

Sahtu Health & Social Services UPDATE

APRIL TO JUNE, 2006
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Making an Impression

Our new Logo

Our logo was the result of two design competitions: one open to all Sahtu residents, and one for youth only. This version is an adaptation of the winning entry, which was submitted by Dennis Kenny of Deline.

Consistent through all the artwork received was the theme of Sahtu Gotine culture and tradition.

The logo is set within 2 concentric circles, representing the Sahtu as a whole. The

circles also suggest the Dene Medicine Wheel, and the graphic representation of the Integrated Services Delivery Model, which, together, serve to guide our practice.

The 4 quadrants of the circle represent the physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental aspects of all people, which must be in balance for optimal well-being. The inward facing arrows separating the quadrants point to the core, which is the client.

Delving deeper, the quadrants depict: the elders, symbolizing respect, one of the core values of the SHSSA; the caribou and fish embody traditional foods and healthy lifestyles; the drum remembers Dene culture and the balance which is essential for a healthy life; finally, the three beaver pelts on the side of Bear Rock recall the legend of Yamouria, the great Lawmaker, and celebrate the land and identity of the Sahtu Region.

Who's in charge?

The SHSSA Board of Trustees.

The Sahtu Health & Social Services Authority Board of Trustees held its inaugural meeting in September of 2005.

Selected from a panel of nominees put forward by the 5 Sahtu communities, the board was appointed by the Minister of Health & Social Services.

So far, the board has had 4 formal meetings. The trustees also traveled to Whitehorse and Edmonton to meet and learn from existing Authorities.

The Board has worked very hard to get the fundamental underpinnings of a new Authority in place.

Photo (Left to Right) **Back Row:** Melinda Laboucan, Youth Rep; Florence Barnaby, Fort Good Hope; Alfred Masazumi, Elder Rep.; Diane Baptiste, Norman Wells; **Seated:** Judith Wright-Bird, Tulita (Chair); Joe Martin-Oudzi, Colville Lake (Guest); **Absent:** Danny Bayha, Deline; Linda Kochon-Manuel, Colville Lake

- **Our Vision:** *Diverse and healthy families, balanced in wholistic well-being, and strengthened by the values of the Sahtu culture.*
- **Our Mission:** *Providing excellent Health and Social care.*

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General Information

- Currently there is a **VERY LOW RISK** of getting Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) in the NWT.
- Bird Flu is a contagious viral infection that can affect all species of birds, and rarely can affect mammals such as humans and pigs.
- While Bird Flu can rarely be passed from birds to humans, it is **NOT** passed from person to person at this time.
- It is only certain subtypes of the virus that have occasionally caused illness in people.
- The variant that has been associated with the most serious symptoms in humans (Type A: H5N1) has not yet been seen outside Europe and Asia.
- In these regions, most of the cases have been in people who work closely with large numbers of live birds in enclosed spaces.
- Scientists are worried that the disease will mutate (change), and develop the ability to be passed from human to human.
- The symptoms of Bird Flu can range from typical flu-like illness (fever, sore throat, cough, aches and pains), to pneumonia, difficulty breathing and other serious complications.
- There is currently no vaccine to prevent Bird Flu infections. A vaccine is being worked on, but it is difficult to say when it will be available.

What's being done about it?

- The Canadian Wildlife service, through the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre, is sampling birds from all migratory waterfowl flyways in the country, including those that enter the NWT.
- The GNWT also submits any dead birds for testing. Renewable Resource officers should be notified of any dead birds found so they can be collected and sent for testing. Proper techniques should be used when handling dead birds, so individuals should leave them for the professionals to deal with.
- All suspected cases of Avian Flu are reported to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.
- The GNWT is currently working with all communities in the Territory to update the Pandemic section of their emergency response plans. The revisions are due to be in place by the end of May.

What can individuals do?

- **Most important: Wash your hands OFTEN!!**
- Hunters and others on the land should avoid handling or eating sick game.
- Wear disposable latex or vinyl gloves when handling and cleaning game.
- Thoroughly wash hands, equipment and all surfaces that come in contact with game.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling game to avoid accidental exposure to germs
- While there is no evidence to suggest that people can get Bird Flu from eating contaminated food, game should always be fully cooked to kill germs.
- A person traveling to areas in Europe and Asia where Avian Flu has been confirmed should be sure to get a flu shot before leaving Canada. While there is no specific vaccine for Avian flu yet, there is some evidence that the flu shot may reduce the severity of certain varieties of the flu that it doesn't actually cover against.
- In countries where the Bird flu has been confirmed, avoid contact with live birds – this includes farms and markets where poultry is being sold.

