

## WELL AWARE – SPRING 2015

May 11th, 2015

The North Bay Regional Health Centre is pleased to provide you with our quarterly e-newsletter update! NBRHC Well Aware is designed to keep you up to date on changes to our services, new initiatives and news that impacts our communities

### **New Forensic Mental Health Unit for Women at NBRHC**

The NE LHIN recently announced new funding for Northerners who are experiencing mental health and addiction challenges.

Of the announced funding, \$3.2 million will go toward developing a new women's forensic mental health unit at NBRHC, to meet provincial needs.

"This new highly specialized Provincial level female forensic mental health unit is a testament to the NBRHC team's reputation for high quality care and demonstrated reliability," said Paul Heinrich, President and CEO of NBRHC. The unique needs of women in the forensic mental health system requires the development of a dedicated, highly supported and secure inpatient unit to better respond to specific needs which often involves complex disorders and related challenging behaviours. NBRHC has been chosen to develop and operate this specialized intensive treatment, rehabilitation and behavioural management service for the Province which will take into account the differences in the offending, medical and psychiatric profiles of women.

"Women referred to our service will likely have had complicated lives, failed treatments and negative clinical experiences," said Hélène Philbin Wilkinson, Director, Dual Diagnosis and Mental Health & the Law. "As such, our long term goal will be to foster an internal change process within patients in a trusting therapeutic environment while facilitating continuity of care planning with our referring hospitals. We will work with our partners to gain their input into care decisions about the patient on an on-going basis."



The new unit will be developed with eight beds for adult women (18 yrs+) who have been found unfit to stand trial or not criminally responsible due to mental disorder and are subject to Disposition Orders of the Ontario Review Board (ORB) under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Following the planning and development phase, the new unit will open for patients in late 2016.

Patients in this unit will stay from 18 months to three years depending on their individualized needs and plan of care.

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## Hospital Reaches Top 10 Wait Times in Province

The North Bay Regional Health Centre (NBRHC) has hit a significant milestone with the latest “Pay-for-Result” (P4R) wait-time figures; ranking the hospital in the top ten in the province for the months of January and February, 2015.



Ontario’s Pay-for-Results program was initiated to assist hospitals in improving emergency room wait times. In 2013, the hospital ranked 24<sup>th</sup> in performance followed by a ranking of 13<sup>th</sup> in 2014 out of the 74 largest hospitals.

In addition, the hospital was recently awarded the designation of “one of the provinces’s high performing P4R sites” by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for sustaining wait time improvements over the years. “These results speak to great team work between hospital staff, physicians, administration and organizational wide support of improving efficiency and quality of patient care,” says Dr. Erica Buck, Medical Director & Chief of Emergency Medicine, NBRHC.

“The ultimate hospital and community goal is to provide care in the right place, at the right time by the right care provider,” says Eric Bouchard, Manager of the Emergency Department, NBRHC. “Without striving for efficient care in the hospital and Emergency Department, the ED and hospital beds would be overcrowded.”

Evidence supports that ED overcrowding and long wait times lead to more hospital admissions, higher death rates and shorter wait times improve patient satisfaction.

“One of our community’s greatest challenges is a shortage of family doctors /primary care providers,” says Dr. Buck. “The hospital hopes that these latest Pay-For-Results achievements will attract more family physicians (as well as family physicians who want to work in the ED) to our community.”

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## Volunteers Enhance Overall Patient Experience

People recovering from physical injuries are more optimistic about their rehabilitation if they are physically and socially active. Older adults report a ‘sharper mind’ when in a higher level of social involvement. People with mental illness are more likely to report a reduction of their symptoms, fewer feelings of stigma and a higher level of confidence when physically and socially active.

At the North Bay Regional Health Centre, volunteers are enhancing the overall patient experience by assisting Recreation Therapists with the facilitation of therapeutic programs and activities for individuals with illnesses or disabling conditions. By reducing isolation, decreasing anxiety and providing positive companionship, volunteers are helping improve quality of life and promote recovery.

“By giving their time and sharing their talents, volunteers support a wide range of recreational activities and help provide meaningful leisure opportunities for patients,” says Oriana Webster, Acting Coordinator of the Volunteer



Department. “By helping to reduce isolation, decreasing anxiety and providing positive companionship, volunteers are helping to improve quality of life and promote recovery.”

Take Ron Walsh for example, who has been volunteering weekly at the hospital for the past three years playing guitar on the Complex Continuing Care unit.

“Music is in everyone,” Ron says with smile. “It is important to get patients out of their room interacting with others and participating in a positive activity.”

Music therapy can ease anxiety and provides an opportunity for social interaction. At the hospital, patients come together and are encouraged to participate by singing along. “You Are My Sunshine is often a favourite, as we can all sing that one together,” says Ron.

Nicky Poulin has also been volunteering with the hospital through Recreation Therapy; however, it is for a very different program.



Every Monday morning for the past three years, Nicky has been instructing a Yoga & Wellness program in the hospital gym for mental health patients.

Nicky teaches patients basic yoga poses and different breathing techniques that help with pain, stress, and anxiety. “Yoga is not just a physical activity, it is about balancing out the body and mind,” says Nicky. “When someone is stressed, their body tenses. If they are angry, they clench their fists. If we can help teach the body to relax, the mind is connected and will relax too.”



