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News Release

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Aging at Home Strategy Launches in North West LHIN

Seniors' Access to Community-Based Health Care Services Improved

The North West LHIN Board of Directors has approved seven programs designed to help seniors across Northwestern Ontario live healthy, independent lives in the comfort of their own homes. The programs are part of the province's landmark Aging at Home Strategy, a four-year initiative launched in late 2007.

Aging at Home is part of the Ontario government's broader strategy to reduce wait times in emergency rooms. Offering better community supports to our seniors allows them to stay in their homes longer and reduces the pressures on Ontario's ERs.

The almost \$422,000 investment announced today marks the beginning of the Aging at Home process and announcements in the North West LHIN. Almost \$6.5-million will be invested in this initiative in the region over the next three years.

The North West LHIN's Year One Aging at Home priorities are programs that:

- 1) Reduce seniors' length of hospital stay
- 2) Decrease unnecessary admissions to long-term care and hospital
- 3) Improve the health and safety of seniors

The seven initiatives announced today are new and will provide innovative health care services for seniors and their caregivers, ranging from in-home exercise for homebound seniors to training and support services for care providers so they can serve remote First Nations seniors in their communities to providing non-medical needs to seniors such as grocery shopping, seasonal chores and home repair.

QUOTES

“These programs build on the announcements of the Aging at Home vans for seniors in the northwest and the Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors’ Services (CEISS) project in Thunder Bay,” says Janice Beazley, Acting Chair of the North West LHIN’s Board of Directors. “They transform into action what seniors, their families and caregivers told us was important – having the appropriate services in place to support seniors who want to live at home in their community.”

“We are shifting the way we’re delivering health to seniors by bringing care to their communities so people can stay at home longer, surrounded by loved ones and where they are most comfortable,” says David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. “Providing rides to appointments and the innovative programs, as well as increased home care and other supports, provides greater access to care for tens of thousands of seniors and at the same time builds stronger communities throughout Ontario.”

“With these programs seniors in Northwestern Ontario will be able to live comfortably at home while receiving the care they deserve,” says Michael Gravelle, MPP from Thunder Bay – Superior North. “This investment further proves the McGuinty government’s dedication to helping our seniors.”

QUICK FACTS

- 14% of the people in the North West LHIN are seniors.
- The NW LHIN's rate of hospital and emergency use among seniors is much higher than Ontario overall.
- The average length of stay in hospital for NW LHIN seniors is over 9 days.
- Eight Aging at Home vans were announced in the North West LHIN in June and will be providing transportation for seniors to health-related appointments starting in the fall.
- The Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors’ Services, to open in 2011 in Thunder Bay, will include 336 long-term care beds (including 64 beds for seniors in the region with responsive behaviours like dementia), 132 new supportive housing units and community support and Community Care Access Centre services for an additional 150 senior clients.

LEARN MORE

Read more about [Ontario’s Aging at Home Strategy](#).

The North West LHIN is responsible for planning, integrating and funding local health services – hospitals, long term care facilities, the community care access centre, community health centres, community support services and mental health and addictions agencies.

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*Healthier people, a strong
health system – our future*

Backgrounder

New Aging at Home Strategy Initiatives for Seniors in the North West LHIN

The North West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) Board of Directors has approved close to \$422,000 for seven new seniors' health service projects under the Aging at Home Strategy – the province's four-year initiative. The strategy, announced in late 2007, is aimed at meeting the health and wellness needs of seniors who require some assistance to live at home independently and reducing the reliance on hospitals and long-term care homes.

These seniors' projects are the first of a number of Aging at Home initiatives to be announced by the North West LHIN.

The North West LHIN issued a Call for Proposals from service providers for innovative projects that reduce seniors' length of stay at hospitals, prevent unnecessary admissions to hospitals and long-term care, and improve the health and safety of seniors at home. The proposals were submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for approval.

These first-year initiatives, to begin in fall 2008, are all new health care services for seniors and their caregivers living in Northwestern Ontario.

APPROVED AGING AT HOME STRATEGY PROJECTS FOR THE NORTH WEST LHIN

Name of the Project	Service Provider	Project Description	2008/2009 Funding
Principles of Physical Rehabilitation: A Training Workshop for Personal Support Workers in Remote First Nation Communities	Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre	This initiative is a new way of offering training and support services closer to the homes of First Nations seniors and their care providers. The use of videoconferencing to deliver telerehab consultations in remote First Nations communities is innovative, enables service in seniors' home communities and supports improvements in quality of care. This initiative is supported through a partnership with KO Telemedicine.	\$10,000
First Link	Alzheimer Society of Thunder Bay	First Link is an early referral and intervention program that links the senior and family members/caregivers in the Thunder Bay District to coordinated learning, services and support from the point of diagnosis and	\$67,500

		throughout the continuum of the disease. This program provides access for seniors with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia and their caregivers to comprehensive and coordinated services early in the disease process.	
Programs for Community Living -Marathon	Wilson Memorial General Hospital	This initiative will provide a functional support program for Marathon community seniors who are frail and at most risk of hospitalization. Support for daily living activities like seasonal chores, meals, housekeeping, home repairs and grocery shopping is provided through traditional and non-traditional care partnerships. The initiative is designed to provide a flexible basket of services based on the unique needs of each senior. This initiative will be supported through a strong partnership with the local seniors' association and the local municipality.	\$43,075
Seniors Maintaining Active Roles Together (SMART) Program	Victorian Order of Nurses – Thunder Bay	This initiative provides physical activity to isolated, homebound, sedentary seniors as a positive health intervention. This program brings services to seniors with the goal of improving mobility, flexibility and strength. Services will be offered throughout the Northwest.	\$31,858
Programs for Community Living – Terrace Bay/Schreiber	The McCausland Hospital	This initiative will provide a functional support program for Terrace Bay/Schreiber community seniors who are frail and at most risk of hospitalization. Support for daily living activities like seasonal chores, meals, housekeeping, home repairs and grocery shopping is provided through both traditional and non-traditional care partnerships. The initiative is designed to provide a flexible basket of services based on the unique needs of each senior. This initiative will be supported through a strong partnership with the local seniors' organization, Townships	\$43,075

		of Terrace Bay and Schreiber and the Family Health Team	
North Shore MedExpress Services	Manitouwadge General Hospital	Two medical transit buses will be providing transportation from Manitouwadge and Geraldton to Thunder Bay for medical appointments three times weekly. This safe, economical service will link seniors with specialist health services in Thunder Bay. The buses are accessible and can accommodate one stretcher per trip. They will serve seniors in communities along highway 17 and 11 corridors and will be managed through a centralized and coordinated approach.	\$207,141
Rural Geriatric Primary Care Outreach Program	Mary Berglund Community Health Centre	A multidisciplinary health team on board a Rural Geriatric Health Mobile Unit will provide comprehensive health care services for homebound elderly in Ignace and outlying rural areas of Dinorwic and Savant Lake. Services will include primary care, chronic disease management and prevention, health promotion and health screening.	\$19,300
TOTAL			\$421,949

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