continue receiving support through the RPCP's Clinical Coach position, which has recently received a continuation of funding through Ontario Health for an additional 12 months. Clinical Coaches collaborate with our health partners to mentor, coach and provide support to health care providers to build palliative care skills, improve care delivery, and manage complex patient needs in Northwestern Ontario.

From lectures and events to ongoing mentorship and support with care delivery, the RPCP continues its work to build local capacity and strengthen relationships, helping to ensure that comprehensive palliative care is available to everyone.

*\*Disclaimer provided to registrants, developed collaboratively with Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario: While Catholic health organizations do not promote or provide MAiD, we fully support comprehensive education for primary care providers. Education such as this strengthens primary healthcare providers' ability to navigate the complex and deeply sensitive conversations that arise when caring for people with advancing serious illness, especially when addressing suffering.*

## Strategic Enablers

### Embedding Cultural Services to Meet People Where They Are

The Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub is an innovative model of care introduced in Ontario in 2025 as a 3-year demonstration project. The goal of HART Hubs is to bring together local service delivery partners to provide a continuum of services for individuals with complex service needs on their recovery journey from addictions and homelessness. There are 18 HART Hubs in Ontario, and NorWest Community Health Centres is the lead organization for the Hub here in Thunder Bay. SJCG is a key partner in the HART Hub service delivery.

Among the services we have integrated into the Hub is the Cultural Outreach Team. Indigenous Cultural programming plays a major role. SJCG has five full-time equivalent positions embedded into the HART Hub to ensure that clients have access to Ceremony and Traditional Healing, System Navigation and Peer Support, while receiving other services offered by the Hub.

Through community partners or self-referrals, clients can access a continuum of Traditional healing services to meet them where they are on their journey. N'doo'owe Binesi staff travel between different physical sites on a weekly basis to provide Traditional healing practices such as Sweat Lodge and Drumming.

Since April 2025, the N'doo'owe Binesi's Cultural Outreach team has held a total of 66 events to support wholistic healing, reaching over 2,000 clients.