While Nicky is the teacher of these classes, she feels through this program she is the person who has learned the most. “You learn so much about people and their life experiences when you volunteer. By giving my time and knowledge, I receive a gift in return—gaining such a rewarding experience.”

Colleen Harrison, Recreational Therapist at the North Bay Regional Health Centre, is grateful for the help volunteers provide. “It is because of these volunteers dedicating their time and sharing their gifts with our patients, that we are able to continue to offer and expand on these unique programs,” says Harrison. “It is easy to feel low when suffering from an illness, so these enjoyable therapeutic activities are important.”

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## **NBRHC and the NE LHIN selected to lead the work of Behavioural Supports Ontario**

A new provincial leadership role confirms the positive work that’s taken place to enhance health care services for people with challenging and complex behaviours and their caregivers who live in the North East region.

North Bay Regional Health Centre will be the single provider to lead the Ontario-wide work of Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO). BSO is a provincial project that provides support for older adults with ‘responsive’ behaviours which can range from roaming, to withdrawing, to verbalizations and striking out.

Monica Bretzlaff, North East BSO Regional Manager with NBRHC, will serve as the BSO provincial manager, and with the NE LHIN hold the Accountability Agreement on behalf of all 14 LHINs in Ontario. This decision was based on positive feedback and outcomes of work that Bretzlaff and her NE BSO regional team have accomplished to date.

Bretzlaff will be responsible for provincial BSO deliverables related to tracking information and working with the Alzheimer’s society and other provincial associations to better the care for people experiencing responsive behaviours.

“The North East LHIN has invested in specialized training for more than 70 front-line workers, and another 7,500 practitioners already working in the field, to provide older adults with the care they need, as well as coaching families and staff on strategies to help prevent and respond to responsive behaviours,” said Louise Paquette, CEO, NE LHIN. “We look forward to continuing our work with partners to further spread the success of BSO across the region.”

Four integrated BSO response teams are based in community, hospitals, tertiary care and long-term care homes within Northeastern Ontario (Sudbury-Parry Sound-Manitoulin, Nipissing-Temiskaming, Cochrane and Algoma). Focused on enhancing care and capacity, these hub teams are also linked with key medical and psychiatric specialists.



“The greatest reward for impacting change is the opportunity to keep change evolving,” said Bretzlaff. “I am honoured and excited to represent our NE LHIN, NBRHC and my regional and provincial care partners in this person-family centred care revolution. Together, we will continue to drive positive system transformation that remains firmly grounded in the lived experience!”

Bretzlaff was recognized with the NE LHIN’s Healthy Change Champion Award in 2012 for championing BSO as a new system of care for our most vulnerable Northerners. Responsive behaviours can be a result of dementia, mental health and/or substance use disorders, and other neurological disorders. Individuals are called responsive because they may be responding to an unmet need or desire through behavioural expressions as a result of no longer being able to effectively communicate their needs.

For information on how to access a BSO team close to your community, please contact the North East BSO Regional Central Intake line at 1-855-276-6313 (1-855-BSO-NE13) or Monica Bretzlaff at 705-675-9193, ext. 8905. For more information on the BSO Strategy and the provincial work underway, please contact Monica at [monica.bretzlaff@nbrhc.on.ca](mailto:monica.bretzlaff@nbrhc.on.ca).

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## Mammo-Rama Breast Screening Challenge a Success

Madeleine Mantha came into the hospital 10 years ago for a breast screening exam, and has been volunteering with the program ever since.

As both a volunteer and a patient of the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) at the North Bay Regional Health Centre (NBRHC), Mantha knows the importance of using this service on a regular basis.

“I make sure to come as a patient myself every two years, as that is the recommended timeframe from OBSP. Early detection results in better health outcomes, and I want to be proactive about my own health,” says Mantha.



Sixty-seven women made health their priority early this May, when they participated in the NBRHC's eighth annual Mammo-Rama Breast Screening Challenge (formerly known as 50 Over Fifty).

OBSP locations in communities across the north east encouraged women who have never been screened or had not had a mammogram in over two years to come in and receive a mammogram.

The goal of breast screening is to detect breast cancer at an early stage before symptoms appear, when it can be most effectively treated.

"Mammo-rama can truly be a life saving event," says Mantha. "The OBSP staff are so warm and welcoming, it makes the breast screening process easy."

In Ontario, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women and the second leading cause of cancer deaths in females. The Mammo-Rama Breast Screening Challenge provides an opportunity for women to get screened, and receive additional information about breast cancer.

Screening saves lives! For more information about the Ontario Breast Screening Program at the North Bay Regional Health Centre, call 705-495-7930 or visit our website at [www.nbrhc.on.ca](http://www.nbrhc.on.ca)

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## Spotlight on Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a serious illness caused by the bite of an infected black legged tick. Ticks are small, ranging from the size of a poppy seed to a pea. The size of the tick varies depending on its age and whether it has fed recently. The bite is usually painless so you may not know that you have been bitten.

Two types of ticks spread Lyme disease in Canada:

- western black legged tick (British Columbia)
- blacklegged tick (other parts of Canada)



### What is the treatment?

Most cases of Lyme disease can be effectively treated with 2 to 4 weeks of antibiotics. Depending on the symptoms and when you were diagnosed, you may require a longer course of antibiotics.

Some people experience symptoms that continue more than 6 months after treatment. Research continues into the causes of these persistent symptoms and possible treatment methods.