



Sahtu Health & Social Services

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VOLUME #4 / ISSUE #1

• **Our Vision:**

Diverse and healthy families, balanced in holistic well-being, and strengthened by the values of the Sahtu culture.

• **Our Mission:**

Providing excellent Health and Social care.

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Quality Improvement at SHSSA

Quality improvement and patient safety go hand-in-hand. SHSSA recognizes the value of performing to national quality standards for health and social service organizations and has voluntarily joined Accreditation Canada to undergo continuous and stringent tests of our practices against the national benchmarks.

The standards exist for every service we provide right through to the way we govern the organization. Accreditation involves every staff member, the client, and our partners. During the first two weeks of April if you visited one of our facilities you may have been asked to complete a short client survey. This survey will help us identify gaps between our employees' and clients' perception of services. Please help us by taking the time to fill out a survey.

Facility Renaming

As one way of connecting the facilities we operate with the communities several of these buildings have been renamed based on suggestions from the Community's Leadership. Accompanying the name change is updated signage. Updates include all health centers with the following name changes:

- Deline Health Center is now the Dora Gully Health Center
- Tulita Health Center is now the Harriet Gladue Health Center
- Norman Wells Health Center is now the Monica Loomis Health Center

The facilities are named after people that reflect SHSSA's values of having a commitment to serve and learn, respect and trust.

New Look & Feel for SHSSA Website

We've updated the look and feel of our website to make it more user friendly. People that visit www.shssa.org should be able to spend less time on the site to gather the information they're looking for. Our newsletter is going GREEN—make sure you sign up for our e-newsletter as this will be the last paper communication we send out in paper format on-mass.

Prevention & Health Promotion Service Improvements

The Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority has made significant improvements designed to enhance the health and wellbeing of our communities!

We have received lots of feedback from community members telling us that more Prevention and Health Promotion activities are needed. In response, SHSSA conducted an evaluation of our delivery of these programs.

Traditionally, all over the Northwest Territories, Community Health Representatives (CHRs) and Community Wellness Workers (CWWs) have delivered Prevention & Health Promotion services at the community level. Our evaluation revealed that the scopes of these positions were individually much too narrow to cover the many health and social issues with which our communities struggle. As well, focusing the efforts of the staff was difficult as they all reported to different supervisors in different communities. These supervisors often had differing opinions on what the workers' priorities should be.

With this in mind, we decided that we first had to eliminate the barriers and boundaries between the CHR and CWW positions. Then we could redesign them to work side by side to improve the Health and Wellness of the communities they serve.

So—without any of our staff losing their jobs—we created new positions to replace the CHR and CWW positions. Our staff are now called Prevention and Health Promotion Workers (PHPW). Their jobs are a harmonized mixture of the duties of their former roles.

We're currently making an inventory of our PHPWs' current skill levels. This will allow them (and us) to identify any gaps in their knowledge we can help them fill. Once we've en-

sured the workers have all the skills they need, we'll have a greater capacity in each community to deliver the programs. In addition, once they are all fully operational, the PHPWs will be able to cover for each other for vacations and duty travel—thus improving continuity.

The PHPWs will be spearheading the Prevention and Health Promotion programs and activities around the region. These include things such as the TB program, wellness presentations, and various workshops, as well as celebrations of sobriety and other victories.

Creating the new positions was a good start. We knew, however, that without a coordinated approach to service delivery we'd be no further ahead. Therefore, we created another position to carry out this crucial function. Melody Cottam is a qualified "home grown" Community Health Nurse, and for the last few months has been our regional Health Promotion Officer. We are very pleased that Melody has accepted the position of Coordinator, Prevention & Health Promotion for our region.

As a Registered Nurse, Melody understands the importance of prevention in reducing the negative impact of health and social stresses on people's lives. In consultation with Territorial Health Promotion specialists, SHSSA Senior Management, front line staff, and community members, Melody will lead our Prevention & Health Promotion Unit. Together, we'll plan, deliver, and evaluate activities around the region.

Soon, you will notice a much greater outreach presence in the Sahtu. You'll see a deeper commitment to ensuring residents have the tools and information we need to be safe and healthy. The Prevention & Health Promotion Workers will work as a

holistic unit, providing resources for our physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.

As this unit develops, we expect to see an overall improvement in the health and wellness of our families and communities. We must remember, however, that health and wellness are primarily our own personal responsibility. If we want to improve our communities' health we all need to take steps in our own lives to make ourselves healthier as individuals. We are the sum of our choices!

Please watch for upcoming activities in your community relating to:

- Preventing Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's),
- Tuberculosis prevention and treatment,
- Improving mental and emotional wellness.
- Safety and injury prevention.

We're always looking for suggestions for making our services better. **Please contact Melody Cottam at 587-3650.**

Submitted by:

Tyler Flaumitsch

Strategic Planning

It's time to refresh our mission, vision, and values as well as identify our strategic priorities looking forward. SHSSA is in the process of finding a facilitator to lead both internal and external consultations to gather stakeholder input. Please look for opportunities to contribute over the next few months.

