

Connecting People in Nipissing with the Mental Health and Addictions Support they Need

North East LHIN Recognizes Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team as a Healthy Change Champion

November 27, 2018 – When it comes to mental health and addictions in Northeastern Ontario, navigating the system of supports can be challenging – and a group in Nipissing is doing something about it.

The Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team helped to develop a system navigation guide to better connect clients to the services they need related to mental health, addictions, and developmental disabilities. For its dedication to improving and transforming the mental health and addictions system in Nipissing, the team has been nominated a North East LHIN Healthy Change Champion.



Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team: (from left) Dan Billingsley, Laura Johnson, Kathleen Eveson, Donna Forget, Joel Johnson, Moira Wheeler and Erika Labonte (missing from photo: Sandy Deschenes and Lynn Perreault)

“Increasing access to mental health and addictions services is one of our top priorities,” said Jeremy Stevenson, CEO, North East LHIN. “This new navigation guide created by the Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team will help service providers to better understand an individual’s needs and connect people to the services that best meet those needs.”

The Service Navigation Guide has four parts: engagement building, service matching, information and referral, and collecting navigation data. Service providers are using the guide to help individuals, seeking and receiving services, identify and prioritize their needs, provide them with information about options for services or supports in community, and track navigation in a community database.

“The Service Navigation Guide can be used to support an individual at various points in their service journey,” said Dan Billingsley, Chair, Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team & Case Manager, North Bay Recovery Home.

“The guide provides structure to enhance existing skills, practices, and processes related to navigation and referrals.”

The Service Collaborative Implementation Team, a work group that provides advice to the Nipissing Service Collaborative, helped design the guide. The group also oversaw a website, available in English and French, that can be used by people looking for information about locally accessible services for themselves, a family member, or a friend.

“Using this guide helps to establish new connections between providers as they learn more about the services that are available locally and refer people to those services while tracking local navigation data to provide information on service gaps and trends which can inform local service improvements,” said Mr. Billingsley.

This project is now in the implementation phase, and the guide is being tested with workers and clients in the Nipissing District. Seven local agencies are using the guide with their clients and capturing important referral information.

“Members of the Service Collaborative Implementation Team have shown a deep dedication to this project. They truly demonstrate system thinking,” said Alan McQuarrie, co-chair, Nipissing Service Collaborative & Executive Director, Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing. “They recognize that health and wellness goes beyond the mandate of their organizations, indeed beyond the mandate of the health care sector. They each bring vision and energy to bring this project to life.”

The Nipissing Service Collaborative Implementation Team is planning to fully launch the Service Navigation Guide between January and March 2019.

Background Information – Healthy Change Champion Award:

- **Who is eligible?** North East LHIN health service providers, employees and volunteers of providers, as well as, health care leaders, community leaders, and other Northerners who are contributing to building a stronger health care system in the North East.
- **What kind of work does the North East LHIN Healthy Change Champion recognize?** Those who are transforming the health care system so that it is more patient/client-focused, integrated, and easier to access. These are people or organizations who are reaching out to others in the course of their work to improve the system. Their work may be small or large in scope, but it's significant in that it is making a difference in people's lives.
- **Who can nominate?** Any Northerner can suggest a Healthy Change Champion. In one or two paragraphs explain why you believe the person or organization deserves this recognition. Send your nomination to engagingwithyou@lhins.on.ca or 555 Oak Street East, Third Floor, North Bay, ON, P1B 8E3.
- **How are they chosen?** Nominees are reviewed by a senior team from the North East LHIN. Consideration is also given to individuals and organizations advancing the care for certain population groups within the North East LHIN including seniors, Aboriginal/First Nations/Métis, and Francophones.

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