(References: --GNWT, Department of Health & Social Services Website; --Health Canada Website)

The Sahtu Health & Social Services Authority is responsible for the provision of Community based, and Regional services within the Sahtu.

Territorial Services are those that are provided on our behalf by other Government Authorities, or by Non Government Organizations (NGOs).

DENTAL SERVICES

Because there is a private Dental clinic in Norman Wells, the SHSSA has little involvement with dental services in that community. For the other 4 communities, dental services are provided by a dental contractor, under the regulation of the Non-Insured Health Benefits Dept. (NIHB) of Health Canada.

We have just completed an RFP process for a dental contractor, and the contract has once again been awarded to the Sahtu Dental Clinic in Norman Wells.

VISION SERVICES

Vision Services are provided for us by the Stanton Territorial Health Authority (Stanton Eye Clinic), which arranges for regular visits by an Optometrist during the year. Stanton has its own contract with a company that makes and repairs glasses, which also visits the communities along with the Optometrist.

REHABILITATION (REHAB) MEDICINE SERVICES

Rehab Medicine is the collective name for Physiotherapy (PT), Occupational Therapy (OT), and Speech & Language Pathology (SLP). Rehab services in the Sahtu have historically been provided from both Yellowknife, and Inuvik.

At present, all our Rehab services are being provided by the Beaufort Delta Health & Social Services Authority (BDHSSA) in Inuvik. Services are delivered by a combination of Authority staff and Contractors.

Owing to a national shortage of qualified SLP providers, BDHSSA is unable to tell us when we can expect visits from this discipline. They are currently working with one contractor, and negotiating with a second. More in the next newsletter.

MEDICAL TRAVEL

Medical travel coordination is provided for the whole Territory by the Stanton Territorial Health Authority.

Stanton has committed to have representatives from Medical Travel visit the communities during the summer to brief residents and Authority staff about the services available, and how to access them.

SCHEDULE OF COMMUNITY VISITS BY TERRITORIAL SERVICES: APRIL TO JUNE, 2006

COMMUNITY	REHAB (PT/OT*)	EYE TEAM	DENTAL
Norman Wells	May 8-9, 2006	May 11-13, 2006	Private clinic
Tulita	May 11-12, 2006		To Be Advised (TBA)
Deline	May 10-11, 2006	May 8-10, 2006	TBA
Fort Good Hope	May 22-24, 2006		TBA
Colville Lake			TBA

We'll be including information about physician services, including family practitioners and specialists, in the next issue of **Update**. Please stay tuned...

**Information about SLP visits not yet available.*

Staffing update

Comings and goings

Sahtu Health & Social Services Authority

At the Sahtu Health & Social Services Authority, we recognize the importance of continuity of care to the quality of our services.

In collaboration with our colleagues at Human Resources, the SHSSA has been working very hard to recruit full time staff for our region. So far, we have had the following successes:

Nurses:

We are very fortunate to welcome a permanent NIC for Norman Wells, who will be attending an upgrading course in Yellowknife in May, then

starting work at the Health Centre in August. We are also sponsoring 3 Registered Nurses in the Community Health Nurse (CHN) Development program through the GNWT. They will all be joining us within the next few months: 2 in Norman Wells, and 1 in Deline.

Social Workers:

We will have a Social Worker / Intern starting in Tulita in April. Her Internship is for a 1 year term.

A Social Worker will be starting in Fort Good Hope in April, also for a 1 year term.

Mental Health & Addictions:

Our Regional Mental Health Clinical Supervisor, and a new Mental Health Worker will both be starting in Norman Wells in late April / early May.

Most vacancies in our region are currently posted, and are being actively recruited for.

Finally:

We bid a sad farewell to Judy Miller, Manager of Social Services. We wish her all the best in her new position at home in Nova Scotia.

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Contributions welcome!

SHSSA will be publishing our **Update** Newsletter quarterly. Contributions of good news articles relating to Health & Social Services in our region will be gratefully accepted. Submitted articles become the property of the SHSSA. If used, articles may be edited for length or content.

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Useful Phone Numbers (Area Code is always "867")

Community	Health Centre	Social Services
Norman Wells	587-2250 (Phone) 587-2934 (Fax)	587-3447 (Phone) 587-3722 (Fax)
Tulita	588-4251 (Phone) 588-3000 (Fax)	588-4271 (Phone) 588-3925 (Fax)
Deline	589-3111 (Phone) 589-3406 (Fax)	589-3041 (Phone) 589-3620 (Fax)
Fort Good Hope	598-2211 (Phone) 598-2605 (Fax)	598-2304 (Phone) 598-2605 (Fax)
Colville Lake	709-2409 (Phone) 709-2504 (Fax)	Contact Fort Good Hope