Signing up for our e-newsletter at www.shssa.org ensures you'll receive notices in the most timely manner possible.

The strategic plan is used to guide all the work in the organization. Cascading the priorities throughout the organization ensures all staff work congruently towards the same end. Developing a measurement system that demonstrates our success in addressing the strategic priorities and helps us be accountable to our stakeholders is just as important as the strategic plan.

Dental Services

Health Canada, through its Non Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) branch is responsible for the provision of dental services to aboriginal people. The SHSSA does some of the clerical work associated with the contract for dental services in Fort Good Hope, Colville Lake, Tulita and Deline on behalf of NIHB. The contract doesn't cover Norman Wells because there is a private clinic here which deals with NIHB directly. The most recent contract expired on March 31st, and is currently being re-negotiated.

All the dentists who come to our region are private business people, and not employees of the SHSSA. Since it is not an insured "core" service, dental care is provided to non-aboriginal residents of the Northwest Territories on a "fee for service" basis, or covered by private dental insurance.

Health and Safety Are Everyone's Responsibility

Throughout our accreditation process, we will be evaluating our authority against a large list of national standards. As part of this, we'll be adopting a set of 31 "Required Organizational Practices" (ROPs), most of which highlight the importance of patient / client safety.

As we enter into this exercise, we can see that there are many things we're already doing to make sure you receive safe care. What we haven't done, is formalize all our safety practices, or have a measurement system in place we can employ to demonstrate that we're meeting the standards. Putting these systems in place will be a huge priority over the next few months.

Also, moving forward, you'll notice some subtle and not-so-subtle signs that we're striving to make all the places where we do business safer for our patients / clients, as well as for our staff. This will not just include our Health Centres, Social Services, and Mental Health offices, but also the homes where we provide services. We've always performed an assessment to make sure our Homecare clients', and foster children's environments were safe. Now we'll be able to demonstrate that we did it, and measure how effective we were.

This is all very well for those folks we provide services for at home. But what about everyone else?

Over the next months and years, you will see an increase in our initiatives to educate all Sahtu residents about the ways they can keep themselves safe at home, in the community, on the land, and on the water. Through the efforts of our Prevention & Health Promotion Unit, we'll be very visibly making sure you have the knowledge you need to stay safe and healthy.

At the same time, we'll be encouraging you to ask us questions about your safety and health care. The more you know, the better able you'll be to keep yourself well.

It's our job to make sure you have the tools. It's your job to use them.

Information:**Sahtu Health & Social Services Authority**

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Contributions welcome!

*The SHSSA **Update** Newsletter is published 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.*

COMMUNITY VISITS BY TERRITORIAL SERVICES:

COMMUNITY	REHAB (PT/OT/SLP)	EYE TEAM	DENTAL TEAM	DOCTORS
Norman Wells	SLP—Aug. 24-27, 2009 PT/OT—TBA	May 22-24, 2009 August 28-30, 2009	TBA	Lee – Apr 1-3 Ferguson – Apr 24(pm)- May 1 McNeil – May 4 McNeil – May 22(pm)-29 McNeil – May 19(pm)-26
Tulita	TBA	August 25-27, 2009	TBA: New Contract in Process	Ferguson – Apr 6-10 McNeil – May 5-8 McNeil – June 1-5
Deline	TBA	May 19-21, 2009	TBA: New Contract in Process	Ferguson – Apr 13-17 McNeil – May 11-15 McNeil – June 8-12
Fort Good Hope	SLP– May 6-8, 2009 PT/OT—TBA	July 21-24, 2009	TBA: New Contract in Process	Ferguson – Apr 20-24(am) McNeil – May 18-20 McNeil – May 22 (am) McNeil – June 15-17 McNeil – June 19 (am)
Colville Lake	TBA	July 20, 2009	TBA: New Contract in Process	McNeil – May 21 McNeil – June 18

Useful Phone Numbers (Area Code for long distance is always “867”)

Community	Health Centre	Social Services	Mental Health & Addictions Workers
Norman Wells	587-2250 (Phone) 587-2934 (Fax)	587-3447 (Phone) 587-2934 (Fax)	587-2446 (Phone) 587-3436 (Fax)
Tulita	588-4251 (Phone) 588-3000 (Fax)	588-4271 (Phone) 588-3925 (Fax)	588-4019 (Phone) 588-4928 (Fax)
Deline	589-5555 (Phone) 589-5570 (Fax)	589-5545 (Phone) 589-5549 (Fax)	589-5543 (Phone) 598-5549 (Fax)
Fort Good Hope	598-2211 (Phone) 598-2605 (Fax)	598-2304 (Phone) 598-2605 (Fax)	598-3242 (Phone) 598-2513 (Fax)
Colville Lake	709-2409 (Phone) 709-2504 (Fax)	Contact Fort Good Hope	Contact Fort Good Hope